



March 12, 2009

Dear Friend,

I'm writing to share an opportunity that The Michael J. Fox Foundation thinks will be of interest to you. 23andMe, a personal genetics company, is launching a Web-based Parkinson's disease community whose members will become part of an innovative research project. The goal is to efficiently gather genetic information from as many people with PD as possible in order to accelerate new discoveries and therapeutic breakthroughs.

With acceleration of new treatments chief among our Foundation's goals, the appeal of technology-enabled approaches to PD research is clear. For the past year we have been funding five projects — including a partnership between 23andMe and The Parkinson's Institute — to develop Web-based tools that can be used for scientifically rigorous PD research.

For Web-based research tools to be useful, communities of affected individuals must be created to use them. In the interest of quickly growing its Parkinson's disease community, 23andMe is offering membership to people with Parkinson's at the reduced rate of \$25, as opposed to the standard \$399, through March 22. This limited-time discount is available to up to 10,000 PWP's because of the personal financial sponsorship of Google co-founder Sergey Brin. Sergey and his wife, Anne Wojcicki, a co-founder of 23andMe, have a personal connection to PD and are highly motivated to find a cure.

MJFF is excited about advancing this novel approach to research. While the ultimate utility of Web-based research remains unproven, we believe the opportunity is too great not to explore. The decision to learn about your own genome, however, is a significant one deserving of serious thought. Currently there is no targeted therapeutic response to learning that you have a specific genetic variant linked to Parkinson's, and such treatments require additional research. You may also discover other unexpected health information unrelated to your PD status. While we think you should take this decision seriously, we also believe that the choice to discover this information is yours to make.

Sincerely,

Katie Hood
Chief Executive Officer

P.S. In the interest of full disclosure, the Brins are supporters of MJFF. But their funding is independent of both this specific project and our Web-based efforts more generally.

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