

ANNUAL REPORT



2015



STRIVING TO WORK

Inside the QR CODES

Throughout Kessler Foundation's 2015 Annual Report are QR codes, which you can use to find more information on grants, publications, research, and employment initiatives. To access this information, download a QR code scanner or reader app on your mobile device. Open the app and place your mobile device over the QR code. Scan the code here, or visit <http://kesslerfoundation.wix.com/2015-annual-report>.



About Kessler Foundation

Kessler Foundation, a major nonprofit organization in the field of disability, is a global leader in rehabilitation research that seeks to improve cognition, mobility, and long-term outcomes, including employment, for people with neurological disabilities caused by diseases and injuries of the brain and spinal cord. Kessler Foundation leads the nation in funding innovative programs that expand employment opportunities for people with disabilities. For more information, visit KesslerFoundation.org.

Our Vision

Kessler Foundation leads the way in linking science and grant-making so that people with disabilities can lead more productive, independent, and fulfilling lives.

Our Mission

The mission of Kessler Foundation is to improve quality of life for people with disabilities through discovery, innovation, demonstration, application, and dissemination.

Annual Report Staff

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Dear Friends,

The year 2015 marked an important milestone—the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. We celebrated that anniversary with the Kessler Foundation National Employment and Disability Survey, the first survey of its kind. What made this survey unique? The respondents—more than 3,000 people with disabilities—provided valuable information on their personal experiences with employment.

And what did we find? Work is important to people with disabilities. Almost 69% are striving to work. Those who are already in the workplace are seeking more hours, or better jobs. Some are actively job-hunting, and others are preparing by getting the training, education, and rehabilitation they need to succeed in the workplace. And so, in this report we share how the Foundation's activities support the majority who are "striving to work" through research that identifies obstacles to leading full and productive lives, scientific advances that restore function, and collaborative programs that provide ways to overcome obstacles.

Foundation scientists were awarded more than \$9 million in 2015 for research projects aimed at finding new ways to restore function to people recovering from catastrophic illnesses and injuries. A major increase in funding for our work in human performance and engineering research has accelerated advances made through internal and external collaboration. A new research grant has enabled us to explore ways to help individuals with spinal cord injuries return to work as soon as possible.

The Foundation's grant-making continues to be a national example of innovation by funding sustainable programs, including social enterprises, faith-based initiatives, and public-private partnerships. In 2015, we awarded \$2.3 million to employment programs in the New Jersey area, and in Illinois, Florida, Missouri, and Maryland, to prepare people for the workplace by providing job training and education, and connections with employers.

Foundation research was widely recognized in professional and consumer media throughout the year. One example was an online video series by the renowned medical journalist Dr. Sanjay Gupta, which highlighted our cognitive research in MS and

stroke, and our robotics research involving testing exoskeleton-assisted walking in adults with recent strokes. Dr. Gupta's team filmed our scientists at work in our research-dedicated facilities—the Rocco Ortenzio Neuroimaging Center at Kessler Foundation, and our state-of-the-art Gait Lab. In the business media, we were pleased to be named—yet again—among the "Best Places to Work in New Jersey" and "Best U.S. Nonprofits to Work For." Also, we are proud to announce that the Foundation was ranked #5 in Fortune Magazine's new national list - "Best Workplaces for Recent College Graduates".

These successes are only achieved through the concerted efforts of our management team, our directors, and our Board of Trustees. With their guidance, 35 new employees were hired to support the rapid growth in research activities in 2015, and plans were finalized for a move to substantially larger space. Every department met its budgetary goals, and more than 50% of our research proposals were awarded. We remain committed to ensuring that 100% of your donations fund our initiatives and change the lives of people with disabilities.

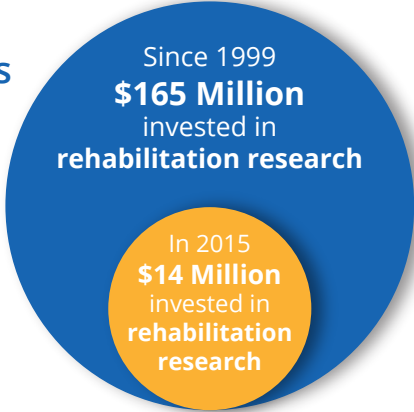
We encourage you to stay informed about the Foundation's many activities by liking us on Facebook and following @KesslerFdn on Twitter. You can also view our educational and entertaining videos on YouTube, and listen to our exciting new podcast series, "Inside Kessler Foundation" on SoundCloud.



Rodger DeRose

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read "Rodger DeRose".

Dollars Invested in Research and Programs
to improve the lives of people with disabilities



8 One of only 8 centers in the U.S. with federally funded Model Systems for Brain and Spinal Cord Injury.

14 One of only 14 TBI Model System centers, the Northern NJ Brain Injury System serves 100 new patients each year and follows 1,500 with chronic TBI.

16 One of only 16 SCI Model System centers, the Northern NJ Spinal Cord Injury System serves more than 120 new patients each year and follows 1,500 with chronic SCI.



306 media-related pieces generated for print, online news and video, broadcast TV, podcasts, scripts, and in-house brochures.

Google Device Searches

12,000
Mobile searches

6,000
Tablet searches

63,000
Desktop searches

S in **15** seconds **SOCIAL MEDIA**

Facebook

POSTS
498

ENGAGEMENT
10K
Likes/Shares/Comments

VIEWS
310K

Tweets

TWEETS
821

FOLLOWERS
3.3K

VIEWS
1.7M

YouTube

SUBSCRIBERS
286

VIEWS
9.6K

MIN. WATCHED
14.6K

SOUNDCLOUD

AUDIO TRACKS
21
posted in a 6 month period

PLAYS
545

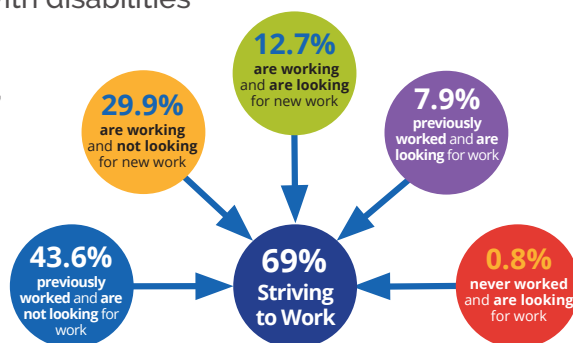
LISTENERS
in 24 countries

LEARNING ABOUT WORK FROM PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

In June 2015, we announced the findings of an important new report—the Kessler Foundation National Employment and Disability Survey. More than 3,000 respondents from across the country shared their experiences and aspirations, dispelling many common myths about people with disabilities in the workplace.

The findings are striking—nearly 69% of people with disabilities are taking at least one of the following actions: working, seeking a better position or more hours, actively job-hunting, networking with family and friends, or getting the necessary rehabilitation, education, and job training to prepare for employment. “We learned that work is important to people with disabilities,” said John O’Neill, PhD, director of Disability and

Employment Research at Kessler Foundation, and co-author of the survey. “Despite the challenging environment of today’s workplace, the survey shows that many are successfully overcoming obstacles to finding and maintaining jobs. While challenges persist, this survey has reframed the dialogue about disability and employment to focus on the progress being achieved, rather than the challenges to be overcome.”



The Kessler Foundation survey was funded by a \$500,000 grant to the University of New Hampshire Institute on Disability, whose experts conducted the

survey and analyzed the results. Ongoing analyses are extending the impact of the report on the decision-making process of policymakers, legislators, and philanthropic and advocacy organizations.

SUPPORTING STRIVING FOR WORK

Through targeted philanthropy, the Foundation connects people with disabilities who are striving to work with employers committed to diversifying their workplaces. In 2015, the Foundation awarded more than \$3 million to help people with disabilities transition to competitive jobs. Overall, the Foundation has distributed \$36 million to fund programs that provide skills acquisition and job placement for thousands of individuals with disabilities. Nearly \$1.6 million in Signature Employment Grants funded programs in four states—Florida, Illinois, Maryland, and Missouri.

(continued on page 7)

- *Bridging the Gap from College to Careers*, an initiative of the Florida Atlantic University Foundation, provides a professional workplace skills curriculum and other supports to facilitate the transition of college students with disabilities to employment.
- *Realizing Education and Advancement for Disabled Youth (READY)*, a program of Access Living of Metropolitan Chicago, consolidates available resources to transition students with disabilities to either college or employment.
- *The Maryland Customized Employment Project* improves employment outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities.
- *The Mercy Health Foundation's Healthcare Workforce Inclusion Model* places individuals with disabilities in new or existing job opportunities in St. Louis, Missouri.

"Because the need is so great, we focus our grant-making on programs based on collaborative models that have the potential to transition substantial numbers of people to the workplace," noted Elaine E. Katz, MS, CCC-SLP, senior vice president of Grants and Communications at Kessler Foundation. "Large-scale hiring can be achieved through partnerships involving corporations, community organizations, and vocational rehabilitation services. To further maximize the impact of our grants, we seek to fund programs based on models that can be replicated throughout the country."

Seven Community Employment Grants totaling \$600,000 were awarded to job training and employment programs in the New Jersey area. In addition, eight Special Initiative Grants totaling \$119,000 funded artistic, educational, and recreational activities for veterans and civilians with disabilities.

MONITORING NATIONAL TRENDS

Kessler Foundation, in partnership with the University of New Hampshire Institute on Disability, has issued a customized monthly report since 2011, based on data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics: National Trends in Disability Employment, also known as nTIDE.

Each month, the release of nTIDE—the only report of its kind—is widely anticipated by the disability community, as well as experts in employment trends and labor markets. Dr. O'Neill and economist Andrew Houtenville, PhD, provide analysis and commentary on the data for workers and jobseekers with disabilities, and answer questions from news outlets and government agencies.

"During the first eight months of 2015, the major employment indicators were strikingly positive for people with disabilities," noted Dr. O'Neill. "This may be a sign that they're finally starting to recover from the downturn of the Great Recession. We're looking carefully to see how things unfold in the coming year."

2015 KESSLER SOCIETY

Leadership gifts from Kessler Society members provide Kessler Foundation with a solid base of support. Kessler Society members propel scientific discoveries and fund innovative employment initiatives so that people with disabilities can re-imagine what's possible and realize the extraordinary. Year after year, these generous friends demonstrate a belief in our mission and a commitment to solidifying Kessler Foundation's role as a global leader in rehabilitation research and disability employment. Membership in the Kessler Society is extended to friends who make annual gifts totaling \$500 or more. For a complete list of 2015 donors, please scan the QR code or visit the online report.



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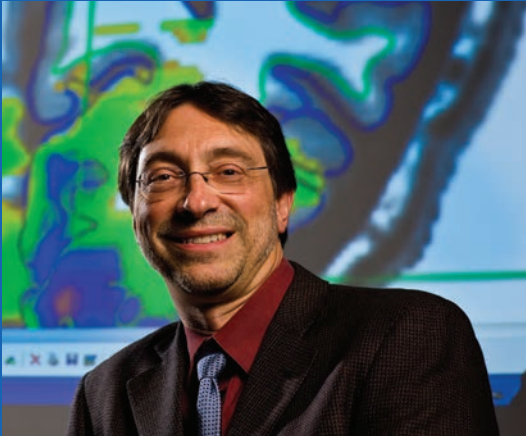
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“The findings of our 2015 Employment Survey confirm the work we do at Kessler Foundation. Our research spans the spectrum of recovery — restoring function so people can access education and training, and finding ways to help people return to work after disabling illness or injury.”



John DeLuca, PhD
Senior Vice President of Research and Training

REHABILITATION RESEARCH – THE CONTINUUM

Restoring Function, Preparing for Work, and Overcoming Barriers to Employment – the Pathway to Independence for People with Disabilities

Restoring Mobility through Technology

During 2015, the Foundation was awarded nearly \$9 million dollars, including substantial federal and state funding for our Human Performance and Engineering Research, led by Director Guang Yue, PhD. A multi-million-dollar federal grant funded an important new collaboration with the New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT): the Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center (RERC) on Wearable Robots. With this five-year grant, a joint team of Foundation researchers and NJIT bioengineers is developing the next generation of wearable robotic devices, and applying available robotic technology to improve mobility for people with spinal cord injury (SCI), Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, and stroke. “Robotic exoskeletons have fundamentally altered the way we approach rehabilitation,” said Dr. Yue. “As a result of these new RERC studies, we will see broader use of robotic exoskeletons in rehabilitation and the community.”

The RERC draws on the talents of scientists in Human Performance and Engineering

Research, Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Research, Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Research, Stroke Rehabilitation Research, and the Rocco Ortensio Neuroimaging Center at Kessler Foundation. “All the individual specialties are pulling together to improve recovery in different populations with a variety of disabling conditions,” Dr. Yue observed, “and this is reflected in our remarkable gains in external funding.”



Drs. Gail Forrest and Guang Yue in the Gait Lab

Preparing Children for Productive Lives

Five grants totaling \$3 million were awarded to the Foundation by the New Jersey Commission on Brain Injury Research (NJCBIR) in 2015 for studies that improve mobility, cognition, and psychosocial adjustment after TBI.

The largest of these NJCBIR grants funds research into balance dysfunction, an under-recognized cause of disability, according to Dr. Yue. Another grant enables Dr. Karen Nolan, senior research scientist in Human Performance and Engineering Research, to extend her expertise in wearable robots to children and adolescents with impaired mobility. The remaining grants support cognitive studies, in partnership with Children's Specialized Hospital.

"This NJCBIR funding is an important step toward identifying and addressing deficits in emotional processing, learning, and psychosocial adjustment in children living with brain injury," said Nancy Chiaravalloti, PhD, director of Neuropsychology, Neuroscience and TBI Research. "By discovering ways to improve their academic and interpersonal skills, they'll be better equipped to contribute at home, in their communities, and eventually, in the workplace—



that's the key to achieving real independence."

New technology is being applied to mobility rehabilitation through joint research with Children's

Specialized Hospital.

In addition to robotics,

3D printing allows researchers to create custom components for testing in children. "We're the first to study manual wheelchair propulsion in this population," said Peter Barrance, PhD, "and we're also testing a treadmill system that helps children develop a more efficient gait pattern."



Children's Specialized patient in a robotic exoskeleton

Regaining Function after Stroke

Karen Nolan, PhD, senior research scientist in Human Performance and Engineering Research, continues to study the Ekso GT, a wearable robot, in inpatients with one-sided weakness or paralysis after stroke. "Use of a wearable robot early in rehabilitation not only helps restore function to the paralyzed limb, it promotes a healthy and efficient gait," explained Dr. Nolan, "which may enhance the person's ability to participate in the community, access education and training, and find and maintain employment." Dr. Nolan is also testing the combination of functional electrical stimulation (FES) and repetitive training to improve gait in individuals with foot drop, a common complication after stroke.

Our advances in research are reaching U.S. and international stroke rehabilitation professionals, as therapists are being trained to administer the KF-NAP™ (Kessler Foundation Neglect Assessment Process) and KF-PAT™ (Kessler

Foundation Prism Adaptation Treatment), according to A.M. Barrett, MD, director of Stroke Rehabilitation Research. "In 2015, we trained therapists in Missouri, Ohio, and New Jersey to diagnose and treat spatial neglect. We also published an important neuroimaging study on reading impairment, a serious disability that has received little attention. These findings are an important step toward planning individualized treatments to address this major obstacle to recovery after stroke."



A.M. Barrett, MD, demonstrating Prism Adaptation Treatment

Overcoming Obstacles to Employment

Cognitive problems are often under-recognized as obstacles to community participation and employment. Important advances in memory research in TBI were published in 2015, underscoring the Foundation's practical approach to developing strategies that help



Dr. Nancy Chiaravalloti
Director

people perform everyday activities. "We conducted a randomized clinical trial of the modified Story Memory Technique© (mSMT), a cognitive intervention to improve learning and memory," said Dr. Chiaravalloti,

"and found improvements among adults with moderate to severe TBI. This study is the first Class I evidence for the efficacy of mSMT in this TBI population, and supports efforts to gain reimbursement for cognitive rehabilitation."

Cognitive research also attracted media attention in 2015. Two consumer videos featuring Helen Genova, PhD, research scientist, and Jeannie Lengenfelder, PhD, assistant director of TBI research, were produced for EveryDayHealth.com by medical journalist Dr. Sanjay Gupta. The topics were cognitive fatigue and emotional processing deficits, disabling conditions that can occur after TBI and with MS.



Drs. Helen Genova and Jeannie Lengenfelder

"The inability to perceive the emotions of others can lead to inappropriate responses," said Dr. Chiaravalloti, "adversely affecting relationships with family members, co-workers, and others." In 2015, we received three new grants for this important line of research, including funding for an International Progressive MS Alliance study with the University of Bordeaux.

Unemployment is a major problem among working-age people diagnosed with MS, which has negative consequences for their physical and mental health, as well as their standard of living. Lauren Strober, PhD, senior research scientist, studies why some people leave their jobs, and how others manage to stay in the workforce. "Fatigue and cognitive difficulties are often cited by individuals who leave the workforce," said Dr. Strober, "but symptoms alone do not account for the large drop in employment.



Dr. Lauren Strober
Senior Research Scientist

Through our research, we have identified other factors that influence these decisions, such as coping skills and perceptions of the benefits of employment. Finding ways to identify persons at risk for leaving work will lead to interventions that will help them stay employed."

Sharing advances through publications and conferences



91 Research Articles

4 Books/Book Chapters published

147 Research Presentations

To view a complete list of publications, scan the above QR code or go to <http://kesslerfoundation.wixsite.com/2015-annual-report/publications>

Improving Long-term Outcomes

"Spinal cord injury has effects that are long-lasting and far-reaching," noted Trevor Dyson-Hudson, MD, director of Spinal Cord Injury and Outcomes & Assessment Research, "and the spectrum of our research reflects that." In addition to developing ways to restore function, our researchers are studying the long-term outcomes for veterans with spinal cord injuries, the impact of early intervention to maintain employment, and the influence of factors such as race, ethnicity, and type of community.

Through the Northern New Jersey Spinal Cord Injury System (NNJSCIS) and the Northern New Jersey TBI System (NNJTBIS), the Foundation collaborates with federally funded SCI Model System (SCIMS) centers and TBI Model System (TBIMS) centers across the U.S. on research aimed at helping individuals live productive lives after catastrophic injuries.



Dr. Trevor Dyson-Hudson (right) with Canadian colleague Dr. R. Lee Kirby at the wheelchair clinic.

"Because wheelchair use is integral to the lives of many, we're conducting a collaborative study to see whether wheelchair skills training can



Check out our podcasts at
<https://soundcloud.com/kesslerfoundation>

help people maintain their participation in the community," said Dr. Dyson-Hudson, co-director of the NNJSCIS. "Connecting with consumers is also important," said Jeanne Zanca, PhD, MPT, senior research scientist in SCI Research. "In addition to our newsletter, Connections, we hosted eight SCI Grand Rounds this year—bringing experts to our SCI community. And to reach a wider audience, we distributed dozens of podcasts via our social media channels."

"Deficits in learning and memory are common in the TBI population," said Dr. Chiaravalloti, project director of the NNJTBIS, "and the impact can be severe. We're looking at new strategies to help individuals regain the cognitive skills they need to function at home, in school, and at work. We've also studied how culture and language affect rehabilitation outcomes, an important consideration given the diversity of people with TBI." More than 100 people attended "Taking Care of Yourself after Brain Injury", the conference hosted by the NNJTBIS. For the first time, those unable to attend were able to listen to podcasts via social media. "We also publish TBI News & Views, which features the practical perspectives of individuals, caregivers, and professionals," added Dr. Chiaravalloti.

Providing Pathways to Careers

The need for effective rehabilitation continues to grow, underscoring the increasing demand for trained scientists. In 2015, the Foundation added five postdoctoral fellows and 16 research assistants. Foundation scientists **Silvana Costa, PhD** and **Ekaterina Dobryakova, PhD** (right) received federally funded Switzer Research Fellowships. "Only six of these prestigious fellowships were awarded in 2015. This really speaks to the quality of our training program," said Dr. DeLuca.





In Washington, DC, president and CEO Rodger DeRose shared the findings of our National Employment and Disability Survey on C-SPAN's Washington Journal.

SURVEY: AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES "STRIVING TO WORK"



RODGER DeROSE
Kessler Foundation
President & CEO



IN THE NEWS



Dr. Nancy Chiaravalloti was interviewed on NJTV about her brain injury research by host Steve Adubato. View video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eol5k-Ctxfc>



Rehabilitation Research – the Continuum Scan the QR code or go to <http://kesslerfoundation.wixsite.com/2015-annual-report/rehabilitation-research-the-continuum>



Research Grants Received Listing Scan the QR code or go to <http://kesslerfoundation.wixsite.com/2015-annual-report/grants-received>



Program Center – Striving to Work Scan the QR code or go to <http://kesslerfoundation.wixsite.com/2015-annual-report/striving-to-work>



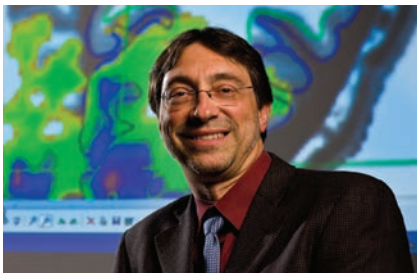
Program Center Grants Listing Scan the QR code or go to <http://kesslerfoundation.wixsite.com/2015-annual-report/grants-awarded>



Our most recent Baird Lecturer was MS researcher Hanneke Hulst, PhD, from the Netherlands, shown with Dr. John DeLuca, senior vice president of Research and Training.



Rodger DeRose accepted a custom t-shirt from artist Ronaldo Byrd, who participates in Arts Unbound, a local nonprofit that supports artists with disabilities, with funding from Kessler Foundation.



Dr. John DeLuca received the prestigious Benton Mid-Career Award from the International Neuropsychological Society.

In New York City, Dr. A.M. Barrett was interviewed by well known medical journalist Dr. Sanjay Gupta about her innovative research into hidden disabilities after stroke.



TBI is personal for Dan Mollino, who biked cross country to raise funds for brain injury research at Kessler Foundation.



On Disability Mentoring Day, our staff hosted students with disabilities from Horizon High in Livingston, NJ, providing a perspective on career paths.



Racers from around the world made a strong showing in the 15th annual Kessler Foundation Wheelchair 10K on Memorial Day in Ridgewood, New Jersey.



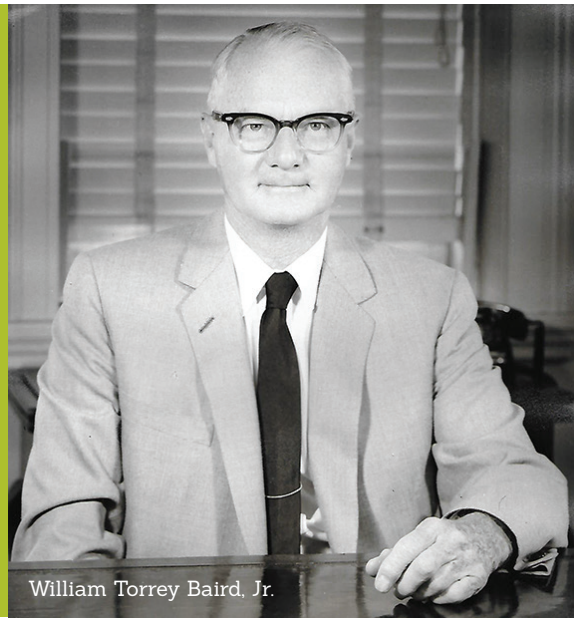
At the White House for the ADA 25th Anniversary celebration— Liz Lowenstein, board chair and Elaine Katz, senior vice president of Grants and Communications.



Dr. Karen Nolan was interviewed about her novel stroke research using the Ekso GT for a video by Dr. Sanjay Gupta on EveryDayHealth.com

“Our parents were very humble and generous people who understood the importance of giving back to the community.”

Collier Baird III



William Torrey Baird, Jr.

ONE FAMILY'S LEGACY: THE IMPACT OF ESTATE GIVING

The Baird family tradition of donating generously to Kessler Foundation exemplifies the power of planned giving to improve the lives of people with disabilities.

William Torrey Baird, Jr., who witnessed the wonders of medical rehabilitation as a soldier in World War I, joined Kessler's Board of Trustees in 1957. Upon his death, his wife Camille Baird gifted the Baird Family Estate in South Orange, worth \$400,000, to the Foundation. The donation established the Baird Visiting Educational Professorship, which enables us to invite distinguished clinicians, educators, and scientists to Kessler and contribute to the education of our pioneering researchers.

Mr. Baird's nephew, Collier W. Baird, Jr., furthered the family's commitment in 1995 by establishing a charitable remainder trust to benefit the Foundation. And in 2015, we received more than \$220,000 from the trust. We're using these funds to recruit people to participate in our research studies—which is essential to the

success of our clinical investigations. Through thoughtful planned giving, the Baird family has made a lasting impact on Kessler Foundation's innovative research, which translates into revolutionary treatments for stroke, multiple sclerosis, brain and spinal cord injuries, and other disabling conditions. The result of their multi-generational commitment is the development of more effective rehabilitation protocols that help children and adults with disabilities restore their mobility and their ability to think, learn, and remember.

“Our parents were very humble and generous people who understood the importance of giving back to the community,” says Collier Baird III, “especially to organizations that make a difference in the lives of people with disabilities, such as Kessler Foundation.”



Liz Lowenstein

“Liz gave us the critical impetus to apply our research—to put what we developed in science, into practice.”

A.M. Barrett, MD
Director, Stroke Rehabilitation Research
Kessler Foundation

LIZ LOWENSTEIN: COUNSELOR, DONOR, FUNDRAISER, AND BOARD CHAIR EXTRAORDINAIRE

As a rehabilitation counselor at Kessler Institute for Rehabilitation, Liz Lowenstein loved celebrating small victories with patients as they regained their independence.

After retiring from Kessler Institute, Mrs. Lowenstein wanted to continue helping people with disabilities. So she joined Kessler Foundation's Board of Trustees in 1992, and assumed the chairmanship in 2013. Her leadership has supported the advancement of rehabilitation research.

Mrs. Lowenstein was greatly impressed with Kessler Foundation's groundbreaking research on spatial neglect, a common, disabling complication of stroke that leads to poor rehabilitation outcomes. She also understood the importance of making our advancements available to the widest possible audience. To achieve this goal, she donated \$25,000 to fund a dedicated educational website (KFlearn.org) and an online training video based on the diagnostic and treatment protocols developed by our stroke team: KF-NAP™ (Kessler Foundation Neglect Assessment Process) and KF-PAT™ (Kessler Foundation Prism Adaption Treatment). She also helped raise another \$26,000 to complete the project.

More than 1,000 people a year benefit from KF-NAP™ in the Kessler system, according to Peggy Chen, PhD, research scientist in Stroke Rehabilitation Research. "Because of Liz's generosity, the benefits of our research are extending into clinical care here and abroad," said Dr. Chen. "Through the KFlearn.org website, more than 200 occupational and physical therapists, nurses, and speech language pathologists have accessed training—free of charge—on how to detect and treat spatial neglect." Our online resources have been accessed by professionals in 20 countries spanning four continents.

"Liz gave us the critical impetus to apply our research in acute care facilities such as Newark Beth Israel Medical Center, to put what we developed in science, into practice," says A.M. Barrett, MD, director of Stroke Rehabilitation Research. "She really believes in our work," adds Dr. Chen. "And we feel very grateful."

REVOLUTIONIZING REHABILITATION: NEW DISCOVERIES IN WEARABLE ROBOTS

Kessler Foundation, a leader in robotics research, hosted a demonstration and discussion on innovations in robotic exoskeletons for more than 150 community members, donors, scientists, and others interested in our research.

The Foundation is one of the few rehabilitation centers in the world to study three different wearable robots: Ekso, ReWalk, and Indego.

These devices enable people with weakness or paralysis in their legs to stand and walk. Former research participants, including U.S. Olympic ski jumper Nick Fairall, demonstrated how they utilize the devices, and Foundation scientists shared their latest findings on the application of exoskeletons in rehabilitation after spinal cord injury and stroke.

The potential for robotics to revolutionize rehabilitative care was the topic of an engaging panel discussion moderated by local author and broadcast journalist, Steve Adubato.



SETTING RECORDS AT STROLL 'N ROLL

Kessler Foundation's 2015 Stroll 'N Roll, sponsored by Biogen, Inc. and the Newark-based law firm Gibbons P.C., celebrated its most successful year ever.

More than 500 people of all ages and abilities gathered in picturesque Verona Park last fall to raise over \$152,000. Proceeds will be used to advance rehabilitation research and fund innovative employment initiatives that expand opportunities for people with disabilities.

"We're grateful to everyone who helped raise vital funds to change the lives of people with disabilities," says Rodger DeRose, president and chief executive officer of Kessler Foundation.

"The impact of their generosity is profound. Individuals are getting out of their wheelchairs and taking their first steps, regaining their driving skills, and improving their ability to think, learn, and remember. Restoring function is the first step toward fully participating at home, at work, and in community activities."



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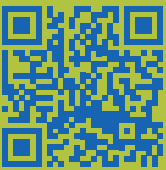


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CHANGING THE LIVES OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES through research in stroke, brain injury, multiple sclerosis, and spinal cord injury and by funding innovative programs that promote employment for people with disabilities.

