Dear Friends,

As we prepare to celebrate our 30th anniversary, we are grateful to all who have generously supported Scripps Whittier Diabetes Institute in our mission to improve the quality of life for people with diabetes through innovative education programs, patient care, research and collaborations that pursue prevention and a cure. Since our founding in 1981, through a generous donation from the Whittier family, we have relied on the generosity of those in our community to help us in accomplishing this mission.

During 2010, our main focus was to build a continuum-of-care plan for diabetes patients. This strategy will provide enhanced patient-centered care as we follow patients throughout their course of treatment. Scripps Whittier is also building top-notch, evidence-based programs that will integrate all aspects of diabetes care across the health system. These programs will be used as models for other health care systems and help patients with diabetes not only here in San Diego, but across the country.

Our programs make a difference in the San Diego community. Project Dulce continues to demonstrate outcomes that are above and beyond target measures. Dulce Mothers, an extension of Project Dulce, has proven to be extremely effective as well. The program reaches out to women with a history of gestational diabetes.

Once again, thank you for your giving spirit and loyal support of Scripps Whittier Diabetes Institute and its programs. Please enjoy this stewardship report, highlighting how your generosity makes a difference, and our plans to continue to provide the most advanced treatment and care.

Sincerely,

Athena Philis-Tsimikas, MD
Corporate Vice President
Scripps Whittier Diabetes Institute

Dave Woltman
Chair, Community Advisory Committee
Scripps Whittier Diabetes Institute
Known for her bubbly laughter and sincere passion for life, Yvonne Polatchek leaves a lasting legacy in this community through her dedicated efforts in diabetes research and education. A beloved wife, mother and friend, Yvonne’s unexpected passing in August 2010 was felt by all. She was a selfless individual who will be forever remembered by the San Diego community for her philanthropy, her enthusiasm and her charm.

With a daughter who was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes at a young age, Yvonne was truly passionate about creating a better health care environment and investing in innovative research discoveries for those living with diabetes. Having served most recently as the chair of Scripps Whittier Diabetes Institute’s community advisory board, she also served on the board of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

“She gave her time with full-hearted energy and personal donations to support the efforts of the Scripps Whittier Diabetes Institute, improving diabetes care today and for future generations,” says Athena Philis-Tsimikas, MD, friend and corporate vice president of Scripps Whittier.

“She understood how critical it was to raise awareness and improve care for diabetes in high-risk ethnic communities of San Diego. We will truly miss her.”

Yvonne’s legacy lives on in the lives of those she touched in so many ways. She is survived by her treasured husband, Roy, and loving daughter, Julie. With fond memories, we extend our deepest sympathies to her family and friends.

U.S. News & World Report Recognizes Scripps for Diabetes Care, Among Other Specialties

The inaugural edition of U.S. News & World Report’s Best Hospitals metro area rankings recognized three Scripps hospitals for high performance in diabetes and endocrinology. Scripps Memorial Hospital La Jolla, Scripps Green Hospital and Scripps Mercy Hospital were recognized for high performance in 11 specialty areas.

In addition to a national ranking for heart and heart surgery by U.S. News & World Report for 2010–11, Scripps La Jolla and Scripps Green were recognized for high performance in eight additional specialty areas, and Scripps Mercy was recognized for high performance in 10 specialty areas.

“This recognition demonstrates Scripps Health’s outstanding quality care in cardiovascular services, as well as other many other important specialties,” said Chris Van Gorder, Scripps president and CEO. “It further demonstrates the consistent, high-quality care we provide across our system. We owe these accolades to the incredible dedication and talent of our hospitals’ staff and physicians.”
Wireless Technology Empowers Patients to Take Control of Their Health

In less than four decades, diabetes has become the most prominent public health problem around the U.S.-Mexico border, with more than 1.2 million people living with the condition. Recognizing the need to find a solution to this problem, Qualcomm Inc., through its Wireless Reach Initiative, launched Dulce Wireless Tijuana. Scripps Whittier Diabetes Institute is one of several organizations providing technical assistance, program management, evaluation and in-kind support.

The project uses a combination of mobile applications, web applications, mobile phones, laptops, diabetes educational content, health care workers and patient training to create the Dulce Wireless Tijuana system, available through Qualcomm's 3G technology. All of the components offer many benefits to health care workers, such as real-time ability to locate and receive confidential access to patient information, manage patient appointments and review training curriculum.

“Scripps Whittier Diabetes Institute has background and expertise in training and developing peer educators so it can deliver a clear, understandable message that improves diabetes care for people in the community with the disease,” says Athena Philis-Tsimikas, MD, vice president of Scripps Whittier. “In Dulce Wireless Tijuana, we used our expertise to train peer educators south of the border in order to implement programs similar to those we conduct with Project Dulce here in San Diego.”

Scripps Whittier's nationally recognized Project Dulce program has been combating the diabetes epidemic for more than 10 years by providing diabetes care and self-management education to low-income and uninsured populations in San Diego County.

The Dulce Wireless Tijuana project is a clear example of how to use wireless technology to improve patient care for marginalized communities – not just in Mexico, but throughout the world.

Gene Bank Could Hold Key to Diabetes Prevention

A team of Scripps Translational Science Institute (STSI) and Scripps Whittier Diabetes Institute scientists and physicians have established a gene bank to enable researchers to pinpoint DNA variations that predispose Mexican-Americans to diabetes and its complications. The Scripps San Diego Diabetes Gene Bank is a much-needed resource that will encourage scientists who are pursuing the genomic variants of Type 2 diabetes to focus on Hispanics/Latinos.

Although they have a higher lifetime risk for diabetes than African-Americans and non-Hispanic Caucasians, people with Mexican and other Hispanic ancestry have not yet been adequately represented in genomic studies. But researchers believe the set of genomic variants that underlies diabetes in Mexican-Americans may lead to new targets for drug development and identify individuals predisposed to the disease.

The gene bank pulled nearly 135 participants from its Project Dulce patient population. The participants attended culturally tailored genomic education sessions in Spanish taught by Isabel Garcia. Scripps endocrinologist Liliana Uribe-Bruce, MD, a clinical scholar at STSI, designed the sessions.
Dulce Mothers: Reducing Diabetes in Pregnant Women

Infants born to mothers diagnosed with gestational diabetes have a significantly higher risk of developing Type 2 diabetes as children. And their mothers are more than 50 percent more likely to develop Type 2 diabetes within five years.

In 2010, Scripps Whittier Diabetes Institute launched a first-of-its-kind study to determine if behavioral intervention could reduce or prevent diabetes in low-income women with a medical history of gestational diabetes, ultimately reducing the risk in their children.

The Project Dulce behavioral study features educational sessions, lifestyle coaching and behavioral modifications. Activities were designed to be culturally appropriate and acceptable to women of Latina ancestry, and are based on Scripps Whittier’s research that included focus groups with members of the target population and their health care providers.

Central to the intervention are trained peer educators/lifestyle coaches. The Mexican-American women serve as individual lifestyle coaches who provide patients with intensive behavioral self-management strategies for weight loss and regular physical activity. Preliminary results demonstrate a decrease in cholesterol and triglyceride levels, as well as an increase in the adoption of healthy lifestyle behaviors.

The next step of the study will be a prospective, randomized controlled clinical trial to determine whether the intervention designed for the San Diego population will be relevant to other geographical and ethnic groups in the U.S.

Athena Philis-Tsimikas Receives Outstanding Service Award

In April 2011, the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists (AACE) presented Athena Philis-Tsimikas, MD, corporate vice president for Scripps Whittier Diabetes Institute, with the Outstanding Service Award for the promotion of endocrine health of an underserved population as part of her leadership of Project Dulce. The service award is given to an individual for outstanding contributions to the care, health and service to an underserved population via leadership, long-term commitment, vision, innovation and impact/outcomes.

Dr. Tsimikas initiated the Project Dulce program in 1997 through a collaborative partnership of the County of San Diego, the San Diego Community Health Center network, San Diego State University, local community hospitals and the Scripps Whittier Diabetes Institute. The program was developed to improve the delivery of diabetes clinical care and diabetes education for underserved, diverse ethnic communities.

Project Dulce and Scripps have been recognized by the United States-Mexico Border Health Commission as a Border Model of Excellence and received the 2005 Nova Award from the American Hospital Association.
Investigating The Role of Enzymes in Mealtime Glycemic Control

Clinical research is a critical part of Scripps Whittier Diabetes Institute’s mission. Scripps Whittier is currently undertaking a Phase 2 clinical trial of an ultra-fast insulin treatment protocol that utilizes an enzyme (PH20), produced by San Diego-based Halozyme, in combination with two common fast-acting injectable insulin analogues: insulin aspart and insulin lispro.

“These studies are designed to test whether this novel combination will produce measurable benefits for patients with diabetes, shortening the time to action for injectable insulin,” says Athena Philis-Tsimikas, MD, Scripps Whittier corporate vice president. “Typically, there is a 10- to 15-minute delay before insulin takes effect. We hope to see that delay reduced, which would give patients better immediate glucose control at mealtimes. It could also lead to more consistent long-term glucose levels over time.”

The study will ultimately enroll approximately 110 patients, with Type 1 diabetes. Over the course of a 20-week period, the trial will track the effects of insulin alone versus the insulin–enzyme combination, measuring both immediate and long-term average blood glucose, as measured by levels of glycated hemoglobin (A1C).

“I feel blessed to have had access to the guidance of doctors and nurses consistently for six months,” says Kelly Kurzrock, one of the first study participants. “Even though I’ve been diabetic for ten years, there’s always something to learn. I look forward to participating in future diabetes research.”

Preliminary studies suggest that the co-injection of enzymes with an insulin analog enhances mealtime glycemic control. If this trial’s results are also positive, the long-term goal is to develop a best-in-class mealtime insulin program.

For more information on ongoing clinical trials, please call 858-626-5678, or visit www.scripps.org/services/diabetes/clinical-trials.

Physician Handbook for Diabetes Care and Treatment

For more than 30 years, Scripps Whittier Diabetes Institute has provided diabetic patients with quality resources to manage their condition and improve their quality of lives. Now, these insights are available to physicians in Scripps Whittier Diabetes Institute’s Guide to Patient Management and Prevention of Diabetes.

A portable reference for physicians, the guide provides physicians with a holistic approach to treating patients, including standards of care and prevention, psycho-social care related to diabetes and patient education tools, such as peer-reviewed, multi-lingual handouts on nutrition and blood glucose monitoring.

Scripps Whittier Diabetes Institute’s Guide to Patient Management and Prevention of Diabetes is available online at Amazon.com. For more information, call 877-WHITTIER.
Family Matters

When Frank Potenziani was a freshman in college, he learned that his beloved younger sister, Kathleen, then just 6 years old, had been diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes. “I didn’t really understand the problems associated with diabetes at the time,” he remembers. “I certainly didn’t know that your life is at stake, literally, if you don’t take care of yourself.”

Through the decades that followed, the siblings have remained close. Although Kathy lives in New Mexico, she visits San Diego three or four times a year. When she does, one of her first stops is the Scripps Whittier Diabetes Institute, where she receives ongoing counseling and personalized care from Athena Philis-Tsimikas, MD, and the Scripps Whittier staff.

The Potenziani family has long supported Scripps through philanthropy. In 2010, to honor the courage of his sister and others who live with diabetes, Frank made an additional $100,000 gift through the family foundation to Scripps Whittier. “Kathy was very happy about the gift because of all the patients who will benefit from the work of Dr. Tsimikas and the Scripps Whittier staff,” Frank says.

As both a donor and patient living with Parkinson’s disease, Mr. Potenziani is a strong proponent of supporting health care innovation and research that leads to medical breakthroughs. He recently elected to have deep brain stimulation (DBS) – an innovative therapy which helps control symptoms of Parkinson’s disease and is highly effective in treating tremors. “If I hadn’t had this procedure, I would be confined to a wheelchair,” says Frank. “I am still walking today, and it’s because of care I received at Scripps.”

This summer, Frank looks forward to taking a trip to London with his sister and their 93-year-old mother and strolling through his favorite spots – Hyde Park and St. James’ Park. While the trees, flowers, and pathways are familiar favorites for Frank, his sister will be seeing them for the very first time. It’s an experience that will be possible because of a lifetime of successfully managing her diabetes.

By the Numbers:

Diabetes in America

• Diabetes is the 7th leading cause of death in the U.S.
• Nearly 26 million U.S. children and adults – 8.3 percent of the population – have diabetes.
• By 2050, an estimated 48 million Americans will be diagnosed with diabetes.
• Diabetes is the leading cause of kidney failure, nontraumatic lower-limb amputations and new cases of blindness among adults.
• One out of every three U.S. children will face a future with diabetes, if current trends continue.

All statistics courtesy of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
David Woltman, the new chairman of the Scripps Whittier Diabetes Institute advisory board, is a self-described expert at managing his Type 1 diabetes. Diagnosed at age 9, he took early and decisive charge. “I must have given myself nearly half a million shots through the years,” he remembers. “I look at my son today, and sometimes I marvel that I was around his age when this all began.”

During a stay at Scripps Mercy Hospital in 2008, David had an experience that is unfortunately common among patients with diabetes. “My recovery in the hospital was good, but my blood sugar proved difficult to control,” he remembers. “This disease has its own rhythm with each person, and it can be hard to manage.”

A few weeks after discharge, during the course of follow-up care, David experienced a detached retina. “I don’t know if it was related,” David says. “Nobody knows. Still, sometimes you can’t help but wonder.”

David’s father, Dick Woltman, and his late wife, Kaye, have been longtime supporters of Scripps. After an acquaintance told Dick about a similar experience with inpatient glucose management, he recognized a golden opportunity to make a positive, lasting contribution.

After discussing the issue with Athena Philis-Tsimikas, MD, director of the Scripps Whittier Diabetes Institute, the Woltmans made a gift of $250,000 to seed a project to improve inpatient insulin management through a combination of software, physician and nurse training, and evidence-based best practices. Dr. Tsimikas secured matching funds.
“Twenty percent of inpatients are diabetic, and with that there are additional components of care,” Dick says. “The team that worked on this inpatient glucose project is dedicated and very zealous, and from what we’ve already seen, the outcomes are proving the gift was a wonderful investment.”

The La Jolla-based pilot program that grew out of the Woltmans’ gift was so successful, the new insulin management protocol is now being adopted at all Scripps hospitals.

“The team that worked on this inpatient glucose project is dedicated and very zealous, and from what we’ve already seen, the outcomes are proving the gift was a wonderful investment.”

— Dick Woltman
Athlete Sidelines His Diabetes

As a professional beach volleyball player, Leonardo Moraes takes his health very seriously – eating right and exercising regularly. Since graduating high school in San Diego, the Brazil native has traveled the world participating in tournaments and building a name for himself as a competitive professional volleyball player.

But in October 2009, Leo’s health began to decline. It was during a tournament in Los Angeles that his vision began to blur, and he grew extremely thirsty and lethargic. As an athlete, he was used to getting these symptoms individually, but not all at once. When rest and rehydration did not help him bounce back, his family researched the symptoms online. Concerned about what it could be, they suggested Leo come home to San Diego to be examined.

Leo met with physicians at Scripps Memorial Hospital La Jolla, and within five minutes, he was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes. He was stunned.

“I felt guilty, wondering if I’d done this to myself and if it was somehow my fault,” says Leo. “My knowledge of the condition was limited, so I felt completely lost.”

The physicians and family friends, the Coppys, who coincidentally were involved with the Center for Metabolic Research, connected Leo with Athena Philis-Tsimikas, MD, corporate vice president of Scripps Whittier Diabetes Institute. With her support, Leo began to understand his diagnosis and take steps to get his health back on track.

She explained that although exercise often is prescribed as a way to manage Type 2 diabetes, athletes with Type 1 face special challenges. In patients with Type 1, exercise can cause blood-sugar levels to suddenly drop. Therefore, exercise, food intake and insulin injections must be carefully monitored and balanced.

“I was devastated and felt immense guilt. I didn’t know what would happen next,” says Leo. “But Dr. Tsimikas gave me the steps and supported me through the process. She gave me the knowledge to move on with my life.”

Thanks to his determination, his family and friends and the staff at Scripps Whittier, Leonardo is on the right path. In fact, he recently won the Pacific Beach Best, which he had won twice before his diagnosis.

Leo has now moved to Brazil and is the team manager of the Brazilian women’s volleyball team, which is preparing for this year’s Pan American Games and the 2012 Olympic Games.

Reflecting back on the last couple of years, Leo says he is extremely appreciative of the support he received from his family, friends and Scripps Whittier.

“My future looks bright,” says Leo. “I am living out my dreams and am incredibly grateful to everyone for believing in me. I wouldn’t be where I am without them.”

With help from the professionals at Scripps Whittier Diabetes Institute, Leonardo Moraes is back on the beach, keeping his eye on the ball.
The Future of Diabetes and Heart Care

The Scripps Cardiovascular Institute and Scripps Whittier Diabetes Institute will provide comprehensive, evidence-based heart care for patients with diabetes.

Innovation in Care

There is a clear-cut relationship between diabetes and cardiovascular disease. In fact, two out of three people with diabetes die from heart disease or stroke.

Scripps Cardiovascular Institute (SCI) will serve as a destination hospital for cardiac and metabolic care on the West Coast. Slated for completion in 2015, SCI will bring together a progressive alliance of health care professionals and the most sophisticated technology to provide comprehensive heart care for patients.

Combining the well-respected cardiology programs at Scripps hospitals, with programs from Scripps Whittier Diabetes Institute, the cardiovascular institute will provide rapid progress in the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of patients with cardiovascular and metabolic disorders. Located on the campus of Scripps Memorial Hospital La Jolla, SCI will interweave research, medical education and clinical care.

For more information about Scripps Cardiovascular Institute, visit www.scripps.org/SCI, or call 858-626-7482.
Bump, Set and Spiking Down Diabetes

When professional beach volleyball player Leonardo Moraes was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes at age 29, he blamed himself. But with the support of friends, family and the experts at Scripps Whittier Diabetes Institute, Leo realized the condition was not his fault. After diabetes specialists at Scripps Whittier introduced him to several treatment options and collaborated on a plan to complement his active lifestyle, Leo’s condition improved, and he was able to continue his passion for volleyball. Today, he is team manager for the Brazilian women’s international volleyball team and is closer to getting back on the court himself.

“I wouldn’t be where I am today without the support of my friends, family and Scripps,” says Leo. “Scripps Whittier helped me manage my diabetes and move on with my life. For this, I am forever grateful.”

Read more on page 10.