



Mesothelioma Research Foundation of America

December 2015  
Winter Edition

## Message from Foundation Executive Director, Elizabeth Ann Paul



I hope this newsletter finds you and your family well during this holiday season. As I reflect on

another great year of fundraising, I am reminded of the very special people who have gone above and beyond in making a difference. Whether you have spent countless hours planning events, donated money or items for raffle, worked in the office, participated in the events, or any combination of those, we want to thank you for being apart of the solution in developing new treatment options for mesothelioma. All of the diligent efforts towards making the events a success have not gone in vain. The donations generated are instrumental in funding research into the development of new medicines that we can all be proud of.

Year after year, the events held in benefit of the Mesothelioma Research Foundation of America have grown. Much of the credit goes to our friends at the California State Pipe Trades, the Southern California Pipe Trades District Council 16 and the San Diego Building & Construction Trades Council.

We kicked off this year's fundraising with the California State Pipe Trades Aim to Cure Mesothelioma Clay Shoot in Birdslanding, CA. Thanks to the continued dedication of the newly elected CA State Pipe Trades Executive Director, Greg Partch, Retired Executive Director Rodney Cameron and Foundation Board Member Jim Kellogg the shoot was a success. Everyone had a great day on the course, breaking targets for a great cause and generating approximately \$75,000 while doing it. What a great result, THANK YOU!

Southern California Pipe Trades DC 16 followed up with an amazing effort of their own, holding the 13th Annual Mesothelioma Golf Invitational. The event saw a large turnout and one of their highest netting efforts in its 13 year history, bringing in over \$110,000! This is all thanks to the powerful leadership of DC 16 Business Manager, Mike Layton and DC 16 Director of Organizing, John Ferruccio. DC 16 used their momentum gained in the Invitational and followed up with the Southern California Aim to Cure Mesothelioma Clay Shoot and generated an additional \$40,000. We cannot thank Mike Layton, John Ferruccio and the folks at DC16 enough. Year after year, they have gone above and beyond and the results speak for themselves.

The San Diego Building & Construction Trades Council Business Manager, Tom Lemmon once again presided over the 33rd Annual John S. Lyons Memorial Banquet honoring an old friend while acknowledging colleagues' dedication to labor. Tom Lemmon, UA Local 230 Plumbers and Pipefitters Business Manager and JOHNS member Mike Hartley, UA Local 230 retired Business Managers, and JOHNS members, Nico Ferraro and Kirk Crosswhite, have dedicated their lives to labor and have continued their commitment by supporting worthy causes that benefit their brothers and sisters!

We have also seen increases in donations in memory of a loved one. We are grateful for the honor of being chosen to commemorate their lives and will continue to be good stewards of their trust. I can assure you that all donations raised are being used with the utmost of care and are truly making a difference.

This year, the Chairman of our Medical Advisory Committee, Dr. Parkash Gill, was awarded the Research Innovation Award at the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center. Dr. Gill's accomplish-

ments in identifying and localizing cancer causing proteins and developing new treatment options are being recognized by his peers at USC Norris, as well as by other Universities and treatment facilities outside the Los Angeles area. Treatment facilities at the University of Chicago, University of California, Davis and others are ready to provide their patients with the treatment options currently being developed by Dr. Gill and his team at USC Norris. Mesothelioma patients now have somewhere else to turn, with medicines such as EPh-B4 given in conjunction with chemotherapy, quickly becoming a better alternative.

By the time you read this, planning for our 2016 efforts will be under way and we are ecstatic to report that the Roger Hamilton Memorial Golf Tournament will be back! This is all thanks to Local 16 Heat & Frost Insulators and Allied Workers Business Manager, Mel Breshears. We cannot thank Mel enough for taking on the task. Roger Hamilton, his dear wife Cindy, Retired California State Building Trades President Bob Balgenorth, and Foundation Board Member Jim Kellogg spent countless hours making the event possible and a success year after year. We look forward to working with Local 16 Insulators in continuing that success. We are so pleased and grateful to have the event back!

Our 2015 collaborative efforts resulted in raising approximately \$300,000. 100% of that total will go directly towards research, as all costs continue to be privately underwritten. Again, I would like to thank you, the reader, our private donors, event sponsors, as well as our dear friends Mike Layton, John Ferruccio, Jim Kellogg, Sid Stolper, Shane Rucker, Jerry Neil Paul and of course Dr. Parkash Gill, whose research and efforts made the clinical trials a reality.

Sincerely,  
*Elizabeth Ann Paul*



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**If you or a loved one has been diagnosed with this devastating illness and would like help, please call 1-800-909-MESO (6376) and speak with one of our volunteers.**

We're on the web!  
[www.mesorfa.org](http://www.mesorfa.org)

Please Remember The Mesothelioma Research Foundation of America In Your Will

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## California State Pipe Trades: Aim to Cure Mesothelioma Clay Shoot



The June 2015 "California Pipe Trades Aim to Cure Mesothelioma

Clay Shoot, hosted by Foundation Board Member, Retired U. A. International Pipe Trades Representative and California Fish & Game Commissioner, Jim Kellogg, kicked off this year's fundraising efforts and was a great success, netting \$75,000 for mesothelioma research! Once again, the event saw a great turn out of over 180 participants who were blessed with beautiful weather at the Birdslanding Hunting Preserve and Sporting Clay facility near Concord, California. Representing the Foundation at the event were Board Members, Jim Kellogg and Jerry Neil Paul, and Assistant Executive Director, Shane Rucker.

After a fun filled day on the course the shooters gathered for lunch and the always anticipated raffle of prizes. Before the festivities though, Jim Kellogg thanked everyone who attended and spoke about the importance of staying involved to continue raising awareness of mesothelioma research. He then introduced Jerry Paul who gave an update on Dr. Parkash Gill's progress in developing new treatments for patients diagnosed with mesothelioma. Highlighted was the progress of drug Eph-B4 in the FDA process, as well as the interest shown by other treatment facilities, such as University of Chicago and the University of California, Davis in treating their mesothelioma patients with the drug. With the support of participants in events such as "Aim to Cure" advances in mesothelioma treatment options will be a reality.

As always, 100% of the money raised during the "California Pipe Trades Aim to

Cure" and other events, will go toward mesothelioma cancer research. With these sizable donations we can be assured that Dr. Gill's mesothelioma cancer research at USC/ Norris Comprehensive Medical Center will be moving in the right direction. Thank you to all who participated and made the shoot a success!



(left to right) Foundation Board Members Jim Kellogg and Jerry Neil Paul, welcoming shooters at the gates.

## Southern California Pipe Trades District Council 16: 13th Annual Golf Invitational



Southern California Pipe Trades District Council 16 held their 13th Annual Golf Invitational in Alta

Vista, California on July 20, 2015. Successful would be an understatement in describing this year's event. Founding Board Member, Jerry Neil Paul, Chairman of the Medical Advisory Committee, Dr. Parkash Gill, Executive Director, Elizabeth Ann Paul and Assistant Executive Director, Shane Rucker were on hand to witness a great turn out of golfers and supporters. Together we raised over \$110,000 for research into this terrible disease, with 100% of the donation going directly towards research!

After a warm day on the course, Event Organizer, John Ferruccio got the evening under way, thanking the sponsors who turn out year after year to support this worthy cause. He then asked Jerry & Elizabeth Paul to join him and together they thanked the participants who have made the event what it is today. Jerry informed guests of the roots of the Foundation, the partnership with DC16 and the good that has come of the partnership.

With the development and submission of two separate drugs to the FDA Clinical Trials process, the successful treatment of mesothelioma patients at USC Norris with the most recent drug Eph-B4, and Dr. Parkash Gill's nomination for the Research Innovation Award at USC we all have so much to be proud of.

Dr. Parkash Gill, then spoke of the promise that Eph-B4 has shown in lab studies, as well as in patient clinical trials conducted at USC Norris that there has been actual shrinkage of malignant tumors after being provided the treatment. The findings are so promising that Dr. Gill has confirmed treatment facilities such as University of Chicago, University of California at Davis, and others have vowed to offer Eph-B4 to their patients. Also, large pharmaceutical companies have expressed interest and have provided additional funding and resources to help push the research and development of new drugs to the next level. This is truly an amazing and exciting time to be a part of something great.

The continued success seen at the Golf Invitational and in other events held by DC16 for the Foundation's benefit, would not be possible without the support and dedication of some very special people. People such as, DC16 Business Manager, Mike Layton, Event Chairman and Organizer, John Ferruccio, Honorary Event Chairmen Jim Kellogg and Sid

Stolper, and Committee Members Ray LeVangie, Jerry Neil Paul, Elizabeth Ann Paul and Shane Rucker, have all done and given so much for the cause. We cannot thank you all enough.



(left to right) Assistant Executive Director, Shane Rucker, DC16 Event Organizer, John Ferruccio, Foundation Board Member Jerry Neil Paul, Executive Director Elizabeth Ann Paul and Chairman of the Medical Advisory Committee, Dr. Parkash Gill.

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## John S. Lyons Memorial Banquet



The 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual John S. Lyons Memorial Banquet was held on September 12, 2015 in San Diego, California and raised \$5,000 for the Mesothelioma Research Foundation of America.

Every year the JOHNS come together to honor an old friend, by recognizing today's Labor Leader of the Year while at the same time raising money for local charities and research centers. The Mesothelioma Research Foundation of America is honored to have been chosen as one of the benefactors of this year's event, as well as in past years.

Chairman of the Medical Advisory Committee, Dr. Parkash Gill, and Assis-

tant Executive Director, Shane Rucker attended the event together on behalf of the Foundation. Dr. Satchin Panda of the Salk Institute spoke of his interesting research into our body's biological clock before Dr. Gill was given the opportunity to speak on his research. Dr. Gill updated the JOHNS supporters on progress being made by the Mesothelioma Lab at USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center. Guests were brought up to date on the research and development of cancer treatment, Eph-B4, and the fantastic promise it has shown in clinical trials studies. Dr. Gill also highlighted the fact that the proteins needed to make the drug are manufactured in the Mesothelioma Lab in San Diego, which is helped funded by events such as the John Lyons Banquet. Dr. Gill also informed supports that the development of additional treatment options are underway and are a direct result of the fund-raising events.

Everyone at the Foundation would like to thank the President of the JOHNS and the San Diego Buildings Trades Business Manager, Tom Lemmon, UA Local 230 Plumbers and Pipefitters Business Manager Mike Hartley, UA Local 230 retired Business Managers, and JOHNS members, Nico Ferraro and Kirk Crosswhite, and the rest of the JOHNS for their commitment to making mesothelioma a disease of the past!

(left to right)  
Assistant Executive Director, Shane Rucker and San Diego Building Trades Business Manager, Tom Lemmon



## Southern California Pipe Trades District Council 16: Aim to Cure Mesothelioma Clay Shoot



The Mesothelioma Research Foundation of America would like to congratulate and

thank the Southern California Pipe Trades District Council 16 for organizing another great event for a worthy cause! This year's District Council 16 Aim to Cure event saw a great turnout of 90 shooters and generated approximately \$40,000 for mesothelioma research! With the Foundation's costs privately underwritten, 100% of the money generated at the event will go directly to mesothelioma research! Representing the Foundation at the event were Founding Board Members, Jim Kellogg and Jerry Neil Paul, Executive Director Elizabeth Ann Paul, Chairman of the Medical Advisory Board Dr. Parkash Gill and Assistant Executive Director Shane Rucker.

After a great day of shooting sporting clays in the foothills of the Angeles National Forest participants gathered for lunch, the always popular raffle of prizes and to learn how their hard earned donations are helping in the development of

new treatments. Founding Board Member Jerry Neil Paul joined DC 16 Organizer John Ferruccio in thanking sponsors and individuals who attended the events year after year. Executive Director Elizabeth Ann Paul then informed the sponsors how their contributions have helped fund Dr. Parkash Gill's research lab at USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center, which has resulted in the development of new treatments that are showing promise in clinical trials. Dr. Parkash Gill continued by highlighting how treatments such as Eph-B4 target cancerous cells while leaving healthy tissue unharmed, making Eph-B4 safer than conventional treatments. Dr. Gill also relayed the news that research facilities such as UC Davis, University of Chicago and others have committed to providing their mesothelioma patients with the option of Eph-B4 as a treatment.

The Foundation would like to personally thank all of those who organized and supported this year's Aim to Cure events. Without the support and organizing skills of people such as DC 16 Business Manager Mike Layton, DC 16 Director of Organizing John Ferruccio and Retired International Pipe Trades Representative Jim Kellogg these types of events would not be possible.

**WE THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR  
CONTINUED SUPPORT AND  
DEDICATION!!**



(left to right) Board Member, Jerry Neil Paul, Assistant Executive Director, Shane Rucker, UA Local 761 Business Agent Greg Lewis and UA Local 761 Organizer, Adolph Navarro.

**Help Us Update Our Mailing List—To help us update our mailing list and to be cost-effective, please notify the office if you change your address or if you no longer wish to receive this newsletter.**

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## USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center Honors Dr. Parkash Gill with the Research Innovation Award



On October 10, 2015, USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center bestowed upon Dr. Parkash Gill the prestigious Research Innovation Award for his

lifelong dedication to medicine and developing new treatments for cancer. In addition to the award, an article published by USC Norris titled "Building a Cell Blocker", highlighted his achievements and commitment to science. We would like to take a moment to applaud Dr. Gill, the Chairman of our Medical Advisory Committee and our friend.

Throughout his career Dr. Gill has worked tirelessly in his quest for better treatment options for various forms of cancer. In the article, "Building a Cell Blocker", Dr. Gill's painstaking research into angiogenesis and his discovery of the receptor protein Eph-B4, was highlighted as spurring the development of new treatments that have "shown to shrink colon, lung, breast, glioma, melanoma, prostate and Kaposi's sarcoma tumors". These treatments are now being realized as viable treatment options for mesothelioma patients participating in clinical trials at USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center.

Angiogenesis is a process in which new blood vessels are formed but is also a part of the process in which tumors switch from benign to a malignant state. By learning which proteins play a key role in the angiogenesis process, Dr. Gill learned how they interacted with one another to spark mutation into a cancerous tumor. Through this process he also learned which proteins inhibited angiogenesis, leading to his "uncovering of protein EphB4 as being present on many types of tumors" and development of proteins to block the deadly interaction. From there, a new potential treatment is born for further research, testing and development.

While not all treatment options that are currently used as mainstream treatments, or are currently being developed, will work for all patients, the article notes that the new treatments developed by Dr. Gill "appear to be safe for use in humans and living up to its promise of inhibiting tumor growth in patients with a variety of tumor types". USC Norris Director of Phase I Drug Development, Dr. Anthony El-Khoueiry, noted "We have had patients whose tumors progressed on chemotherapy and they go on the treatment and it stops shrinking. There have been actual shrinkage that we can measure and that is rare".

There are plans to take Dr. Gill's medicines, such as Eph-B4, further in the FDA Clinical Trials process and administer it to patients diagnosed with other cancers, in addition to mesothelioma. Patients diagnosed with non-small cell lung cancer, pancreatic cancer, colorectal cancer, head and neck cancer, hepatocellular carcinoma and gallbladder cancer are be-

ginning to receive Eph-B4 treatments. Doctors at USC also plan to study its effectiveness against a form of leukemia. In addition to USC Norris' plans of expanding the patient base, large treatment facilities across the United States have taken note of the developments made at USC. Facilities such as the University of Chicago, University of California, Davis and others, have vowed to offer their patients the treatments developed by Dr. Gill and his team at USC. Large pharmaceutical companies are also interested in the research and have provided funding and resources for additional research.

We are amazed and proud of what Dr. Gill has accomplished throughout his career and what he continues to do in researching and developing new treatments for mesothelioma patients. As we have said time and time again at our Fundraising events and in past newsletters, he has truly done amazing things on a very small budget compared to the money spent by large pharmaceutical companies to develop cancer treatments. The process of a new medicine going through the necessary steps of the FDA approval process can be long and arduous. With government funding sporadic and not always available, the continued support for Dr. Gill and his team is not only very much appreciated but it is absolutely necessary to move new treatment options forward for mesothelioma cancer victims.



The Mesothelioma Research Foundation of America has a mission: fund research that will lead to the quickest cure for mesothelioma. Mesothelioma, a cancer of the lining of the lungs caused by asbestos exposure, has very few treatment options at this time. Since the year 2001, the Foundation has funded the opening of the Mesothelioma Laboratory under the supervision of Dr. Parkash Gill at the USC/Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center in Los Angeles. Since the lab's inception Dr. Gill has received FDA approval from the U.S. Government to conduct Clinical Trials using new mesothelioma treatments he has developed in the laboratory, whose research is 100% funded by the Foundation. A recent example of the research being done by Dr. Gill, and the direct results of the donations received, is the submission and approval from the FDA to use EPH-B4 in Phase I Clinical Trials. We are all very excited at the possibilities of a more effective treatment for patients suffering from mesothelioma!

For tax purposes, we are a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, I.D. #33-0956493