

**November 10, 2016**

**For Immediate Release**

**CARLY CARES PARTNERS WITH THE PROGERIA RESEARCH FOUNDATION TO  
FUND A PROGERIA RESEARCH GRANT**

Carly Cares is partnering with The Progeria Research Foundation (PRF) to co-fund a two-year research grant through PRF's Medical Research Grant Program. The funding will support Dr. Roland Foisner, Professor of Biochemistry at the Medical University of Vienna, Austria and Deputy Director of the Max F. Perutz Laboratories (MFPL) in Vienna, Austria. The MFPL is a research center established by the University of Vienna and Medical University of Vienna. His project is entitled "Contribution of endothelial cell dysfunction to cardiovascular disease in progeria and implications for diagnostic and therapeutic targets" Hutchinson-Gilford Progeria Syndrome ("Progeria") is caused by a genetic mutation that produces an abnormal protein called progerin. Progerin makes cells unstable leading to the process of premature aging in Progeria. Dr. Foisner and his team will be investigating how progerin damages blood vessels and how it affects heart function.

"We are thrilled to continue our partnership with Carly Cares in our vital research grant program", states Meryl Fink, Executive Director of PRF. "Since 1999, PRF has funded Progeria-related projects conducted in 13 countries throughout the world. This research has led to crucial discoveries about Progeria, heart disease, and aging. Our partnership with Carly Cares allows innovative new research in Progeria to continue to thrive and give the world ever-increasing hope for treatments and a cure."

Progeria is an extremely rare genetic condition with features of premature and accelerated aging. All children with Progeria die of the same heart disease affecting millions of normal aging adults (arteriosclerosis), but instead of occurring at 60 or 70 years of age, children with Progeria may experience strokes and heart attacks before the age of 10 years. The intellect of children with Progeria is unaffected, and despite physical changes in their young bodies, these remarkable children are intelligent, courageous, and full of life.

"We could not be prouder to help fund this grant," said Heather Kudzia, President of Carly Cares and mother of six year old Carly Kudzia, a child with Progeria for whom the organization is named. "Carly Cares exists for this very purpose - to raise money to fund research that will extend lives and positively impact the children and their families. We look forward to working even harder, with the amazing support of our community, to continue to fund future research."

**About Carly Cares**

Carly Cares is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization whose mission is to support children and families suffering from rare genetic diseases including Progeria, and the medical researchers who fight these diseases. Carly Cares, and its army of volunteers known as "Team Carly Q", hold several fundraising events each year and have funded medical grants, a national reunion for Progeria families and lodging for extended medical visits. Carly Cares is focused on growing the awareness and local rare disease research in NW Ohio/SE Michigan. For more information about Carly Cares or to make a donation, please visit [www.CarlyCares.org](http://www.CarlyCares.org) or [www.teamCarlyQ.com](http://www.teamCarlyQ.com).

**About The Progeria Research Foundation (PRF)**

The Progeria Research Foundation (PRF) was established in 1999 to find the cause, treatment and cure for Progeria – a rapid aging disease that causes children to die from heart disease or stroke at an average age of 14 years. In the past 17 years, research funded by PRF has identified the gene mutation that causes Progeria, and the first-ever drug treatment for children with Progeria. PRF continues to identify more children worldwide who can benefit from the programs and services that it provides, while helping advance research towards treatments and cure. To learn more about Progeria and what you can do to help, please visit [www.progeriaresearch.org](http://www.progeriaresearch.org).