



# International Brain Research Foundation

By LORRAINE CANCRO

**Just** over a year ago, the International Brain Research Foundation (IBRF) was founded by Philip A. De Fina, Ph.D. the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Scientific Officer. Dr. De Fina is spearheading the collaborations among top neuroscientists and research facilities around the world by facilitating and coordinating cutting-edge research methodologies. Under his leadership, IBRF is in a position to translate the scientific findings of state-of-the-art research into applicable solutions that are essential to solve the complex issues in the areas of brain health. The foundation

has an international advisory board of renowned scientists around the world. The IBRF's scientists span the globe researching neurological disorders. The foundation's three areas of concentration are coma, autism and other developmental disorders in children and traumatic brain injury. Effects of brain aging and appropriate forms of intervention are also being addressed.

IBRF's initial funding was provided to create the Neuropsychiatric Advanced Care Unit (NACU) as a joint effort with NYU-Bellevue Medical Center for state-of-the-art treatment for coma and other disorders of consciousness. The NACU team has brought a 65-year-old man out of coma. Today he is communicating and the team continues to work with him to help him resume a normal life.

The International Brain Research Foundation provided information and results of research to the doctors working with the lone survivor of the Sago coal mine disaster in West Virginia to bring him out of his coma. They also did the same for the team of doctors treating Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon following his stroke in January 2006.

IBRF scientists intervened on behalf of a young woman who went into coma during childbirth. Using state-of-the-art treatment modalities, the Neuropsychiatric Advanced Care Unit team brought her out of coma within a three-week period.

The condition of numerous children suffering with autism spectrum disorders was markedly improved by the provision of new modalities of treatment based on individual evaluation findings.

IBRF is planning a second Neuropsychiatric Advanced Care Unit at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) Neurosurgery Department. Additionally, the IBRF and UMDNJ are developing an advanced neurotrauma center that will facilitate rapid intervention for traumatic brain injury and stroke syndromes.

The International Brain Research Foundation has developed relationships with the Kessler Institute for rehabilitation and the Morristown Memorial Hospital in New Jersey. Plans are underway for the first pediatric NACU as well as an outpatient autism unit employing IBRF's protocols at Morristown Memorial Hospital.

An initial goal of the foundation is to establish internationally based cooperative sites. IBRF, with remarkable speed, has procured collaborators internationally, who deal with specific neurological disorders. These collaborators focus on research, contribute to improved care and seek to prevent disability and handicap. Their international nature gives them access to different gene pools and, importantly, different cultural settings. In this way,

## The International Brain Research Foundation provided information and results of research to the doctors working with the lone survivor of the Sago coal mine disaster in West Virginia to bring him out of his coma.

research can be conducted simultaneously and allow the foundation to obtain a sufficient number of cases to produce results in a reasonable time frame.

IBRF's Inaugural Gala will be held at Cipriani in New York City on October 10, 2006. Vanessa Williams is slated to perform. Among our honorees are Ian Hunter, Ph.D. of

MIT and Julian Bailes, M.D. who treated the Sago Coal Miner when he was in coma. The funds raised from this event will go toward further research into the cause and prevention of neurological disorders.

The International Brain Research Foundation was created as a response to the under-recognized public health crisis. The mission of the International Brain Research Foundation is to advance neuroscience research through worldwide collaborations in order to facilitate effective

interventions for brain-related disorders and diseases. Philanthropy is the main source of funding for IBRF. For more information on IBRF's Inaugural Gala, please contact [EP](#)



---

Lorraine Cancro, Director of Development, at (212) 505-3400 or email [lcancro@ibrfinc.org](mailto:lcancro@ibrfinc.org).

