

ANRF Hosts First-Ever Virtual Fundraiser Amid Record Research Applications

More arthritis research applications than ever before. ANRF responds with its first virtual event, featuring Tyrell Crosby.

IRVINE, CA, UNITED STATES, March 24, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- This year, more scientists applied for arthritis and autoimmune disease research funding than at any point in the Arthritis National Research Foundation's 50-year history.



It means that right now, more brilliant early-career researchers are ready to pursue ideas that could change what it means to live with these conditions, affecting more than 60 million adults and 300,000 children in the United States. And every one of those ideas needs funding to move forward.

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Emily Stormoen, ANRF CEO

Here's the challenge: early-stage research is the hardest phase of science to fund. It's where new treatments are born. It's also where promising ideas most often stall. No new therapy has ever reached a patient without it.

ANRF is meeting this moment with something it has never done before. This Thursday, March 26, 2026 at 7:00 PM CT, the organization is opening its doors — virtually — for [60 Minutes to Save Millions](#), a one-hour live event that invites the public inside a working research lab to see exactly where their support goes, meet the scientists doing the

work, and help determine how many of this year's record applications receive funding. Funding decisions are made at the end of March. This event is part of how ANRF says yes.

“We have never seen demand like this. The applications we received this year represent some of the most promising researchers whose ideas will advance science and directly improve the patient experience. This event is how we make sure as many of those ideas as possible move

forward. We're opening our doors and inviting the public to come inside and see what's at stake," says Emily Stormoen, Chief Executive Officer at ANRF.

Joining the evening is Tyrell Crosby. Most people know him as a former offensive lineman for the Detroit Lions. At 24, a spinal injury ended his career and left him navigating chronic daily pain, the kind that people living with arthritis and autoimmune disease know intimately. In the years since, Crosby rebuilt his life in ways few expected, including becoming a certified scuba instructor after confronting a fear of water head-on. He'll be at the event to share that story and to stand with the community of researchers and patients working toward something better.

The event also comes with something unexpected: one of the most distinctive charity auctions of the year. Bidding is open now at bit.ly/60MSMAuction and closes live the night of March 26. No event ticket required to bid.

The featured item is a chance to dive with Tyrell Crosby himself. The Elite Athlete Dive Experience in Utila, Honduras offers the winning bidder a scuba certification course and open-water dives alongside NFL and Olympic athletes in some of the clearest waters in the world. It is, to put it simply, a once-in-a-lifetime trip.

Other auction items include a one-week stay in a private home in Mallorca, Spain for up to six guests; an original painting by Peihong Endris, an artist living with rheumatoid arthritis; a one-on-one virtual conversation with an ANRF-funded scientist; a guided meditation series led by ANRF Board Member and Buddhist priest Timothy Niewold; a private autoimmune-informed yoga series; a custom NFL fan basket; and a curated six-bottle wine collection from Washington and Oregon.

Tickets for 60 Minutes to Save Millions are \$30 and available at bit.ly/ANRF60MSM. The event is fully virtual — one hour, from anywhere. Every ticket sale goes directly toward funding the scientists who applied this year.

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