
◆ THE DERBY CITY NSCIA NEWSLETTER ◆

FEBRUARY 2010

The Derby City Chapter of the National Spinal Cord Injury Association Network- Serving Kentuckiana.

Message From the President

Dear Members & Friends-

February's meeting will be held at Frazier Rehab Institute; 220 Abraham Flexner Way; Louisville, in the 10th floor dining room. Dr. Susan Harkema and Karey McDowell will discuss an opportunity for individuals to participate in a study group for the community fitness and wellness program. This opportunity will provide participants with a six-month membership to the Frazier Community fitness and wellness program. Please plan to attend the next meeting in February as there will be a lot of good information shared.

- David Allgood

KENTUCKY STUDY ADVANCES NEW TARGET FOR CNS DRUG DEVELOPMENT

Researchers led by Royce Mohan, associate professor of ophthalmology and visual science in the UK College of Medicine, found that the small molecule withaferin A can simultaneously target two key proteins - vimentin and glial fibrillary acidic protein (GFAP) - implicated in a damaging biological process called reactive gliosis.

Both vimentin and GFAP, members of a family of proteins called intermediate filaments, are important factors in the stress response of the central nervous system (CNS). But pathology in the CNS from a traumatic injury or neurodegenerative disease can cause overexpression of vimentin and GFAP and lead to reactive gliosis.

During gliosis, astrocyte cells that express vimentin and GFAP accumulate into dense, fibrous patches called glial scars, which interfere with normal functioning of the CNS. Gliosis is a significant feature of many disorders of the CNS, including multiple sclerosis, Alzheimer's disease, stroke, and traumatic brain and spinal cord injury, and it is also central to major retinal diseases such as age-related macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy and glaucoma.

Mohan's lab discovered that withaferin A binds to both vimentin and GFAP within an unique pocket

therapeutic lead for drug-development research, Mohan said, and he owes great credit to the interdisciplinary team of collaborators who contributed to extending this finding.

Mohan describes the discovery as serendipitous. Originally, his team was investigating withaferin A as an angiogenesis inhibitor, a type of drug used to slow the development and growth of new blood vessels. Such drugs are useful in treating cancers and various conditions of the eye, such as corneal neovascularisation, wet-stage macular degeneration and glaucoma.

Using an approach called reverse chemical genetics, Mohan's lab started with the identification of withaferin A as a vimentin probe, and then looked for CNS pathological indications where the related type III intermediate filament GFAP is critically involved.

'It was fortuitous that we looked at the retina of injured mice,' Mohan said. 'This drug was causing simultaneous inhibition of both corneal angiogenesis and retinal gliosis, a finding that is relevant to combat ocular trauma from the alarming incidence of blast injuries. Rarely does one get the opportunity to make an important discovery that advances on two drug targets at once.'



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Refrigerator Calendar

2010

FEBRUARY

- 1st Mon** Elderly & Disabled Advisory Council Meeting.
1:00 p.m.; TARC; 1000 W. Broadway; Board Room.
- 2nd Tues** Learn to Golf Program for Adults sponsored by Louisville Metro Parks; 10:00a.m.
Douglass Community Center Gym (inside), equipment provided, \$10 per person for instruction, For more information please call 502-456-8120 or 502-456-8148.
- 5-7th Fri- Sun** Bluegrass Invitational Wheelchair Basketball Tournament; University of Kentucky Seaton Center, Lexington, KY. Twenty teams from around the U.S. including the local 'Hill on Wheels' Team will be in town to compete for the winning title. For more information or to volunteer please call 859-288-2916.
- 15th Mon** Derby City Chapter, Spinal Cord Injury Association Meeting; 6:30 p.m.; Frazier Rehab Institute, 220 Abraham Flexner Way; Louisville; 10th Floor Dining Rm.
Guest Speakers-Dr. Susan Harkema, PhD & Karey McDowell, MS, CTRS, CPT will share information on a study group specific to fitness and wellness for individuals with SCI. By participating in the study you could also receive a six-month membership to the Frazier Community Fitness and Wellness Program.
- 20th Sat** Metro disAbility Coalition Meeting; 3:15 p.m.
Urban County Government Center; Barrett Avenue; Louisville

MARCH

- 1st Mon** Elderly & Disabled Advisory Council Meeting
1:00; TARC; 1000 W. Broadway; Board Room.
- 15th Mon** NO Derby City Chapter Meeting in February
- 20th Sat** Metro disAbility Coalition Meeting; 3:15 p.m.
Urban County Government Center; Barrett Avenue; Louisville

For More Information Call
David Allgood at 502-588-8574

Derby City Area Chapter
of the
National Spinal Cord Injury Association

ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

The Derby City Area Chapter of the N.S.C.I.A. is a membership organization for individuals with spinal cord injuries, their families, and health professionals. Founded in 1984 as a Charter Member of the N.S.C.I.A., it was incorporated under IRS Section 501 (c) 3 as a not for profit organization. The Board of Directors consists of the Officers, Past President and the Board Members At Large.

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Visit Our Website at

www.DerbyCitySpinalCord.org

**The Derby City Area Chapter Newsletter is
brought to you through the generous support
of Frazier Rehab Institute**

The following is from NewMobilityMagazine.com

Amanda on the Range
By Natalea Watkins

Who needs Vegas? Amanda Stewart Tye learned to "play the cards that were dealt" in America's biggest game of chance — farming. She grew up near tiny Keyes, Okla. — in a county that touches Kansas, Colorado, New Mexico and Texas and is closer to Amarillo and Albuquerque than Oklahoma City. Out in the Panhandle, DIY isn't optional — you're either self-reliant or you fail.

And if your family has raised wheat and milo on the same land for five generations, once again failure is not an option. Amanda Stewart was driving a tractor by the age of 12. Family farming takes the whole family, and at least one member had better earn off-farm wages to get through the droughts and other disasters. When a spinal cord injury in an accident caused by a drunk driver altered Stewart's mobility at age 15, she transitioned to life on smaller wheels and rolled on.

"I made a stupid choice to get in a car with a guy who'd been drinking," she says, "but I was lucky that my accident happened over the summer." She watched high school classes on videotape and earned science credits for her first hand education in how to live with SCI during four long months in rehab at Craig Hospital in Denver. Even though she missed the first nine weeks of high school, she returned literally on the same page as her classmates.

But another set of pages comprise her strongest memory from Craig. Counselors worried that she wasn't sad enough, so one of them gave her "the talk" — showing her the C's, T's and L's on a chart of the spine, identifying her level of injury (T2) and going through pages of what she would and wouldn't be able to do. "I just remember thinking, I've got pages and pages of *cans*," she says.

The life she was in such a hurry to return to included cheerleading, slumber parties and livestock shows — not often in accessible environments. She's grateful that her parents provided both technical assistance and a shove when she needed it. Her dad improvised a chunky third wheel that made her manual chair maneuverable in deep dirt, and Stewart plowed into sandy arenas with a 1,200-pound show steer in tow.

Dad also improvised a rolling lift to help her transfer in and out of her friends pickup trucks so she wouldn't be left out of the social scene. Once she was in the cab, the lift and her wheelchair could be thrown in the bed and used at multiple stops. Her mom called ahead to the tiny high schools where she cheered on the Keyes team — to find the location of an accessible restroom within 15 miles.

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AMANDA ON THE RANGE, CONT'D

Stewart learned to "use" the inevitable spasms from her incomplete SCI to jerk on the requisite tight blue jeans razor-creased with heavy starch. She eventually "spasmed" up and into full-sized pick-ups, onto horses and farm equipment lifts with moves like an Olympic gymnast. She graduated in a cozy class of 15 and never considered altering her plans to pursue a degree in agriculture at Oklahoma State University six hours away. A \$30-thousand Discover Card Tribute Scholarship helped pay tuition.

Her college professors remember her as an intrepid people person, fiercely insistent on doing it all — whether playing pool at a campus tavern or participating in an academic tour of farms in Costa Rica. There the conditions were so inaccessible that fellow students took turns carrying her piggyback at many of the stops.

"She was tough as nails on the one hand and incredibly caring on the other," remembers Professor Shelly Sitton. "In the midst of all she had going on, she made me a baby quilt by hand when I gave birth to a child with Down syndrome." As a college student, Stewart was named "Outstanding Big Sister" by the local Big Brothers, Big Sisters organization, and she joined the Exchange Club to advocate against child abuse.

She also traveled to Washington, D.C., to accept a national service award from President Bill Clinton and Attorney General Janet Reno for her "Think First" program. Following the drunk-driver car accident, Stewart worked with the Oklahoma Health Department in speaking to high schools in three states. Her message emphasized the importance of thinking before mixing drinking and driving (or riding) — and remembering to use seatbelts. She also appeared on countless victim impact panels. She stopped counting her audiences after the tally hit 300,000.

Stewart graduated with a bachelor's degree in animal science and a minor in agricultural communications, then went to work selling fertilizer at ranches across Oklahoma. "Sometimes it was hard to tell if the customers were more shocked that a woman hopped out of that big red Jeep or that she hopped into a wheelchair," she says, laughing. Despite her expertise in application rates, she's the first to admit that sales were not her forte. She appreciated the environmental aspect of the job — "leaving the land better than you found it for the next generation" — but the 72-mile commute each way to the office, not so much. In 2002 she got a job with the U.S. Department of Agriculture as a land appraiser, and she married Kyle Tye. Then she went through training to become a USDA county executive and was hired in Caddo County.

The woman who never met a field she couldn't traverse had a much tougher time finding an accessible country home. Even after graduation, marriage and a job three counties away, the Tyes continued to live in the house she rented as a student. Years went by before she and her husband located a place "that would do" — near Tuttle, Okla.

Since 2004 she has made a living keeping other farmers afloat through the Farm Service Agency. Based in Anadarko, Okla., she is a conduit to expert advice and federal funds for farmers wobbling on the tightrope between judgment and luck, the bank and the weather. She's one of the state's youngest county executives and oversees a staff of seven from her manual wheelchair. She's convinced her disability gives her added credibility in traits farming has always required: determination and ingenuity.

Currently, her county's wheat farmers are worried Mother Nature will run the table. Their first planting went down to an early freeze. A replacement crop was ruined by record October rain. Now the 2010 wheat crop could be the third strike for those who've borne the expense of planting three sets of seed without the income of a single harvest.

Even when wheat's having a banner year, the winemakers in Caddo County are facing challenges, or the guy who grows the peppers used in making mace is on the phone, or the peanut crop is being threatened by pests, or flood-based erosion has legislators taking a tour. Tye loves the diversity of traditional crops and new ones and the avalanche of applications their challenges produce. One long-time county resident describes her approach: "The other executives would let you know about programs if you came in, but she calls you up and tells you to 'get in here, I've just found a program that's perfect for you.'"

As it turned out, she started two new careers in 2004. The second, motherhood, was an odyssey that began on Easter Sunday. A couple from the Tyes' church asked if they'd ever considered adopting — a brother's teenage girlfriend was seven months pregnant. The answer was: Yes, they'd love a family, but no, they'd not pursued it, what with the plateful they already had.

That conversation led to the private adoption of a baby girl. Tye says she knew it was meant to be when the baby's due date turned out to be the anniversary of her accident. The Tyes were in the delivery room when MaKenna arrived, and they brought her home to a house full of boxes the movers had delivered the same day.

The new mom fashioned a pouch and began wheeling with a baby on board. But by six months old, MaKenna knew which way to lean going up and down ramps. Grandmother Stewart still marvels at the balance of that baby "when cousins were always tumbling off Amanda's lap."

(Continued On Page Five)

AMANDA ON THE RANGE CONT'D

Tye gets occasional calls to speak to someone who's just been injured and they can't imagine what life in a chair holds. She remembers her own early days at Craig and says, "It's not what you say, it's what they see." When she drives up in a truck with her daughter, talking to her office on a cell phone, the wheelchair nearly disappears behind the possibilities. She's convinced her disability has opened many more doors than it has closed.

In her capacity as a Farm Service executive, Tye offers empathy and federal lending programs to young couples dreaming of their own farm. It's close to impossible for new farmers to afford land, a home and the hundreds of thousands of dollars needed for equipment, seed or livestock without inheriting either land or money. That's why the average age of most farm owners is close to 65.

The Tyes just bought their first 80 acres, but they're leasing it out for now. Building an accessible home and their own farming operation will have to wait on cash flow. But when it's in your blood, as Amanda puts it, "At the end of the day, there's nothing quite like the smell of fresh hay and your own dirt "

FREE TAX PREPARATION ASSISTANCE

The Center for Accessible Living in Louisville will again participate in the VITA Tax Program to file 2010 taxes for low income individuals with disabilities. The tax site will be open by appointment only on Tuesdays and Fridays.

Appointment scheduling will begin February 2, 2010. If you are interested in this service contact Beverly Alford at 589-6620 or balford@calky.org. on or after February 2.



*****FOR SALE*****



2004 Buick Rendezvous CX, Gold Sport Utility 4D, AWD; 52,953 mi; seats 5—rear compartment contains Sonic scooter Bruno lift; new battery; numerous special features. \$8,800. Call Bryan Fantoni at 502-644-4446 or email at Bryan.Fantoni@mozlaw.com.

Easy Stand Glider 600; like new—barely used; allows transfer, stand and glider movement of legs. Paid \$6,000. Will sell for \$3,000. Call Shirley at 502/228-1271.

93" E150; EZ Lock WC System Elec. w/Quantum 600 wc/swivel captain's chairs/3-way power driver's seat/remote start burglar alarm/front-rear air/power wc lift/new upholstery. \$11,000, negotiable. **(502) 543-5948/(502) 773-2337.**

WC Lift; \$1,000; **Invacare Storm TDX 3 Power WC;** full reclining; less than 1 year old; \$1000; **Call David 588-8574.**

NC topper; used; 3 E&J Manual chairs; used; 1 Quicksilver Action manual chair; Monarch hand controls. 93,000 miles. Price negotiable. **Call Ruth @ 239-9754 after 5 p.m.**

******If assistance is needed to pay for any of the above items, contact Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation at 1-800-327-5287 for information on loans at 5% interest to qualified individuals.******

***Cookbooks for Sale:** Recipes compiled by Chapter members; \$10:00. Call David @ 585-8574.

***Video tapes for sale.** Various topics related to spinal cord injuries. Call David Allgood or Buddy Lawson.

♦ **SCI -Shirts for sale.** S, M, L, XL. David—589-6620.



You are cordially invited to join us!

The Derby City Chapter of the National Spinal Cord Injury Association consists of people with spinal cord injuries and similar physical conditions, their family members, friends, and professionals or other interested parties.

We meet:

WHEN- Third Monday of every month from 6:30 to 9:00 PM

*WHERE- Frazier Rehab Institute, 10th floor Dining Room
220 Abraham Flexner Way, Louisville, KY 40202*

If you wish to be a member, donor, and/or be on the mailing list of the Derby City Chapter of the National Spinal Cord Injury Association please complete and mail the following form to the address below

National Spinal Cord Injury Association
Derby City Chapter

Membership & Organization Sponsorship Form

Name: Mr./Mrs./Ms./Dr. _____ Date _____
 Address: _____ Apt.# _____
 City/State/Zip: _____
 Business (if any): _____
 Home Phone: () _____ Work Phone: () _____
 Date of Birth _____
 Para: _____ Quad _____ Hemiplegic: _____
 Level of Disability _____ Other Disability _____
 Able-Bodied (yes/no): _____
 New Member: _____ Renewal _____ Newsletter Subscription
 (only \$12): _____
 Special Interests /Hobbies/Sports: _____

Membership is open to all individuals and sponsorship to all organizations interested in spinal cord injury.

Mark Type of TAX DEDUCTIBLE Individual Membership or Organization Donor Category Desired***

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| _____ Regular-\$12 | _____ Bronze Organization-\$100-249 |
| _____ Sponsor-\$25 | _____ Silver Organization-\$250-499 |
| _____ Patron \$50 | _____ Gold Organization- \$500-999 |
| _____ Benefactor-\$100 | _____ Platinum Organization-\$1000-2499 |
| _____ Permanent- \$1000/lifetime** | _____ Diamond Organization-\$2500 Or Over. |

Please make checks payable to: **NSCIA Derby City Chapter**
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