MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On behalf of the patients and families who benefit from our work, thank you for your generous and ongoing support of The Bone Marrow Foundation. For more than 22 years, the Foundation has served as a comprehensive resource for patients and their families, connecting them with the services they need to make effective decisions about treatment and its aftermath.

Although this is our last newsletter for the summer season, please remember that the needs of our patients are ongoing. Currently, we receive requests for financial assistance, resources, and counseling from hundreds of patients each month, and we anticipate that this number will increase in the coming months. Support from The BMF makes a tremendous difference in the lives of these patients — enabling them to move forward with the treatment they require. Please consider making an online donation today and Be a lifeline™ for someone in need.

PATIENT SPOTLIGHT

Michele and Martin “Marrow Twins”

Michele, a cancer survivor and friend of The Bone Marrow Foundation, underwent two transplants during her 15-year battle with non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma. Unable to find a donor match among family, Save the Date

15th Annual Christmas Celebration at Radio City Music Hall

Friday, December 5, 2014

Event Co-Chairs: Virginia Apple and Shannon Henderson

The Bone Marrow Foundation presents its 15th Annual Christmas Celebration at Radio City Music Hall on Friday, December 5! Children and their families enjoy the VIP holiday treatment — no crowds, a delicious catered supper, photos with Santa and the Rockettes, and a behind-the-scenes tour. Funds raised through this event will help to meet the critical needs of children and adults through our patient programs.

Lifeline Project

You can be someone’s lifeline. Make a direct and instant difference in the life of a child or adult undergoing a bone marrow or stem cell transplant. 100% of your tax-deductible donation will go directly to the patient (or patients) you select to help meet their uncovered financial
Michele’s first transplant involved using her own stem cells for an autologous transplant. In 2001, Michele’s cancer returned and a donor match was found through the DKMS German Bone Marrow Donor Center, and Michele underwent an unrelated bone marrow transplant.

Grateful for this life-saving gift, Michele always hoped she would have the opportunity to meet her donor and personally express her appreciation. According to U.S. donor regulations, patients and donors are not able to learn of each other’s identities until the patient has reached one-year post transplant, and both the patient and donor are in agreement to meet. Michele set out to meet her donor, and her efforts evolved into a longtime friendship with her self-proclaimed “marrow twin.” Knowing that her donor was a young man, she named him “Gabriel”, in reference to the archangel Gabriel. She learned that since the donor was in Europe, they could not meet for another year due to the disparity in regulations. However, she could write to him through an intermediary who would approve and pass on the letters.

In October 2003, Michele learned that her “Gabriel” was a university student in Germany named Martin. He had become a donor at the urging of his mother, a nurse, who had heard about a young girl at the hospital who was in need of a donor. While he was not a match for the young girl, he was a very good match for Michele.

Michele recalls that Martin’s response has always been, “Of course. Why not?” in regards to registering and becoming a donor. Upon meeting in Germany, Michele said, “It was like we already knew each other.” Their friendship has spanned more than a decade and each time they visit or speak, “it’s like no time has passed.” In fact, Martin and his fiancé arranged the date of their wedding so that Michele and her husband could attend. In 2007, NBC Today Show host Meredith Vieira conducted an on-stage interview with Michele and Martin at the “Links for Life” Gala, an event benefitting both DKMS and The Bone Marrow Foundation. They shared their story on stage in front of 300 guests and there wasn’t a dry eye in the room.

Michele was a theatre major in college, but had not pursued her interest in art and painting professionally until undergoing treatment. During that time, she found great solace in her artistic roots. Michele began painting a mural in her home, and from there a mural painting business was born. Mural Mural On The Wall is based out of the Stamford/Greenwich Conn. area but spans all of greater New York and New England. Michele’s paintings and photography also adorn the walls at The Bone Marrow Foundation. “Michele’s artwork brings me joy every morning when I walk in to my office to start my days’ work,” said Executive Director, Christina Merrill. Michele also created note cards inspired by her paintings, which are available through The BMF website with 100% of proceeds benefitting the Foundation.

Michele encourages patients to find “ways to turn the intensity down,” and look for comfort and quiet time during their illnesses. Michele said, “My work is infused with the

needs during transplant. Give a little or give a lot. Every dollar makes a difference.

Click here to Be a lifeline™

Employer Matching Contributions

Double the impact of your gift! Many corporations match employee support for charitable causes. Some companies even match volunteer hours. Ask your Human Resources Department for info on matching gift programs.

Partner Spotlight

On Saturday, September 20, 2014, New York City will host its first Be The Match® Walk+Run at South Street Seaport; bringing together marrow donors and transplant patients to demonstrate that the cure for blood cancer is in the hands of ordinary people. This is one of 17 Walk + Runs in 17 cities across the country.

Every year, more than 12,000 patients in the U.S. are diagnosed with blood cancers like leukemia. A marrow transplant from an unrelated donor may be their best hope for a cure.

With a 5K, 1K and Tot Trot, the Walk+Run is perfect for the entire family and for people of all fitness levels. Join a community transplanting hope. Help patients with blood cancers take the next step toward a life-saving marrow transplant by taking a few of your own. To learn more or register, please visit
varied emotions of my life, which include my battle with cancer and my life-saving bone marrow transplant. I believe it expresses that I am not simply surviving, but thriving!” In addition to a new lease on life and an ongoing friendship with Martin, Michele is thankful for her continued good health and looks to find inspiration in art and all that life has to offer.

MEDICAL SPOTLIGHT

Dr. Richard O’Reilly

Dr. Richard O’Reilly currently serves as the Chair of the Department of Pediatrics for Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York.

He received his medical training at the University of Rochester School of Medicine, and completed his residencies and fellowships at University of Minnesota Hospitals, Children’s Hospital Medical Center and Beth Israel Hospital. His clinical expertise is in bone marrow transplantation and the treatment of children with congenital and acquired immunological deficiencies. Other areas of concentration include treating genetic diseases that impair hematopoiesis—the formation of blood cells—as well as pediatric leukemias. He is an authority on transplantation immunology and cellular therapies.

Dr. O’Reilly has always been fascinated by the immunology of transplantation and the ability to use this approach to cure diseases. He performed the first successful bone marrow transplant between an unrelated donor and patient in 1973. This opened the possibility of a transplant to the majority of patients who lacked a matched brother or sister. He and Yair Reisner, PhD. subsequently introduced T-cell depleted, HLA haplotype mismatched transplants from parent donors for the treatment of children with severe combined immunodeficiency in 1980-81, demonstrating their capacity to durably engraft and reconstitute immunity without graft vs. host disease. He has subsequently developed and explored T-cell depleted transplants for the treatment of patients with leukemia. In addition to leading and co-investigating clinical trials, Dr. O’Reilly has authored more than 400 scientific publications.

Dr. O’Reilly and his fellow scientists are in the process of developing cellular therapies that could be used to enhance the resistance of bone marrow transplant recipients to not only cure serious infections but also their underlying cancers. They are aiming to create novel systems to elicit an immune response against infectious organisms or residual cancer cells within the patient.

Dr. O’Reilly was the founding secretary and past president of BeTheMatchWalkRun.org/New York.

The Bone Marrow Foundation is proud to support Be The Match at this NYC event. The BMF will be an onsite exhibitor on September 20th. Please stop by to visit with us on race day!

About Be The Match

Be The Match is operated by the National Marrow Donor Program® (NMDP), a nonprofit organization that matches patients with donors, educates health care professionals and conducts research so more lives can be saved. For people with life-threatening blood cancers - like leukemia and lymphoma - or other diseases, a cure exists. Be The Match connects patients with their donor match for a life-saving marrow or umbilical cord blood transplant. Be The Match provides patients and their families one-on-one support, education, and guidance before, during and after transplant.

Shop to Support

Town Togs neckties are available in a variety of patterns and in both traditional and easy-to-fasten zipper styles. 10% of each purchase will help support the Foundation’s Pediatric Patient Aid Program. Visit towntogs.com to order yours today.

When you use the links below to search the Web and shop online, you will help raise much needed funds to support the Foundation's programs.

- Amazon
- GoodSearch
Dr. O'Reilly is a past-President and current member of the Board of the Damon Ruyon-Walter Winchell Cancer Fund. He also serves on the Board of the Children’s Oncology Society of New York, which operates the local Ronald McDonald House. He has won several awards for his work, including honors from the American Society of Clinical Oncology, the Society of Translational Oncology, the American Society for Blood and Marrow Transplantation, and Leiden University in The Netherlands. In 2011, Dr. O’Reilly was named the third recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Pediatric Blood and Marrow Transplant Consortium (PBMTC), and in 2014, received the DKMS Mechthild Harf Science Award.

In addition to the roles, notable accomplishments and innovative research detailed above, Dr. O’Reilly currently serves as valued member of The Bone Marrow Foundation’s Medical Advisory Board. This group of medical professionals is crucial to the success of The Foundation’s Ask The Expert program. Through this online platform, doctors volunteer their time and expertise to respond to patients’ questions concerning transplantation. We are grateful to Dr. O’Reilly for his involvement and support of this important initiative at The BMF.