



Voices of Progress

Dear Friends,

There has never been a time to be more committed to the cause of life-changing research in Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis. Because of your generous support, we are now witnessing astonishing advances in the understanding of these devastating diseases that inflict such a heavy burden on thousands of families.

Forty-two years of Foundation history have demonstrated the power of our donors' unwavering support. Over four decades, CCFA has become the unmistakable voice for finding answers that will one day lead to a cure. The opportunities have never been greater for transforming the future of over 1.4 million Americans and future generations with Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis by investing in cutting-edge research.

2008 was a watershed year for our Foundation. We reached new fundraising and research milestones. In the past fiscal year, we invested \$15.5 million in research, roughly two and a half times what we allocated only a couple of years ago. CCFA funded fifty-three research projects this year, an excellent accomplishment in what continues to be a financially challenging environment.

CCFA has defined itself by sponsoring the best and brightest researchers over many decades, seeding the field with studies around the mysteries

of Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis, collectively known as inflammatory bowel diseases (IBD). The model has been a resounding success as the majority of our selected scientists have received continuing grants from the National Institutes of Health to undertake larger and more definitive studies. This strategy has resulted in a very high return on our invested dollars. It also has shaped a strong partnership with the research community that was most apparent in this year of financial challenges.

Due to our accelerated research investment in the past year, our portfolio can now boast of two high-profile initiatives. In 2008, the Foundation commenced funding of the **CCFA Human Gut Microbiome Initiative** and the **CCFA Risk Stratification Initiative** of our Pediatric Network. These groundbreaking studies, discussed in this annual report, leverage 21st-century scientific and technology breakthroughs to move us forward in our understanding and treatment of IBD. These investments are aligned with our strategic goals of addressing areas of unmet needs for solving the puzzle of IBD, and improving the outlook for all young IBD patients by developing a better standard of care from day one.

The **CCFA Human Gut Microbiome Initiative** moved from a pilot phase into its first and second phases of research in 2008. Dr. Jeffrey Gordon and Dr. Rob Knight have now published five scientific articles sharing new information with the worldwide scientific community. The goal of this prestigious undertaking is to develop labor- and cost-effective tools and framework to enable more scientists to study IBD, which can take the field to a new level of understanding of the role of intestinal microbes.

Children have always been at the forefront of the concern of our Foundation. In 2008, CCFA adopted a new acronym, **Pro-KIDS (Pediatric Resource Organization for Kids with Inflammatory Intestinal Digestive Diseases)** to symbolize our comprehensive and ambitious approach to pediatric research and care. CCFA has to date invested over \$10 million in research, services, and education programs for young IBD patients.

CCFA's Clinical Alliance has made impressive headway in gaining timely information about pregnancy and IBD. However, many more promising studies looking at clinically important questions are waiting in the wings. The work of the Clinical Alliance is crucial because it both provides short-term improvements in patient care and a foundation for applying scientific discoveries to patient-based research.

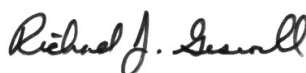
The need for patient support has always been at the core of CCFA's mission. The rapid uptake in Web-based technology has transformed the field of patient education and support. **CCFA's Information Resource Center (IRC)** in its second year launched a community interactive Web site that has drawn over 356,000 visitors. For our younger patients, our new teen Web site—ucandcrohns.org—provides an online resource second to none. The IRC has also discovered an appreciative audience for educational teleconferences and Webcasts and we will be expanding this activity in the future.

CCFA's signature fundraising events launched in 2008, **Team Challenge**—a half marathon and training program, and **Take Steps**—a community walk, are proving to be strong contributors to the bottom line. Over 30,000 people participated in these events in 2008, raising \$9.5 million dollars. We expect that our entry into the popular social networking site, Facebook, will help drive awareness in FY09. Members will be able to share the cause with networks of friends and colleagues with ease and efficiency.

Our advocacy efforts in Washington, D.C. are also supported by online grass-roots strategies for gaining sponsorship for our IBD bill in Congress. In 2008, support continued to grow. In FY08, NIH funded \$80 million in IBD research. The NIDDK is the primary site for IBD research and responsible for the Inflammatory Bowel Disease Consortium. The historic discovery of twenty-one new disease-associated genes published in 2008 was the result of their groundbreaking research. We anticipate that the increase of funding from the economic stimulus in FY09 will continue to increase the discoveries in genetic research.

This is an exciting time to continue our journey toward curing and preventing Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis. The opportunities that we can pursue today are significantly more promising than they were only ten years ago. The potential for efficiencies and productivity based on digital technology is also most encouraging. We recognize our responsibility to you, our generous supporters, to continue to make the best choices in research and fundraising programs. We acknowledge that every donation has moved us ahead in this long and enduring mission to find a cure.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Geswell
President



Gary Sinderbrand
Chairman of the
National Board