

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**FOUNDATIONS COMBINE TO PROVIDE A LARGER PLATFORM
FOR PATIENT COMMUNITY**

(Pittsburgh, PA) -- The Foundation for Mitochondrial Medicine (FMM) and the United Mitochondrial Disease Foundation (UMDF) are excited to announce an agreement to combine and advance their synergistic missions of advancing research, education and patient support for treatments of mitochondrial disease. FMM made this decision after careful strategic consideration for opportunities to generate greater critical mass and serve a greater number of patients and families.

Atlanta-based FMM has been dedicated to supporting the development of the most promising research and treatments for the many forms of mitochondrial disease. The foundation was formed by parents of patients with mitochondrial disease and medical experts. Since its relaunch in 2010, FMM has focused on raising awareness for mitochondrial disease, fueling connections to related diseases and funding treatment-oriented research. In addition to hosting and sponsoring a variety of awareness and informational programs to help further its mission, FMM has co-funded research projects with partners like the Alzheimer's Drug Discovery Foundation and the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research.

"This is an exciting opportunity for the community at-large to unify and become stronger together," said Laura Stanley, Executive Director of FMM. "Consolidation and integration is the right thing to support the patient community and to grow the collective voice for all mitochondrial disease patients." Stanley said that FMM is thrilled about the opportunity to join with the UMDF. "Our goal was to secure a like-minded relationship to harvest the plantings of FMM's good work, and UMDF is the perfect organization to carry on the FMM legacy."

Since 1996, UMDF has provided education and support to patients and families, has advocated in favor of issues that impact the entire mitochondrial disease community and has awarded more than \$13 million in research towards treatments and cures.

Brian T. Harman, President and CEO of UMDF, said the organization is honored that FMM chose UMDF to carry on the FMM legacy. "We recognize the tremendous work done over the years by FMM for the scientific and patient community," Harman said. "We are grateful for this opportunity because FMM's priorities align with UMDF's mission." In welcoming FMM, Harman said the combination of the organizations will clearly benefit the entire patient community because both focus on treatments and cures for mitochondrial disease.

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On January 1, 2019, the daily operations at the Foundation for Mitochondrial Medicine (FMM) will transfer to the United Mitochondrial Disease Foundation (UMDF).

ABOUT MITOCHONDRIAL DISEASE

Every 30 minutes, a child is born who will develop a mitochondrial disease by age 10, although the actual number of children born with the disease is thought to be much higher. More and more adults are being diagnosed with a mitochondrial disease. Recent research indicates that one in 200 people harbors a genetic mutation that can lead to mitochondrial disease in them or their offspring. Most patients suffer symptoms for years before they are accurately diagnosed with a mitochondrial disease. Mitochondrial diseases result from the failure of the mitochondria, which are located in the cells of our bodies. Mitochondria are responsible for creating more than 90% of the energy needed to sustain life and support growth. When mitochondria fail, less energy is produced causing cell injury or cell death. On a larger scale, organ systems begin to fail. The disease is often debilitating. In some cases, it may result in death. Adult onset is becoming more and more common. There is no cure for mitochondrial disease.

ABOUT THE UMDF

Founded in 1996, the United Mitochondrial Disease Foundation (UMDF) works to promote research and education for the diagnosis, treatment and cure of mitochondrial diseases and to provide support for affected individuals and families. Since its inception, the UMDF has funded more than \$13 million in research, making it the leading non-governmental contributor of grants focused solely on mitochondrial disease. The UMDF, based in Pittsburgh, PA, is a national organization, represented around the world by thousands of members. For more information about mitochondrial disease or the UMDF, visit [**www.umdf.org**](http://www.umdf.org)

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