

2025 CRF International Conference Unites Global CHM Community for Research, Education, and Connection

Nearly 200 attendees from around the world gathered to advance research and support for those affected by choroideremia (CHM).

SPRINGFIELD, MA, UNITED STATES, July 9, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Choroideremia Research Foundation](#) (CRF) successfully hosted its 2025 International Conference in Bloomington, Minnesota, bringing together nearly 200 individuals, families, researchers, and advocates from across the globe to advance education, research, and community connection for those living with choroideremia (CHM).

Held from June 25–28, 2025, the four-day event featured expert-led sessions on the latest in CHM research, emerging treatments, and strategies for living with vision loss. Attendees heard from leading scientists and clinicians on topics including gene therapy, optogenetics, low vision technology, health and wellness, and financial planning for individuals and families affected by CHM.

"Attending the CRF International Conference always revitalizes and strengthens me as a CHMer. I gain a much greater understanding of the ever-changing and advancing CHM research," said H. Eric Hartman, CRF Director of Advocacy. "On a personal level, I cherish the meeting of new CHM families and rekindling the friendships I have made over the last 20+ years. I am so grateful for each and every one of them."

Conference highlights included:



CRF Board of Directors: John Trott, Yamil Rosete Rodriguez, Neal Bench, John-Ross Rizzo, Michael Mullen, Brian Mayer, Tara Cassidy-Driscoll, Aurelie Harp, Mary Porter, Eric Hartman, Rachel Oster, Sarah Thompson, Kathi Wagner, Thomas Driscoll

- Presentations from world-renowned researchers on topics such as RPE and photoreceptor transplantation, gene replacement therapies, and ongoing clinical trials.

- Opportunities for attendees to meet directly with genetic counselors and ask questions about genetic test results.

- Dedicated breakout sessions, including a female carriers discussion, hobbies & recreation talks, and small group forums designed to foster meaningful connections.

- Youth programming with activities tailored for younger attendees, including adaptive martial arts, a pajama party, pool time, and multiple outings to the Mall of America.

"If you're a CHMer, carrier, and/or parent of a CHMer, the CRF Conference is the place to be," said Cory MacDonald, CRF Engagement Director. "CHM can be isolating, but there's nothing like sitting down with those walking the same path. You'll connect with world-class researchers, gain tools to live better with CHM, and take part in fun, meaningful activities. There's simply no reason not to join us if you can!"

In addition to scientific updates, the conference prioritized building community, offering social events like the Welcome Reception and Conference Banquet, where participants shared experiences and celebrated the strength of the CHM community.

Recordings of most conference sessions will be made available on the CRF YouTube channel (@CureCHM) in the coming weeks, providing access to valuable information for those unable to attend in person. The Foundation encourages individuals to subscribe to the [Choroideremia](#)



Ask a Doctor Q&A Session with Dr. Malia Edwards, Dr. John Lueck, Dr. Katie Bales, Dr. Rachel Huckfeldt, Dr. Ian MacDonald, Dr. Joseph Porter & Dr. JR Rizzo



Cory MacDonald, CRF Engagement Director with CRF Family Members

[Research Foundation YouTube channel](#) to stay informed.

Looking ahead, the CRF plans to continue expanding its global impact through education, advocacy, and research funding, with the next CRF International Conference scheduled for 2027.

For more information about the Choroideremia Research Foundation and to access other resources, visit www.curechm.org.

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About Choroideremia:

Choroideremia (CHM) is a rare inherited form of blindness affecting approximately 1 in 50,000 people. Due to its x-linked inheritance pattern males are most severely affected with females usually experiencing much milder visual impairment. Symptoms begin in early childhood with night blindness and restriction of visual field being the earliest noticeable effects, eventually progressing to complete blindness. An estimated 6,000 people in the United States and 10,000 in the European Union are impacted by Choroideremia. There are currently no approved treatments for Choroideremia. For more information, visit curechm.org/#choroideremia

About the Choroideremia Research Foundation Inc.:

The Choroideremia Research Foundation was founded in 2000 as an international fundraising and patient advocacy organization to stimulate research on CHM. Since its inception, the CRF has provided approximately \$6 million in research awards and is the largest financial supporter of



A packed session at the 2025 CRF International Conference, where attendees gathered to hear the latest updates in CHM research and more.



Jeanette Bench, Loron Oster, and Carol Wheelock at the 2025 CRF Conference Registration Table

CHM research worldwide. Research funded by the CRF has led to the development of a CHM animal model, the pre-clinical production of gene therapy vectors currently in clinical trials, and the CRF Biobank which stores tissue and stem cell samples donated by CHM patients.

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