



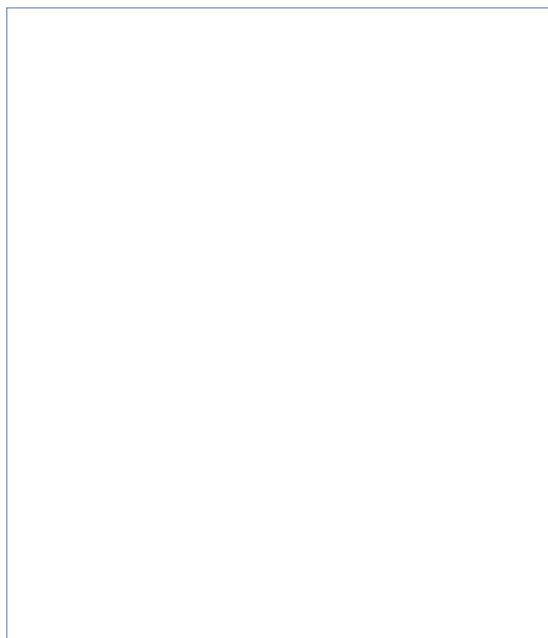
November 5, 2005

Celebrate the Science! with PRF at the 2005 Night of Wonder Gala in Boston, Massachusetts

Mark your calendars now for The Progeria Research Foundation's 2005 Night of Wonder fundraising benefit at the beautiful new Boston Convention Center. Our theme this year is "Celebrate the Science!", where we will toast the tremendous scientific accomplishments of PRF and the exciting future of developing treatments and the cure, made possible in large part by the money raised from Night of Wonder events. The evening promises to be unbelievable!! We will be having a Super Silent Auction, a Razzle Dazzle Raffle, music provided by the World Premier Band, an Over the Top Live Auction and many more Surprises! Under the enthusiastic direction of our Co-Chairs Kim Paratore and DebbiePonn, you don't want to miss this evening.

Email us at PRFNOW05@yahoo.com if you can help with auction items, share contacts for potential corporate sponsorships or suggest new people to add to our invitation list.

We look forward to seeing you at NOW05!



The Progeria Research Foundation

www.progeriaresearch.org

Winter 2005

The Next Big Step – Clinical Studies for Children with Progeria

The Progeria Research Foundation is taking our next major step forward in the challenge to help children with Progeria; we are partnering with The National Institutes of Health (NIH) to conduct longitudinal clinical baseline studies of Progeria.

Story continued on Page 4



The Nighbor family with the core clinical team:
L to R back: Steve, Josh and Sandy Nighbor, Drs. William Gahl, Wendy Introne, Melissa Meredith, and Ann Smith
Bottom L to R: Michaela and Megan Nighbor with Dr. Leslie Gordon

In Their Own Words... First Family to Participate Raves about the Program.

In February, 4-year-old Megan Nighbor was the first child to participate in the longitudinal studies. We asked her parents, Sandy and Steve, how they felt about the week-long process: *We left totally impressed with Leslie and all of the wonderful, caring staff at NIH, from the nurses, support team for the Progeria protocol, doctors, researchers and the staff at The Children's Inn. We (mostly Megan) had some long days, shed some tears, learned a lot along the way and have all the confidence our visit will make history for Progeria someday!*

The experience has left us exhausted BUT regenerated with the feeling GREAT things are about to happen in the very near future! After meeting the "elite" team that is working towards finding a

treatment or cure for Progeria, you can't help feeling that they WILL DO IT!! Everyone that "Dr. Bill" [Gahl] had recruited was so supportive, they made you feel like family and that is exactly how we felt when we left, like we were leaving a "new" family.

A special THANKS to Megan's big brother Josh and big sister Michaela - Mom, Dad & Megan could NOT have made it through without ALL their love and encouragement - They were awesome!!

We would encourage every parent that has a child with Progeria to HELP by participating in the clinical study. The more information we can give the researchers - the better! - It's your best way to beat the disease!"

The Progeria Research Foundation

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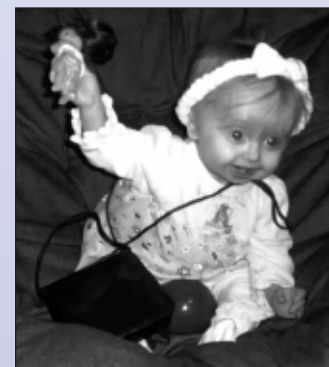
Together we WILL find a cure!



To learn more about how you can help, contact us:
info@progeriaresearch.org
www.progeriaresearch.org
978-535-2594

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Meet Sarah Kennedy...



Thanks to PRF's tremendous outreach efforts in partnership with Spectrum Science Communications, and our Diagnostics testing program, Sarah is one of a growing number of children with Progeria who is being diagnosed early. This is critical for Sarah's medical care – PRF is giving her parents and doctors advice on treatment recommendations of aspirin for her heart, proper nutrition for growth and physical therapy to combat the stiff joints she will develop so she can continue to run and play with her friends. And her family is taking action to support research that will save her life. "At first I felt helpless, what could I do? The doctors said my child would die by her teens", said mother Cheryl, "But then I contacted The Progeria Research Foundation, and realized that by giving blood and medical records, I was helping promote the research for a cure." And Cheryl's family has joined the fight! Sarah's aunt held a benefit dance and silent auction in Tell City, Indiana February 19th

(watch for details in our next issue), and Sarah's grandfather is organizing a golf-scramble at Eagle Valley Golf Course in Indiana on April 22nd. *To learn more about Sarah, visit our web site at www.progeriaresearch.org.*

The 2005 Newsletters are sponsored by CVS/pharmacy... see page 6!



PRF's Mission:
To discover the cure and effective treatments for Progeria and its aging related disorders.

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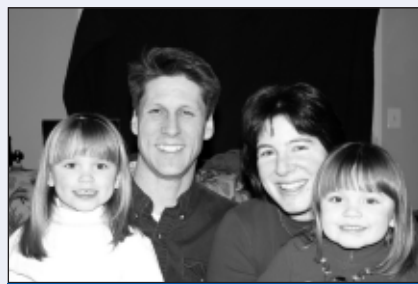
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The Gordon-Reed Family

Message from the President & Executive Director

Hello everyone,

It's so great to be back as PRF's Executive Director, having taken a few months to help my new daughters, Nadia, 5 and Svetlana, 4, settle in to their new home. A fond farewell to Kathleen Cody. We wish her well in her future endeavors.

2005 is shaping up to be an incredible year of challenges and progress, all of which I am ready to tackle with all of you - our devoted board of directors, staff and supporters.

With each new issue of our newsletter, I am so pleased with the progress and intense activity we can tell you about, leaving no doubt that your donations are used well!

- The PRF- NIH partnership for our newest project, the longitudinal studies, is vital to our movement toward treatments and a cure.
- We have six active research projects this year - a record number!
- More funding is being poured into our research-related programs, the Cell & Tissue Bank, Medical & Research Database, and Diagnostics Testing. These programs are now well established and growing as people become more aware of PRF and Progeria, and consequently the highest rate ever of children are being diagnosed, and at earlier ages than ever before.

Our shorter-term goals, all designed to build the foundation towards finding a cure, are all being realized.

Thank you to the families and children with Progeria, our volunteers and our donors, for continuing to help us reach new heights of achievement and giving us the tools needed to always strive for more.

Sincerely,

Audrey Gordon, Esq.
 President, Executive Director



PRF in the News!
Worldwide Coverage Continues...

Seattle Post-Intelligencer



The September 16th (2004) issue of the Seattle Post-Intelligencer featured a very Special Report: "A Time to Live - A Boy Embraces Life as a Rare Disease Hastens His Aging." The article presents a heartwarming personal look at a year in the life of Seth Cook and his family. Wonderful details about Seth's days at school, fishing with his dad, and even his thoughts on heaven captured the hearts of thousands of readers.

"My house in heaven has got lots of rooms for people, and some for pets. And it has a zero-gravity room," he says. "You go hunting for gummy bears and chocolate rabbits. And when you fish, you're guaranteed three a day."

The article describes the effect of the gene mutation that causes Progeria, and potential for Progeria research to help millions of aging adults. It also provides a link to the PRF web site. After the article was published, the Seattle Post-Intelligencer received hundreds of e-mails and voice-mail messages from readers who were moved by Seth's story.



On January 30th, The New York Times Magazine published a multi-page, detailed article on Progeria and PRF. The story, "Racing with Sam," highlights the challenges faced by the Gordon and Berns family upon learning of Sam's diagnosis of Progeria. The piece also chronicles PRF's success of bringing the disease into the forefront of the news and the scientific community, leading up to the discovery of the Progeria gene.

From her unique position as both mother and scientist, [Gordon] has assembled a powerful group of collaborators to push this rare disease to the front of the research agenda...

"Everyone talks about how fast we're going," Gordon said ... "but the truth is, we're not going fast enough."

CNN Weekend



We hope you tuned in to CNN Weekend on February 5th to watch the live interview with PRF Medical Director Dr. Leslie Gordon and CNN anchor Christine Romans. The piece focused on Leslie, her son Sam and the accomplishments of The Progeria Research Foundation, and brought awareness of Progeria and PRF to millions around the world!

"It's an amazing story of your little boy", says Romans... "the path this disease has led you in... you've been able to really make some headway into finding out what causes this disease and really investigate it."

"Well, it is a rare disease," said Dr. Gordon. "But what's very interesting about Progeria is that these children - who all die of premature heart disease at an average age of 13 years - help researchers to investigate heart disease and also premature cellular aging... by providing funding for research, by raising dollars to help researchers, to help these children, we're also providing researchers with the ability to find out more about heart disease and aging."

Want to read more about the articles and TV interview? Go to http://www.progeriaresearch.org/prf_in_news.shtml.

The Next Big Step – Clinical Studies for Children with Progeria

Continued from page 1

Progeria is a disease process that affects many systems of the body – blood vessels, joints, bones, and skin among them. In the future, we will need to measure the effects of new treatments on these different systems as quickly as possible – perhaps one system will be improved in a few weeks or a month, where another system will not show improvement for years.

How will we know whether a treatment is working to help or delay disease? This is how...

We are bringing children with Progeria (and their parents) to The National Institutes of Health Clinical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, USA (near Washington, DC) for one week. During that week, high-level specialists and the latest technology are used to perform baseline testing to understand as much as possible about Progeria. These clinical experts represent many specialties including cardiology, physical and occupational therapy, dermatology, dentistry, endocrinology, audiology, ophthalmology and genetics. By gathering this baseline information, our understanding of Progeria is expanding rapidly.

Why are PRF and NIH doing this?

We believe that the best way to move toward treatment for Progeria is to understand what the disease is doing and where each child is in the disease process. This will help us to assess whether a particular treatment is right for each child when one becomes available, and to know whether a treatment is working to delay or reverse the disease. By starting now, we will be months and possibly years ahead of schedule when a new treatment is ready to be implemented. We believe new treatments will get to the children faster because the baseline studies will already be completed.



3D imaging can tell us more about the facial structures in Progeria than ever before

Will the children sleep at the hospital at night?

The children sleep one or two nights in the Clinical Center, but most nights they sleep at the Children's Inn (<http://www.childrensinn.org/>) across the street from the Clinical Center and return to the hospital during the day for testing. The Children's Inn is a wonderful place to stay, and makes families feel right at home throughout the week.

Will doing this ensure that each child gets into a treatment protocol in the future?

Because any treatment can be restricted for unforeseen reasons, we cannot guarantee each child's participation. We will learn what the restrictions are as each treatment is assessed. By participating now, each child is in the system with all of the preliminary information we'll need to enroll him or her into any appropriate treatment protocol. That saves LOTS of time!

Who is involved in the clinical studies?

PRF is working with an interdisciplinary NIH team representing multiple institutes to conduct the studies. This includes the lead institute, The National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI), along with the National Heart Lung and Blood Institute, the National Institute of Child Health and Human



Dr. Richard Cannon, clinical director, division of intramural research, NHLBI and Gloria Zalos, RN work with Megan and Mom to discover new ways to measure vascular health in Progeria.

Development, the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, the Dermatology Branch of the National Cancer Institute, the National Eye Institute, and the clinical center Rehabilitation Medicine and Nutrition Services. The NIH has many years' experience with this type of medical study and together we

have assembled a team of highly trained physicians to care for the children. The Principal Investigator is Dr. William Gahl, Clinical Director of the NHGRI. Dr. Leslie Gordon, Medical Director for PRF, is an associate investigator, and is heavily involved in the study design and implementation.

Is there a new treatment now?

PRF has treatment recommendations for cardiac care, nutrition and physical therapy/occupational therapy, but there is no new treatment now. We are looking at several treatment options, such as drug and genetic therapies. At the present time it is impossible to predict when or if clinical trials of new treatments will become feasible. But we can say that we are working as hard as we can towards the ultimate goal of saving children with Progeria.

What costs are involved?

NIH is covering the cost of all of the testing and most of the other expenses (flights, lodging, food, etc.). PRF is picking up any costs NIH does not cover. There is no financial obligation to any family involved in the testing.

Where do I go to learn more?

The Progeria study is also outlined on the web at: <http://www.clinicaltrials.gov/ct/gui/show/NCT00094393>

If your child has Progeria and you wish to enroll in the study...

Please contact Dr. Leslie Gordon at The Progeria Research Foundation, lgordon@progeriaresearch.org, to find out more and to schedule your visit.

PRF Funds More Projects for 2005 – a record year for research funding!

PRF has now funded 14 grants for Progeria-related research projects performed in 9 states and 3 countries – in just 6 years!

January 2005: To Dr. Karima Djabali, PhD, Columbia University, New York, New York

Defining progerin dominant negative effects on the nuclear functions in HGPS cells



Dr. Djabali will conduct a fascinating series of experiments aimed at demonstrating the direct relationship of the mutant protein progerin resulting from the genetic defect in Hutchinson Gilford Progeria Syndrome to the numerous important binding partners within the nuclear compartment. Identification of any alteration in protein-protein interaction caused by the mutant product will provide clues as to the biological mechanism of disease in Progeria. This work will also provide the basic data needed to lead to potential treatments.

Dr. Djabali is Assistant Professor at the Department of Dermatology at the Columbia University, College of Physicians & Surgeons. She is involved in molecular genetic studies of genetic related disease and applies a wide range of approaches such as molecular biology, cell biology, biochemistry and proteomics.

December 2004: To Robert D. Goldman, PhD and Dale Shumaker, PhD, Northwestern University Medical School, Chicago, Illinois.

The Effects of the Major Mutation on Human Lamin A's Function in DNA Replication



Dr. Goldman and Shumaker seek to determine the process by which mutations in the Lamin A gene alter nuclear functions thereby causing the premature aging effects seen in children with Progeria. Their experiments will shed light on the basic mechanisms responsible for the aging-related disorders in the children. Previous studies from the Goldman laboratory have shown that the accumulation of mutant lamin A protein inside cells is responsible for changes in the cell nucleus, from a normal rounded appearance to a non-rounded highly convoluted shape. As the cells nuclear shape changes it appears that the cell stops growing and copying its DNA. They are now trying to understand why the DNA copying system in Progeria cells goes awry. This information is critical to determine ways to combat the progression of the disease.

Dr. Goldman is the Stephen Walter Ranson Professor and Chairman of Cell and Molecular Biology at Northwestern University Medical School. His research has focused on the dynamics of nuclear lamins during cell cycle, examining the relationship between their structure and function. He is an NIH member of Molecular Approaches to Cell Functions and Interactions and serves on the Human Embryonic Stem Cell Advisory Board for the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation. He has worked as an instructor and director in cell and molecular biology at the Marine Biological Laboratory, Woods Hole, Massachusetts.

Dr. Shumaker is a postdoctoral fellow of Cell and Molecular Biology at Northwestern, and has worked with Dr. Goldman studying nuclear lamins since 2001.

PRF Scientific Workshop Participants Produce Great Science for Progeria!

One of the most gratifying outcomes of our scientific meetings on Progeria is generating excitement and new Progeria research among the attending scientists. This is how the research field of Progeria mushrooms, as we see more and more high-level scientists producing data that will help to better understand Progeria and develop treatments in the future. In March 2005, PRF workshop participants published new data:

Reversal of the cellular phenotype in the premature aging disease HGPS. Published online on March 6, 2005 in Nature Medicine (www.nature.com)

Cells from patients with Hutchinson-Gilford Progeria Syndrome (HGPS) can be made healthy again, according to findings by scientists at the **National Cancer Institute**, part of the National Institutes of Health. Using specially modified short segments of DNA, NCI researchers **Paola Scaffidi, PhD**, and **Tom Misteli, PhD**, reversed the defects seen in HGPS cells by eliminating the lamin A protein that is faulty in HGPS. By demonstrating that HGPS cellular phenotypes are reversible, this study brings scientists one step closer to curing this devastating childhood disease.

"We set out to ask whether these cellular changes associated with Progeria are permanent or can be reversed," said Scaffidi. The researchers designed a "molecular Band-Aid®," said Misteli (a chemically stable DNA oligonucleotide – so the cell wouldn't be able to degrade it.) One week later, the mutant lamin A protein had been eliminated and more than 90 percent of progeria cells looked normal; and the activity of several genes that are misregulated in HGPS patients were also restored to normal. "It's amazing that we could take a sick cell and a few days later it's healthy and ready to divide again," said Misteli.

He noted that these results demonstrate a proof-of-principle that the cellular effects of Progeria can be reversed, meaning his laboratory's method might someday be used as a therapeutic strategy.

Decreased levels of "good" cholesterol in children with Progeria may contribute to premature heart disease. Adiponectin – a hormone that regulates the metabolism of fat and sugar – may be helpful in finding treatments. *The Journal of Pediatrics, March 2005*

A team of researchers led by **PRF's Medical Director and Tufts U School of Medicine Assistant Professor Leslie Gordon, MD, PhD**, discovered that children with Progeria in their mid- and later years have decreased levels of HDL cholesterol – or "protective" cholesterol – and adiponectin, a hormone that regulates the metabolism of fat and sugar. Both factors work to remove fat from plaques in arteries, and the lower levels may contribute to accelerated plaque formation. "All children with Progeria die between the ages of 6 and 20 years from heart failure or stroke," said Dr. Gordon. "Studying heart disease as it relates to children with Progeria can help us better understand how atherosclerosis will affect the aging population while also helping these precious children."

"These findings are important for the potential development of a treatment for Progeria," said senior study author **Alice H. Lichtenstein, DSc., Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging at Tufts University**. "If reliable drugs used to increase HDL cholesterol and adiponectin levels become available, they may prove beneficial in preventing the progression of atherosclerosis in children with Progeria."

"These data also reinforce the importance of adipose tissue as an active tissue which secretes hormones which can influence metabolic function of the entire body – a concept important not only for Progeria but also for more common diseases such as obesity and diabetes", comments author **Mary Elizabeth Patti, MD, Joslin Diabetes Center, and Department of Medicine, Harvard Medical School, Boston, MA.**



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CVS/pharmacy®

Sponsors PRF's 2005 Newsletters!

We are proud to announce that The Progeria Research Foundation has received a \$9,800 grant from CVS/pharmacy to fund the cost of publishing and distributing all issues of our 2005 newsletter - WOW! By reinvesting in the areas it serves, CVS/pharmacy has become an active participant in helping people live longer, healthier, and happier lives – goals that we are also working towards, on behalf of all children with Progeria.

CVS/pharmacy giving programs are widespread. They reach infants and the elderly; they help students and parents, children and grandparents. They engage people from all walks of life in almost every community the company serves. With a history of supporting enhanced healthcare services, improved approaches to education, and the creation of healthier communities in which to live, CVS/pharmacy is a welcome new partner on The Progeria Research Foundation team.

Garth Brooks' Teammates for Kids Foundation Awards Grant, Honors PRF at Annual Appreciation Party

The Progeria Research Foundation was chosen as one of four national charities to be recognized at the Garth Brooks Teammates for Kids Foundation Annual Appreciation Party, held January 15-16, 2005. PRF co-founders, Dr. Scott Berns and Dr. Leslie Gordon, and their son Sam, traveled to Las Vegas to participate in a sports-star-studded weekend of activities. The Teammates for Kids Foundation awarded 250 grants to children's charities in 2004 and it was a tremendous honor to be selected as one of the four charities to be featured at this year's event.



l-r: Kevin Queally, Leslie Gordon, Jen Queally and Don Johnson, Teammates for Kids Foundation Executive Vice President, are all smiles as they pose with the "check"

Last Fall PRF received a \$20,000 grant to help fund our Diagnostics Testing program. "This grant has come at a much-needed time and will assure that the PRF Diagnostics Program stays up and running" said Dr. Gordon at a Teammates for Kids Foundation event at the Charles River Country Club on September 17th, 2004. "More and more families are coming to PRF needing a definitive diagnosis for their children and this grant will allow us to promptly meet the needs of these families."

Founded in 1999 by legendary country music star Garth Brooks, the Teammates for Kids Foundation provides financial assistance to children's charities. Criteria for a grant include "having a record of outstanding service in effectively and efficiently delivering programs and

services that improve the lives of needy children". The Foundation enlists the participation of professional baseball, hockey, and football players who contribute a predetermined sum based upon selected categories of on-field and on-ice performance.

And, to quote Garth Brooks himself, "One hundred percent of the money generated by the players and donors goes to the kids. That's not a goal, it's a rule."

Many thanks to Kevin and Jen Queally, co-founders of the New England Chapter of Garth Brooks Teammates for Kids Foundation, and New England Committee member Maura Craig for their support. Find out more about this wonderful organization at www.teammates4kids.com



Sam and Garth Brooks received a standing ovation to an audience of 800 when Garth gave Sam a special gift – star pitcher Curt Schilling's Red Sox Jersey!



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Miracle Makers

People like you...doing what they can, for the sake of helping children with Progeria.

PEDALING FOR PROGERIA

Tim Hilgers, a Vice President at Alto Dairy Cooperative in Markesan, Wisconsin, raised over \$2300 by soliciting pledges from co-workers. He then biked over 1000 miles to honor the pledges. Tom works with Steve Nighbor, father of 4-year-old Megan Nighbor, whose friends and family have raised thousands of dollars to help find a cure for Megan and other children with Progeria. Way to go, Tim!

AND THE BAND PLAYED ON...



Henry Lucas, Peter Strout, Dan Tremblay and Devid Nevil have been playing cool Jazz together for years, always for fun. So when two ladies, who were Peter's friends, asked them to play for their 50th

birthdays, the band insisted they wouldn't take a fee. The women were persistent, so Peter suggested they make a donation to PRF instead. They donated \$750 – COOL!

PENNIES FOR PROGERIA

Thank you to Jen Pinkham and the Peabody, Massachusetts Recreation Department for donating the proceeds from their fall Penny Carnival. Along with some bills and other coins, Jen presented PRF with 6,296 pennies – WOW! Total raised from the event was \$175.

BID HIGH AND BID OFTEN FOR PRF!

Harvard University Business School's section D, Class of 2005 raised over \$940 through a charity auction where their fellow students bought lots of fun items. How innovative – you'll all do well in business when you graduate!

IT PAYS TO BE CASUAL FOR PRF

Carl Andersen of Chestnut Hill Realty in Boston, Massachusetts raised \$1,405 during a "Dress Down for Charity" day he organized on behalf of PRF. Can you get your company to do the same?!

PLAY BALL!

It's World Champions New England Patriots country here in Massachusetts, and Robert Hrabovsky got into the spirit of giving when he donated \$1,000 he won from his "football fantasy" winnings. And to top it off, his company John Hancock is matching it – SCORE!!!

12-YEAR-OLD LUKE FROM ENGLAND HOLDS RAFFLE

"I raised this money after seeing a TV programme about Progeria", says Luke, "It touched me so much I wanted to do something to help them. I put together a raffle between my family and friends and raised 21 pounds." How wonderful!

CLASSMATES OF 8-YEAR-OLD CHILD WITH PROGERIA CASH IN ON BOTTLES AND CANS FOR PRF

Mackenzie and Jordan of Massachusetts are two lovely young ladies who wrote: "We would like to help with the research and a cure, in honor of our friend Sam." They raised over \$100 by collecting cans and recycling them. Thank you, girls!

LONDON SCHOOLGIRLS FUNDRAISE FOR PRF

Cheers! to the group of year 8 girls from the North London Collegiate School who held bake sales, auctions, sponsored swims and other events, raising over 57 pounds. "We hope this money will help the charity in some way", they said. Of course it will – every donation helps us come closer to finding the cure for Progeria, thank you so much!



Your Donations make it all Possible...

2005 marks a record year for the advancement of Progeria research. We have six active research grants in progress, and our Cell & Tissue Bank, Medical & Research Database, and Diagnostics Testing programs are running full speed ahead. Because of our accomplishments and goals, families and their doctors turn to PRF for medical support, and PRF is regarded worldwide as the leader in Progeria research and education. None of this would be possible without your generous donations. Please donate today.

- Thank You, Everyone!