



The American Asthma Foundation's mission is to improve treatment, prevent, and find a cure for asthma.

2010 Annual Report

Dear Friend of the American Asthma Foundation,



Since joining the American Asthma Foundation (AAF) in April 2011 as Executive Director, I have been awed and amazed by the work we are able to do and the advances we are able to make in understanding this disease. This is no mean feat in a time when the population of people suffering from asthma continues to grow at an alarming rate and we don't know why. The AAF is well positioned in the broader field of asthma to bring real long-term benefits to the lives of the many who live with this chronic disease. I'd like to share with you a few observations as to why we can make a difference.

First, we have an unusual, some may say high-risk, approach to funding that focuses on searching for innovation in whatever field it can be found. Simply put, we are willing to support ideas that challenge conventional thinking, but may well not succeed. But even failure leads to learning, which may later be applied to other ways of looking at asthma or even other diseases.

Second, we have built a Scientific Review Board (SRB) unmatched in the breadth of its expertise and demonstrated excellence in basic science. This board guarantees that the awards we fund are of the highest caliber and have the potential to make a tremendous impact on the field.

Third, we have created a process that attracts and provides incentives for the best scientists to apply. Applicants who win one of our prestigious awards are rewarded both financially with multi-year grants and professionally through ongoing interaction with our Scientific Review Board and their peers so that they receive critical feedback and guidance as they pursue their ideas.

We are able to do all of this because of our generous supporters. We extend our thanks to each of them for sharing in a vision of a future where every breath matters.

The 2010 Annual Report that follows brings you up-to-date on the AAF's program, recent awardees, and ongoing successes. With your future support, we look forward to making additional advances in understanding asthma and moving our breakthroughs toward improved treatments, preventions, and ultimately a cure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Betsy Biern". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Betsy Biern, Executive Director
November 4, 2011

The American Asthma Foundation

The American Asthma Foundation (AAF) is the nation's premier organization committed solely to funding basic science research into the physiological processes that lead to asthma, a chronic condition affecting 25 million Americans. The AAF's mission focuses on the underlying causes of the disease so that better treatments for, as well as ways to prevent and ultimately cure, asthma can be developed. The AAF carries out its mission through an international grants program that supports high-risk, innovative research by top scientists usually not currently working in the asthma field. Our researchers come from vastly diverse fields including biology, epidemiology, immunology, medicine, pathology, pharmacology, physiology, chemistry, neurology, and imaging.

The AAF's Approach: Seek and Fund Excellence from Diverse and Unrelated Fields

The AAF's research program actively seeks out excellence and genius, and then provides these outstanding scientific minds with a multi-year period to carry out their projects. Within this framework, the AAF makes generous awards, usually for three years, at two levels: \$250,000 per year for established senior investigators and \$150,000 per year for "early excellence" researchers who are in the initial phases of their careers. Additionally, from time to time, the AAF issues "extension" awards which fund follow-on work to further advance promising ideas and move them on toward therapeutic application.

The annual grant-making process begins in the fall, when the AAF's Research Director, Dr. Bill Seaman, issues a call for applications to eminent scientific investigators in the U.S. and six other countries to apply their expertise and creativity to unlocking the mysteries of asthma and to advancing novel treatment approaches. Following the February submission deadline, the AAF's distinguished Scientific Review Board (SRB) evaluates the proposals received. After extensive and lively discussion at the AAF's annual scientific meeting held in May, the SRB recommends projects for new funding to the Foundation's Board of Directors.

Choosing new awardees is only one part of the AAF's annual meeting. Another important element is learning more about asthma from fellow awardees and from experts in the field. This aspect of our program is so important that AAF grants require the awardees to attend the annual meeting. The meeting kicks off with a keynote speaker, usually a scientist who can provide thought-provoking insights into the disease. Then AAF award recipients from the past three years share learning and key findings from their projects through talks and through "poster sessions" attended by SRB members, fellow awardees, trainees, and additional colleagues. At this time, the SRB reviews the progress of awards eligible for renewal and makes recommendations regarding continued funding for each project.

In 2010, the AAF awarded a total of \$9.1 million for new and renewing projects, while the Foundation's grants through the first nine months of 2011 amounted to \$7.4 million.

Spotlight on New Awardees

After the annual meeting, the spotlight shines on the new grantees. In 2010, the AAF funded 13 new awards, including eight Senior Investigator, four Early Excellence, and one Extension Award. The 2011 awards included eight Senior Investigator, three Early Excellence, and two Extension Awards. The AAF congratulates the winners of the new awards from each year.

American Asthma Foundation Research Awards: 2010 and 2011

2010

Senior Investigator Awards

Daniel J. Dumont, Ph.D., Molecular and Cellular Biology Research, Sunnybrook Research Institute at the University of Toronto, Canada

Evan E. Eichler, Ph.D., Department of Genome Sciences, University of Washington, Seattle, WA

Stuart B. Hooper, Ph.D., Monash Institute for Medical Research, Monash University, Victoria, Australia

Richard M. Maizels, Ph.D., Institute of Immunology and Infection Research, University of Edinburgh, Scotland

Andrew N. McKenzie, Ph.D., Medical Research Center Laboratory of Molecular Biology, Cambridge, England

Kevin J. Tracey, M.D., Laboratory of Biomedical Science, Feinstein Institute for Medical Research, Manhasset, NY

Dario A. Vignali, Ph.D., Department of Immunology, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, Memphis, TN

H. Eric Xu, Ph.D., Laboratory of Structural Sciences, Van Andel Research Institute, Grand Rapids, MI

Early Excellence Awards

Brian A. Cobb, Ph.D., Department of Pathology, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH

Andre Levchenko, Ph.D., Department of Biomedical Engineering, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD

Carla M. P. Maria Ribeiro, Ph.D., Department of Medicine, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, NC

Thaddeus S. Stappenbeck, M.D., Ph.D., Department of Pathology and Immunology, Washington University, St. Louis, MO

Extension Awards

Sven-Eric Jordt, Ph.D., Department of Pharmacology, Yale University, New Haven, CT

2011

Senior Investigator Awards

Daniel H. Conrad, Ph.D., Department of Microbiology and Immunology, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA

James H. Hurley, Ph.D., Laboratory of Molecular Biology, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, Bethesda, MD

Nancy P. Keller, Ph.D., Department of Medical Microbiology and Immunology, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI

John S. McMurray, Ph.D., Department of Experimental Therapeutics, University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, TX

Jonathan D. Powell, M.D., Ph.D., Department of Oncology, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD

Jeremy W. Thorner, Ph.D., Department of Molecular and Cell Biology, University of California, Berkeley, CA

Roger Y. Tsien, Ph.D., Department of Pharmacology, University of California, San Diego, CA

Early Excellence Awards

Edwin C. Jesudason, M.D., Department of Surgery at Children's Hospital Los Angeles, University of Southern California, and Department of Women's and Children's Health, University of Liverpool, United Kingdom

Carla V. Rothlin, Ph.D., Department of Immunobiology, Yale University, New Haven, CT

Yaping Tu, Ph.D., Department of Pharmacology, Creighton University, Omaha, NE

Irina A. Udalova, Ph.D., Kennedy Institute of Rheumatology, University of Oxford, United Kingdom

Extension Awards

K. Christopher Garcia, Ph.D., Molecular and Cellular Physiology Department, Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA

Kodi S. Ravichandran, Ph.D., Department of Microbiology, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA

The AAF's Accomplishments

Since its founding, the AAF's research program has provided over \$80 million to 155 awardees. The success of our program can be measured on both tangible and intangible levels. The "numbers" include:

- 26 current major advances through studies related to cell biology, inflammation, virus detection, parasites, genetics, and imaging;
- Four drugs in clinical trials -- which is unusual for a program this young;
- Over 300 investigators attracted to the field;
- Over \$50 million of external asthma-related funding leveraged by AAF investigators; and
- Over 300 peer-reviewed journal articles.

There are additional significant, but harder to quantify, benefits. We believe that the AAF's grants program has helped to make asthma an important topic for the application of basic scientific research, placing the disease model in the mix with cancer, diabetes, arthritis, and other immune disorders. There are now many more outstanding scientists thinking about asthma than before, due to both the enhanced status of the disease and the fact that most AAF-awardees and their trainees remain in the field.

Thanks to our Supporters

Without support from our many friends, the AAF couldn't fund the extraordinary research that is helping us better understand asthma and move us along the path to improved treatments and ultimately a cure. We are pleased to highlight two significant contributions received in 2011.

AAF Board Member, William K. Bowes, Jr., through his foundation, has pledged \$2.5 million to be paid over the five-year period beginning 2011. This substantial gift followed previous contributions totaling \$1.25 million between 2008 and 2010. The AAF is honored to be the recipient of Mr. Bowes' expertise and financial support. He has extensive experience in both business and philanthropy, with a significant emphasis on health-related operations. He founded Amgen, a leading biotechnology company, and US Venture Partners, a venture capital firm which made significant investments in medical-related companies. Mr. Bowes has a wide-ranging interest in venture philanthropy. He has been involved in start-ups as well as financing initiatives inside established institutions and making transformative investments in organizations at critical operating times. The AAF thanks Bill Bowes for his long-standing and generous support of our innovative research.

Beginning in 2011, the **American Lung Association (ALA)** partnered with the American Asthma Foundation to develop and fund the new American Asthma Foundation /American Lung Association Asthma Foundation Senior Investigator Award. The Senior Investigator Award—a three-year award valued at \$250,000 per year—will be given to a scientific investigator conducting novel and innovative research on asthma. The inaugural American Lung Association/American Asthma Foundation Senior Investigator Award recipient is Roger Tsien, Ph.D., a 2008 Nobel Prize winner in Chemistry and a Professor of Pharmacology, Chemistry, and Biochemistry at the University of California, San Diego.

The innovative research program developed by the AAF fits in well with the goals of the ALA. According to Susan Rappaport, ALA Vice President of Research and Program Services, “At the American Lung Association, working to find better treatments and cures for lung diseases is a cornerstone of our mission. We believe that our support of this new Senior Investigator Award exemplifies the type of quality research consistent with the American Lung Association’s lifesaving mission.”

Our thanks to the ALA for their commitment to research and their support of Dr. Tsien, and for helping us create a model for other partner organizations to leverage critical research dollars towards potential discoveries in therapeutic treatment.

Expanding the AAF’s Outreach and Communications

During the past year, the AAF has increased outreach efforts to more fully communicate with our friends and supporters. In the summer of 2011, we introduced *BreathingMatters*, the flagship newsletter of the organization, to share more detailed information about recent research advances, information about our top notch researchers, and features about our supporters. To be added to our *BreathingMatters* mailing list, please send us an email at info@americanasthma.org or call the office at 1-800-284-0989. We have also updated our website more frequently with news and information about our awardees and their activities. Check out www.americanasthmafoundation.org and click on “Recent Updates and News” to learn more. Finally, we continue to build our presence with social media through Facebook – please be sure to “Friend us on Facebook.”

New Ways to Reach New Supporters: The Combined Federal Campaign and State Employee Workplace Giving Campaigns

The AAF is excited to be a new participant in workplace giving campaigns starting in the fall of 2011.

The AAF is now an eligible charity for the 2011 Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). The mission of the CFC is “to promote and support philanthropy through a program that is employee focused, cost-efficient, and effective in providing all federal employees the opportunity to improve the quality of life for all.” According to the US Office of Personnel Management, the CFC is the world's largest and most successful annual workplace charity campaign, with more than 200 CFC campaigns throughout the country and internationally. It helps to raise millions of dollars each year to support eligible non-profit organizations that provide health and human service benefits throughout the world. We are pleased to be added to the roster of charities available for support by federal employees. Look for the AAF listing within the Health and Medical Research Charities of America federation.

The AAF is also now a participating charity for state employee workplace giving campaigns in 15 states through the Independent Charities of America federation.

For the AAF’s Most Recent Corporate and Financial Summary, See Next Page

American Asthma Foundation

Corporate Information

Board of Directors

Dr. Madeline K. Albright	Bernard A. Osher
Susan V. Berresford	Lewis S. Ranieri
William K. Bowes, Jr.	Anthony D. Romero
Steve R. Daetz, Vice Chairman	Marion O. Sandler, Chairman
	Diane B. Wilsey

Management

Charlotte E. Biern, Executive Director	Ellen E. Reintjes, Treasurer
William E. Seaman, Research Director	

Address and Contact Information

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 Website: www.americanasthmafoundation.org

Financial Information (a)

Statement of Financial Position at December 31, 2010 and 2009

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2009</u>
Assets		
Cash and equivalents	\$ 1,279,774	\$ 1,417,338
Contributions receivable	-	492,135
Other assets	19,808	27,016
Total assets	<u>1,299,582</u>	<u>1,936,489</u>
Liabilities		
Grants payable	481,800	380,580
Other liabilities	24,005	89,607
Total liabilities	<u>505,805</u>	<u>470,187</u>
Net assets	<u>793,777</u>	<u>1,466,302</u>
Total liabilities and net assets	<u>\$ 1,299,582</u>	<u>\$ 1,936,489</u>

Statement of Activities for the Years Ended December 31, 2010 and 2009

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2009</u>
Revenue		
Contributions	\$ 9,656,926	\$ 10,424,220
Interest and dividends	2,861	17,947
Total revenue	<u>9,659,787</u>	<u>10,442,167</u>
Expenses		
Research awards and other program expenses	9,862,054	10,462,612
General and management expenses	334,284	266,647
Fundraising expenses	135,974	274,618
Total expenses	<u>10,332,312</u>	<u>11,003,877</u>
Change in net assets	(672,525)	(561,710)
Net assets, beginning of year	<u>1,466,302</u>	<u>2,028,012</u>
Net assets, end of year	<u>\$ 793,777</u>	<u>\$ 1,466,302</u>

(a) Financial Statements audited by Armanino McKenna, LLP, Certified Public Accountants and Consultants