

Parkinson's Resource Organization 'Poised for Growth' with \$2M Bequest, Board Expansion

The Announcement, on World Parkinson's Day, Kicks off Full Slate of Parkinson's Awareness Month Activities

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Jo Rosen, President

(PRO) is 'poised for growth' as they kick off Parkinson's Awareness Month with the announcement of a major bequest and the debut of eight new [board members](#), further strengthening the organization which has experienced exponential growth since pivoting to virtual programming at the beginning of COVID-19.

Dramatically touched by the work of Jo Rosen and her team, a couple out of Los Angeles bequeathed \$2 million to Parkinson's Resource Organization with a call to action – “spread your life-changing impact on people with

Parkinson's and caregivers across the nation.”

“I distinctly remember this couple from work I did with them in 2018. The husband had Parkinson's; his wife was his primary caregiver. They wished to remain anonymous but through PRO they were able to immediately resolve some urgent care issues and improve their mental outlook on Parkinson's,” says Jo Rosen, Founder and President of PRO. “Their directive was clear – take your ‘personal touch’ model of care as far as possible, so others can be helped the way we were helped.

“We are very fortunate to be remembered in estates and wills from time to time,” states Rosen. “It encourages us to continue to push forward and dig deeper into what is working and what isn't while honing the very valuable resources we offer in the work we do ‘so no one is isolated because of Parkinson's.”

The bequest couldn't have come at a better time. PRO just finalized a significant board expansion, adding eight new board members and electing a new Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer to guide the organization through a period of intense demand for Parkinson's and caregiver resources.

“With the newest additions, we’ve nearly tripled the size of our board,” says Rosen. “This diverse group will help us meet today’s challenges – it’s no secret that we experienced explosive growth during the pandemic while restructuring our programs for the digital age. Despite the chaos, we grew our staff from two to seven, outgrew our office, and tripled program offerings. As we continue to evolve to meet constituent needs, our robust board will help us navigate these changes with intention and care.”

Board members include people with Parkinson’s, caregivers, and friends of the community with an impressive mix of business, communications, and medical expertise. Learn more about the Board below:

Jo Rosen (President) – Board president Jo Rosen has been on a 33-year mission working so no one is isolated because of Parkinson’s. Her past entrepreneurial Financial Management business background pairs well with her passion for helping families affected by Parkinson’s, even if the family was one, and that one was the person with Parkinson’s. Jo began this work because her late mother and husband were both diagnosed with Parkinson’s.

William Remery, Esq. (Vice President) – Longtime board member and elder law attorney William Remery has been elected Vice President. He brings a wealth of experience with elder law, probate, conservatorships, estate planning, and trust administration.

Jim Lawless, MBA (Secretary) – New board member Jim Lawless helps clients plan for financial independence through long term care and disability insurance. An ex-Marine, Lawless is a consummate volunteer devoted to giving back to his community.

Karen Fifer Ferry (Treasurer) – New board member Karen Fifer Ferry is a caregiver to a person with Parkinson’s. She brings 40 years of experience directing and advising finance, operations, and business strategy for regional and national health care corporations.

Howard Cohen, MD – New board member Howard Cohen is a longtime friend of the organization. Dr. Cohen is a board-certified and award-winning Hospice and Palliative Care physician with over 19 years of hospice experience in Coachella Valley and Southern California.

Neil Friedman – New board member Neil Friedman is a caregiver to a person with Parkinson’s. He brings extensive business experience as a furniture manufacturer and sales manager. His humanitarian outreach has made him the recipient of numerous awards including City of Hope’s Volunteer of the Year.

Richard Katz – New board member Richard Katz has a background in human resources, with a 35-year career in corporate HR and as a consultant for global firm Ernst and Young. After retiring, Katz formed a nonprofit, K9 Ambassadors, to support the disabled community with therapy dog services.

Michael Opell – New board member Michael Opell is a seasoned entrepreneur and business leader with experience leading, growing, and starting businesses. A proven problem solver, Opell also brings his unique perspective as a person with Parkinson's.

Shon Tomlin – New board member Shon Tomlin is an Emmy award-winning entertainment executive and founder of 1 Giant Mind, a technology nonprofit dedicated to bringing AI-powered training programs to universities and corporate clients like PriceWaterhouseCoopers, ADT, and UBS.

John White, KESQ-TV Palm Springs – New board member John White anchors News Channel 3 evening news. A family member of a person with Parkinson's, White is excited to bring his Emmy Award-winning journalistic experience to PRO.

Michael Lu – A board member since 2018, Michael is a young person with Parkinson's. Michael was diagnosed at a very young age. He has since been named the Anaheim Ducks' "21st Duck" for his work to raise awareness about young-onset Parkinson's.

Matthew Lu – A board member since 2019, Matthew is a young person with Parkinson's – like his brother Michael. Matthew was originally diagnosed in high school and has lived with the condition for almost a decade.

Kaya Kouvenon - A Board Member since 2008, former owner of LA Limousine Service, now retired.

April is Parkinson's Awareness Month. With support from the new Board, and for the first time since the 2020 pandemic shutdown, Parkinson's Resource Organization has a full slate of activities planned to raise awareness and celebrate the Parkinson's community. To learn more about Parkinson's Awareness Month activities, contact Eileen Lynch at (877) 775-4111 or eileenlynch@parkinsonsresource.org. Parkinson's Resource Organization is a nonprofit, tax-exempt charity 501(c)(3) tax ID: #95-4304276.

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