

Special  
Summer 2008  
Edition

# Challenge

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Anne Sperling, PhD of the University of Chicago.

## RHAMC-Funded Researchers Explore New Lung Disease Treatments And Scientific Breakthroughs

This year, Respiratory Health Association is providing research funding to several local scientists who are helping to unlock new treatments and perhaps even cures for lung disease.

Medical advances may have lengthened the lives of many lung disease patients, but lung cancer remains the leading cause of cancer death among both men and women and claims more lives than colon, breast, and prostate cancers combined. Researchers across the country (and around the world) are seeking cures and a better understanding of the disease. One of those researchers is **Dr. Ravi Salgia of the University of Chicago** who is investigating the role of heat shock proteins in lung cancer, which may lead to innovative treatments.

Dr. Salgia's work is funded, in part, by a grant from Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago. He's one of several local researchers whose work is funded by RHAMC. The following scientists are researching promising therapies in asthma, emphysema and tuberculosis.

A grant funded by the Blowitz-Ridgeway Foundation and awarded by RHAMC supports the research of **Anne Sperling, PhD of the University of Chicago**. Dr. Sperling, who



# Message from the CEO

JOEL J. AFRICK  
President & Chief Executive Officer

Just a few weeks ago, on a bright and cold Sunday morning, 4,000 people “Hustled up the Hancock” to raise funds for Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago’s research program and other programs to support healthy lungs and fight lung disease. Together, those intrepid climbers raised more than \$1 million to support our work.

Each year, I come away from Hustle energized about the commitment and energy of our supporters—and I don’t just mean the energy to climb 1,632 stairs! Many participants climb in honor of friends and family living with lung disease today, or in memory of those who may have passed away. Some of our climbers were lung transplant recipients, climbing to test out their new lungs and show people what it means to “live” with lung disease. One of our climbers was a researcher from University of Illinois

whose work is funded in part by our organization. This year, two climbers told me they were able to participate in the climb as a result of successes in lung disease research. Throughout the climb, participants were greeted by our 400 event volunteers, who cheered them on and thanked them for their great fundraising efforts. Overall, the event was exhilarating, successful, and inspiring. Thanks to all of the participants, volunteers, board members, and staff who helped us support our mission at Hustle Up the Hancock!

In this issue of *Challenge* you will read about some of the great things you are able to do with the funds we raise at Hustle Up the Hancock and with the generous support of individuals, families, grant makers, and businesses. I hope you share our sense of pride for our work!

Joel Africk  
President and Chief Executive Officer

## Grace Anne Dorney Koppel to Receive Award at Catch Your Breath Reception



Grace Anne Dorney Koppel

On May 1, RHAMC will host *Inspiration: A Benefit for Women’s Lung Health*. Proceeds from the reception will support the Association’s Catch Your Breath Initiative that aims to increase research funding and raise awareness about the disproportionate effects of lung disease among women.

More women die from lung cancer than any other type of cancer and in 2000, for the first time, more women died from COPD than men.

Grace Anne Dorney Koppel, COPD patient and advocate, wife of veteran journalist Ted Koppel, will be honored at the event for making a lasting difference in lung health. In support of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute’s COPD *Learn More Breathe Better* campaign, Ms. Koppel has sought to raise awareness and understanding of COPD via national television programs and print publications, including *Good Morning America*, *The CBS Evening News with Katie Couric*, *The View*, *Newsweek*, and *Woman’s Day*.



From left to right Blanca Camoretti-Mercado, CYB committee member; Sue Byrnes, LAM Foundation; Stacy Ignoffo, RHAMC.

Tickets to *Inspiration* are \$100 and include cocktails, hors d’oeuvres, entertainment and a silent auction. All proceeds benefit the Catch Your Breath® Initiative. Contact Rebecca Weinberg for tickets and more information at (312) 628-0211 or [rweinberg@lungchicago.org](mailto:rweinberg@lungchicago.org).

## Illinois to Combat COPD On Statewide Level

On May 1, RHAMC will host a press conference introducing the Illinois statewide COPD action plan, the first effort of the newly formed Illinois COPD Coalition. Illinois will be only the second state in the US to formally introduce a statewide coalition and action plan which addresses the fourth leading cause of death in the US. Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, or COPD, is a serious lung disease sometimes referred to as emphysema or chronic bronchitis.

Dr. Jeffrey Glassroth, Chair of the COPD State Plan and representatives from the Illinois and Chicago Departments of Public Health will outline the core elements of the plan. They will be joined by Dr. James Kiley, director of the Lung Division of National Heart,



*Spirometry test conducted at 2007 Respiratory Rally hosted by RHAMC's COPD Initiative.*

Lung and Blood Institute and Grace Anne Dorney Koppel, COPD patient and advocate. Dr. Kiley will discuss the Institute's commitment to COPD research and to working with states on awareness efforts through the COPD *Learn More Breathe Better* campaign while Ms. Koppel will share her personal COPD story.

To learn more about the COPD State Plan, contact Stacy Ignoffo at (312) 628-0205 or visit [www.copdillinois.org](http://www.copdillinois.org).

## Speaking Engagements

RHAMC is *the* resource for lung health information and experts. Staff members serve on national committees and give talks on a variety of topics including lung cancer, pollution and asthma. If you have a speaking opportunity for an RHAMC expert, call (312) 243-2000.

### **Upcoming Engagements**

Eileen Lowery, Coordinator of RHAMC's Lung Cancer and COPD Initiative, will be speaking on lung cancer at the American Association of Radon Scientists and Technicians (AARST) Midwest Chapter meeting on May 2.

Maureen Damitz, Senior Director of Programs is serving on a panel for the National Asthma Educators Certification Board (NAECB) to help develop a new certification test based on the asthma guidelines recently released by National Heart Lung Blood Institute.

## In the News

### **More COPD and Asthma Patients Need to be Tested for Genetic Pulmonary Disorder**

A recent study found that a higher than anticipated number of COPD and asthma patients tested positive for Alpha-1 anti-trypsin (AAT) deficiency, an under-diagnosed genetic disorder. Low blood-levels of AAT are commonly associated with severe emphysema and is usually fatal in its most severe form. Researchers call for wider screening of asthma and COPD patients.

*Study presented at 2008 CHEST Conference*

### **New Blood Test May Detect Lung Cancer**

A test detecting the level of four blood proteins may provide an alternative to invasive lung cancer screening. Researchers at Duke University compared protein levels in lung cancer patients with people of the same age and gender without the disease. They were able to identify the lung cancer patients with over 80% accuracy. More research is needed, but researchers hope this test will decrease invasive screening by accurately identifying high risk individuals.

*Study published in December 10, 2007 issue of Journal of Clinical Oncology*

### **Beijing to Extend Smoking Ban Before Olympics**

Chinese media have reported that Beijing will extend a ban on smoking in public places in anticipation of the 2008 Olympic Games. Restaurants, schools, hospitals, libraries and museums will be smoke-free and hotels will have to designate 70% of rooms as non-smoking. China accounts for one third of the world's smoking population, and about one million people die each year in China from smoking-related diseases.

*China Economic Review*

*For more information, please contact Meghan Bradley at [mbradley@lungchicago.org](mailto:mbradley@lungchicago.org)*

# SUMMER CALENDAR OF

Spend your summer with Respiratory Health Association! There have never been more opportunities to get involved. Whether you run, walk, ride or volunteer, your support makes our work possible. Read below for a complete list of RHAMC summer events.

**May 13-14, 2008**

### *Federal Advocacy Day*

Join RHAMC and 20 other participating organizations for the first United for Lung Health Federal Advocacy Day in Washington, DC. Be sure to read the article on page 5 for details or visit [www.unitedforlunghealth.org](http://www.unitedforlunghealth.org) for more information and registration.

**June 17, 2008**

### *Cruising with COPD*

COPD patients are invited to a lunch cruise on the Spirit of Chicago hosted by RHAMC's COPD Initiative. Enjoy good food, a live show, and a chance to meet other COPD patients in the Chicago area. For more information contact Eileen Lowery at (312) 628-0217.



**July 20, 2008**

### *Fleet Feet's Women's 5K, 10K & Festival*

Join us for the premier women's running event in the Midwest. Proceeds help support RHAMC's Catch Your Breath Women and Lung Health Initiative. Visit [www.fleetfeetchicago.com](http://www.fleetfeetchicago.com) to register.

**August 2-4, 2008**

### *CowaLUNGa Bike Tour*

Are you an experienced cyclist looking for a challenging ride with beautiful scenery? Or are you looking for a fun, safe ride for you and your family? CowaLUNGa can be as leisurely or demanding as you make it. The ride starts in Gurnee, IL and ends in Hubertus, WI. Ride one, two or three days. Over 300 participants ride and raise money to support RHAMC's research advocacy, and education programs. Contact Niki Bartosiak at (312) 628-0212 for information or visit [www.cowalunga.com](http://www.cowalunga.com)



## Thank you!

Thank you to a few of our recent partners, donors and sponsors. Your generosity helps Chicago breathe easier.

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## Help People Breathe Easier with Your Gift to RHAMC

RHAMC serves patients and families affected by lung cancer, asthma, and COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) with our locally focused mission: to fight lung disease and promote healthy lungs through research, advocacy, and education. This includes programs teaching children how to control their asthma, new research projects at Northwestern University and University of Chicago, and advocacy efforts at the state and federal level.

Local challenges require local solutions. Chicago-area residents living with COPD need local resources and programs to assist them in living with their chronic illness. Families living with asthma need practical solutions to overcome household triggers. And our area medical institutions rely on local resources to develop their research programs.

Your tax-deductible donation to RHAMC will help people breathe easier. Your support helps us achieve key goals for 2008. With your help, we will:

1. Reduce the burden of chronic disease (especially asthma, lung cancer, and COPD) throughout our community;
2. Increase support for local research to improve treatments and identify potential cures for lung diseases, including lung cancer;
3. Protect smoke-free workplaces throughout Illinois to ensure the lung health of all workers; and
4. Develop strategic partnerships with other independent lung health organizations dedicated to serving local families and communities affected by lung disease.

Please use the enclosed envelope to send your gift today, and help people breathe easier! Or call Audrey Eisenberg at (312) 628-0214 to make a gift in memory of a loved one, or for information about remembering Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago in your estate plans.

# EVENTS

## Chicago Distance Classic - August 10, 2008 Chicago Marathon - October 12, 2008

### Lung Power Team

Run for a reason. Join the Lung Power Team and run the Bank of America Chicago Marathon or the Chicago Distance Classic half marathon presented by Bank of America while raising funds to benefit RHAMC. You'll receive free training and other exciting benefits. For more information, visit [www.lungchicago.org](http://www.lungchicago.org) or call Jamie Leavitt at (312) 628-0213.



## September 6, 2008

### Lung Run

Lace up your running shoes and help raise funding for lung cancer research at the annual Lung Run. Proceeds benefit the Lung Oncologists Group in Chicago (LOGIC) and RHAMC's lung cancer research. Visit [www.lungrun.org](http://www.lungrun.org) to register.

## September 21, 2008

### Hike for Lung Health

Gather your friends and family for a multi-charity fundraising walk to support the lung health community. The Hike for Lung Health features a one-mile and 3-mile path along Chicago's lakefront at Montrose Harbor and in Palatine at Deer Grove. At each walk site you'll enjoy food, music, event sponsor exhibits and family entertainment. For more information, contact Stephanie Russell at (312) 628-0223



## Federal Advocacy Day Brings Lung Health Issues to Washington

Hundreds of lung health advocates from across the country will descend on Washington DC on May 13-14, 2008 for the first United for Lung Health Federal Advocacy Day, convened by Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago.

A coalition of more than 20 organizations representing a variety of lung health issues will develop a national agenda before meeting with legislators to press for research, prevention and education funding.

The coalition hopes to demonstrate the strength and vibrancy of the lung health community. The charities scheduled to attend represent such diseases as asthma, COPD, lung cancer, LAM, ARDS, pulmonary fibrosis, tuberculosis, and sarcoidosis.

"When we look at the large numbers of people affected by lung disease, it's clear that research is significantly under-funded," said RHAMC Programs and Policy Director Cheryl Byers. "That's one message we'll deliver to our legislators in Washington."

Participants will learn how to better communicate with legislators during advocacy training. They will then take that knowledge and apply it to visits with Congressional leaders at the Capitol.

Registration for Federal Advocacy Day registration is \$125 per person. The fee will offset the costs of advocacy training and materials, meals, an evening Capitol Hill reception with members of Congress and staff, photographs, a program memento for registrants, baggage check and some ground transportation during the program. Participants are responsible for their own hotel and transportation. Some scholarships are available.

For hotel reservations and a schedule of events, visit [www.unitedforlunghealth.org](http://www.unitedforlunghealth.org) or contact Matt Maloney at Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago (312) 628-0233.

## GET INSPIRATION

Containing the latest news & information about Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)



To sign up for RHAMC's free quarterly *Inspiration* newsletter, contact Stacy Ignoffo at [signoffo@lungchicago.org](mailto:signoffo@lungchicago.org)

# Interactions Q&A

WITH **BRIAN URBASZEWSKI**  
*Director of Environmental Health Programs, RHAMC*

## *Illinois Clean Car Act*



*Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago supports efforts by State Representative Karen May and State Senator Terry Link to reduce vehicle emissions. They are sponsoring the Illinois Clean Car Act now before the General Assembly. RHAMC's Director of Environmental Health Programs, Brian Urbaszewski works with law makers to tighten emissions standards and boost air quality.*

### **What is the difference between California and Illinois emissions standards?**

California has the strictest standards for tail pipe emissions, which are a large contributor of smog and global warming. Illinois now follows less stringent federal standards that allow for more harmful emissions in the air we breathe.

### **What effect does poor air quality have on lung health?**

Air pollution triggers asthma attacks, strokes, heart attacks, exacerbates lung disease and even causes lung cancer and premature death. If Illinois adopted clean car standards, experts believe air pollution would be cut by as much as 16% and school absenteeism would be reduced by up to 250,000 days.

### **How would consumers be affected by a tightening of emission standards?**

Only new cars will be required to be “clean.” For example, if the new law goes into effect in 2008, only cars manufactured in 2010 and beyond would be required to abide by the new standards. Initially, cars would cost a little more, but consumers would save more money at the pump by having more efficient vehicles, which would more than pay for the small price increase.

### **How many other states have implemented the California emission standards?**

Twelve states (Connecticut, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Mexico and Washington) have adopted the standards. Governors in Arizona and Florida have signed executive orders and legislation is pending in Illinois, Colorado, and Minnesota to adopt regulations.

### **What does it mean to car makers if Illinois adopts the new standards?**

It would force auto manufacturers to sell the low-emission versions of their car—the ones they are already selling in many other states—here in Illinois too.

### **How can people show their support for the Clean Car Act?**

Write or call their elected officials! One of the easiest and best ways to do that is to sign up with the RHAMC E-Advocacy program. We send out emails that alert you about critical decisions your government officials will soon make affecting lung health and air quality. We give you background information on the issue and how to reach out to them so as to have maximum impact on how they decide the issues. Sign up by visiting [www.lungchicago.org](http://www.lungchicago.org).

## Thousands Hustle Up the Hancock and Raise Money for Lung Disease Research

More than 4,000 climbers raced up Chicago's John Hancock Center on Sunday February 24 as part of the 11th annual Hustle Up the Hancock. The fundraiser for RHAMC raised more than \$1 million for lung disease research and programs.

Christopher Schmidt of Chicago won the men's division, scaling 94 floors in 9 minutes and 38 seconds. Veteran climber Cindy Harris of Indianapolis took back

the women's title with a record-breaking time of 10 minutes and 52 seconds.

ABC7's John Garcia won the media challenge with a time of 15:25, narrowly beating out CBS2's Kate McCall and NBC5's Mike Adamle.

The average runner scaled John Hancock Center in 26 minutes.

For many climbers, reaching the top was a victory in itself. Half of the participants indicated that they or loved ones have been touched by lung disease.

Randy Gold traveled from Florida to climb in memory of his son Eric. Diagnosed with idiopathic



*Eric Gold, 2006 Hustle Up the Hancock*

pulmonary fibrosis at the age of 21, Eric received a double lung transplant and participated in Hustle Up the Hancock for the past few years. This year, Eric registered as team captain of the Breathin' Easy team and said, "I'm climbing because I can."

However in January 2008, Eric passed away while undergoing treatment for Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma. "Eric told me, 'If I'm alive I'm going to crawl to the top,'" his father said. "It was important to him, so it is important to me. I climbed in his honor." Randy was joined by twelve of Eric's friends and family members. Together they have raised over \$21,000.

Joel Africk, CEO of RHAMC lauded the fundraising efforts of the participants. "More than a million people in the Chicago area suffer from lung disease. Funds raised from this climb will go a long way toward helping us find improved treatments and cures."

If you would like to support lung disease research, visit [www.lungchicago.org](http://www.lungchicago.org) or call Audrey Eisenberg at (312) 628-0214.

## New Grants Fund Lung Health Education

Abbott Laboratories has recently funded two projects supporting Fight Asthma Now (FAN), RHAMC's newly-developed asthma education program for youth and teens. Through FAN, RHAMC-trained facilitators will teach hundreds of Chicago Public School students how to better manage their asthma. A portion of Abbott's recent funding will support validation of the FAN curriculum, so that we more widely disseminate this education.

In January and February, the Chicago Thoracic Society hosted two renowned lecturers. Dr. Bart Celli, of St. Elizabeth's Medical Center at Tufts University School of Medicine and an expert on chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), gave a spirited talk to a standing-room only crowd highlighting the responsibilities of the medical community in the care of COPD patients. One month later, Dr. Monica Kraft, Director of the Duke Asthma, Allergy and Airway Center, educated local medical professionals about new and emerging asthma controversies. We appreciate the dedication of the following pharmaceutical industry supporters, who provided medical education grants for these lectures: Boehringer Ingelheim, Pfizer, Dey, Baxter, AstraZeneca, Teva and Genentech.

For more information on opportunities for corporate or foundation support contact Julie Catalano at (312) 628-0246.

## RESEARCHERS (from p. 1)



Antonio Owens learns how to use his medications correctly with help from RHAMC's Gay Chisum for the Address Asthma in Englewood Project, Chicago.

lives with asthma herself, is researching the binding process of specific proteins and receptors that contribute to asthma symptoms and allergic disorders.

Rates of asthma and obesity have increased dramatically over the past two decades, and African American communities suffer from high rates of both conditions. Experts agree that asthma and obesity are related, but **Dr. Samuel Dorevitch, of the University of Illi-**

**nois at Chicago** is further investigating this relationship.

**Douglas Kuperman, PhD of Northwestern University** is investigating why people with asthma are susceptible to inhaled allergens. Antibodies in the lung normally protect people from developing asthma but studies suggest the 15-lipoxygenase enzyme suppresses levels of antibodies in the lung, which might leave people with asthma more susceptible to the damaging effects of inhaled allergens and potentially, people with emphysema more susceptible to lung infections.

Conventional treatment for a severe asthma attack includes using corticosteroids orally or intravenously, and the use of inhaled bronchodilators. These treatments, however, can take hours or days to provide benefits. Through the American Thoracic Society/Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago Research Award, **Dr. Jerry Krishman of the University of Chicago**, is examining the benefits of using high doses of inhaled corticosteroids, in addition to conventional treatment, as a potential new therapy to improve outcomes of patients hospitalized for asthma.

In a grant funded through the Merck Childhood Asthma Network, Inc., in partnership with **Dr. Victoria Persky from the University of Illinois at Chicago**, and RHAMC, community health educators address the high rates of pediatric asthma hospitalization in Englewood. We hope **Addressing Asthma in Englewood** will demonstrate the success of multi-factorial models for tackling pediatric asthma in urban communities nationwide. Project goals include increasing asthma surveillance, enhancing education, improving access to appropriate medical management and developing long-term sustainable infrastructures to maintain a reduction in asthma morbidity.

RHAMC is partnering with Metropolitan Chicago Tuberculosis Coalition on a number of tuberculosis research projects awarded under a 10-year contract with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This research, conducted through the CDC's Tuberculosis Epidemiologic Studies Consortium, works to strengthen, focus and coordinate tuberculosis research.

For more information on RHAMC funded research, contact Stacy Ignoffo at (312) 628-0205.

## Challenge

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