

For Immediate Release

Campaign to Increase the Awareness and Understanding of Lou Gehrig's Disease Reaches 22 U.S. States

Non-Profit Biotech Calls on the Entire ALS Community to Join a Nationwide Network of Independence Day Events

CAMBRIDGE, MASS. – May 18, 2009 – The ALS Therapy Development Institute (ALS TDI) announced its *BBQ For ALS Awareness*, is a national initiative designed to increase the awareness and understanding of ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis), otherwise known as Lou Gehrig's disease. To accomplish its goal, the campaign brings together three undoubtedly American activities on July 4th, 2009 – an Independence Day celebration, the traditional summer barbecue (BBQ), and America's pastime – baseball.

“The only weapon we currently have against this disease is raising awareness and funds for research. The *BBQ For ALS Awareness* program is a simple and fun way to accomplish both, and an important opportunity for everyone to help fight against this deadly disease”, said Michelle Dupree, a volunteer ALS TDI Advisory Council member. Ms. Dupree has helped to organize several *BBQ For ALS Awareness* events in the greater Sea Bright, N.J. area where she lives. Michelle became one of the first ALS TDI Ambassadors shortly after her friend Pam Callahan was diagnosed with the neurodegenerative disease that affects more than 30,000 American's at any given time.



ALS TDI, the world's first non-profit biotech and largest research center focused exclusively on developing ALS therapeutics, has two goals for the *BBQ For ALS Awareness* initiative, 100 events and at least one in each U.S. state. So far there are events confirmed in 22 states, including, family and neighborhood BBQ's, as well as events at restaurants and sports bars. Each will take place on July 4, 2009 to coincide with the 70th anniversary of Lou Gehrig's famous Yankee Stadium farewell speech. All funds raised at *BBQ For ALS Awareness* events will go to support the research at ALS TDI. Participants in the *BBQ For ALS Awareness* initiative will also become part of a larger effort organized by Major League Baseball (MLB) to integrate awareness activities into all fifteen home games taking place on July 4, 2009 as part of MLB's 4♦ALS Awareness campaign.

“In addition to raising research funds, this program aims to ensure that new generations of Americans know Gehrig’s story and his contributions to the game. Lou Gehrig deserves recognition for much more than the disease that took his life. He is a hero to many, for both the way he lived, and for this courage in confronting ALS. We must find a way to make ALS a thing of the past,” said Michael Goldsmith, an ALS patient, ALS TDI Ambassador and one of the inspirations of the MLB led 4♦ALS Awareness campaign.

Following his diagnosis, Mr. Goldsmith wrote and had published an article in *Newsweek* which led to an article in the *New York Times* – both called for greater awareness of Lou Gehrig’s disease and outlining how Major League Baseball could help. Major League Baseball’s response was immediate and, the 4♦ALS Awareness campaign was launched by MLB. Working together with four major ALS organizations (ALS TDI, MDA’s Augie’s Quest, the ALS Association and Project A.L.S.) the 4♦ALS Awareness initiative has the chance to become one of the largest awareness events for the disease since Gehrig brought it to prominence seven decades ago.

On July 4, 2009, each home team will host an on-field reading of Gehrig’s Farewell speech. All players will wear a “4♦ALS” patch on their chest and MLB will promote the effort in a variety of ways, including in-stadium promotions. In addition, MLB.com will conduct an online auction to raise funds for the cause, and Major League Baseball will continue to work with the four organizations to identify additional opportunities to raise funds and awareness.

For more information about ALS TDI’s *BBQ For ALS Awareness* program, including a Google map showing confirmed events, visit www.als.net/mlb4als. For additional information about the 4ALS Awareness campaign and activities taking place in ball parks on the fourth of July, visit www.mlb.com.

About ALS TDI

The mission of the ALS Therapy Development Institute (ALS TDI) is to develop effective therapeutics that slow or stop amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS, Lou Gehrig’s disease), as soon as possible. Focused on meeting this urgent unmet medical need, ALS TDI executes a robust discovery program, as well as a multi-pronged approach to validate potential therapeutics; including small molecules, protein biologics, gene therapies and cell-based constructs. The world’s first non-profit biotech, ALS TDI has developed an industrial-scale platform that allows for the development and testing of dozens of potential therapeutics each year. Built by and for patients, the Institute is the world’s only non-profit biotechnology company with more than 30 professional scientists. In addition, the Cambridge, Massachusetts based research Institute collaborates with leaders in both academia and industry. For more information, please visit us online at www.als.net.

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