



In Memoriam

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Keith Famie
Executive Producer
Visionalist Entertainment Productions
28345 Beck Road
Wixom, MI 48393

January 10, 2018

Dear Keith,

On behalf of the Michigan Parkinson Foundation's Board of Directors and those we serve, I want to thank you for your commitment to produce a documentary on Parkinson's disease (PD). It is a disease that receives minimal media attention and it is often perceived to be "an old person's disease". We are grateful for the opportunity to dispel myths about PD and to create more awareness of Parkinson's and the programs available to help improve the quality of life for those living with this chronic disease. I applaud your efforts and would be happy to assist you in the development of this project.

The Michigan Parkinson Foundation (MPF) was established in 1983 and is the premier education and support organization in Michigan for people with Parkinson's disease, their care partners, and the physicians and allied health professionals that diagnose and treat PD patients. Our focus is to provide direct patient services and education for people with Parkinson's and their families. Additionally, we fund research into the mechanisms underlying the disease and therapeutic strategies aimed at reducing the burden of illness.

Parkinson's disease is a neurodegenerative progressive disease that has no known cure. It is the second most common neurodegenerative disorder. Currently there are 35,000 people in Michigan who have Parkinson's disease and the incidence is growing. **It is estimated that within 13 years, 70,000 people in Michigan will have Parkinson's.**

The average age of **Parkinson's onset is 58**. If an otherwise healthy individual with no other chronic disease is diagnosed with PD at the age of 58, the life expectancy for a male is 80 and a female is 84. While the symptoms can be treated with medication, there is no treatment to slow the progression of the disease. Generally people do not die from Parkinson's but in advanced PD, they are often wheelchair or bed bound. They are dependent upon a spouse or family member for assistance with activities of daily living such as bathing, dressing, meal preparation, medications, transferring from bed to chair, toilet, and wheelchair. Two thirds of those diagnosed are male; often requiring the spouse to be a caretaker. Typically, this coincides with the time period when the spouse is battling their own health issues related to aging.

Dedicated to People Living with Parkinson's

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248.433.1011 • Fax: 248.433.1150 • 800.852.9781 • www.parkinsonsmi.org



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Recognizing that people with PD often live for 20 to 25 years after diagnosis, the MPF offers a series of free education programs developed to help patients maintain an optimal quality of life for as long as possible. We also deliver programs for care partners and provide assistance and referrals to community resources.

The MPF provides financial assistance for in home respite care and costly medications, funds and administers 71 PD support groups in Michigan, provide updates on the latest treatment options, funds research grants and provides pro-bono legal assistance.

Keith, thank you for contacting me. Please let me know how I might assist you. I look forward to meeting and working with you.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mary Sue Lanigan".

Mary Sue Lanigan
Chief Executive Officer

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