

# PD Avengers Announces Leadership Appointments

*New Board Members and Advisors Reinforce Global Efforts to End Parkinson's*

VANCOUVER, BC, CANADA, March 4, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [PD Avengers](#) — The Global Alliance to End Parkinson's Disease Association — has appointed two new board members and two internationally recognized medical advisors as it intensifies efforts to end Parkinson's disease.

Joining the board are [Esther Labib-Kiyarash](#) and [R. Bernard Coley](#). Named medical advisors are Ray Dorsey, MD, MBA and Michael Okun, MD. They join founding leaders Larry Gifford, Soania Mathur, MD, and Tim Hague Sr..

"Ending Parkinson's means closing gaps — in research, in access and in whose voices are heard," said Tim Hague Sr. "Esther and Bernard bring lived experience, community leadership and a deep commitment to equity. That keeps us grounded in making sure no one is left behind."

Labib-Kiyarash, a former hospital Director of Performance Improvement and Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality, was diagnosed with Young Onset Parkinson's at 47. Based in El Paso, Texas, she serves on multiple patient advisory boards and is a recognized research advocate and social media activist known as "ShakingInMyBoots1."

Coley, an executive with more than 50 years in the high-technology industry, is a care partner and research advocate focused on closing health disparity gaps and increasing Black participation in Parkinson's research.

"The science is also pointing us upstream — toward prevention and environmental drivers," said



Esther Labib-Kiyarash

Soania Mathur, MD. "Bringing Dr. Dorsey and Dr. Okun into advisory roles signals that we are serious about translating evidence into action. If we want fewer diagnoses in the future, we must confront root causes today."

Dorsey is the founding Director of the Center for the Brain & Environment at Atria Health and Research Institute and professor of neurology (part-time) at the University of Rochester.

Okun co-founded and co-directs the Norman Fixel Institute for Neurological Diseases at the University of Florida and serves as National Medical Advisor to the Parkinson's Foundation. Both are internationally recognized leaders in Parkinson's research and care.

"Parkinson's has been underfunded, underestimated and too often accepted as inevitable," said Larry Gifford, co-founder and president of PD Avengers. "It's not. With leaders like Esther, Bernard, Ray and Michael stepping in, we're strengthening a global, patient-led movement that demands prevention, better treatments and real accountability."

Founded in 2020, PD Avengers is a patient-led global alliance uniting people with Parkinson's, care partners, clinicians and researchers to push for urgency in research, policy and access to care through a "Think Global, Act Local" approach.

Hope isn't a plan. Action is.

Larry David Gifford  
PD Avengers  
+1 778-233-6173

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R. Bernard Coley



Michael Okun, MD



Ray Dorsey, MD, PhD



**GLOBAL ALLIANCE TO END  
PARKINSON'S DISEASE**

PD Avengers - Global Alliance to End Parkinson's  
Disease Assoc.

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