



Photo by Lincoln Potter

VITALS

→ GRANT AMOUNT

\$5,575,200

→ ECONOMIC IMPACT

\$34.3 million in additional funding

Drug company partnerships

Seattle start-up company conducting clinical trial of new lupus drug

→ HEALTH IMPACT

Statewide education for providers, patients, families

Over 2,000 people enrolled in MS and type 1 diabetes prevention and treatment studies

→ OTHER IMPACT

Thousands of high-quality patient specimens available for research

Creation of a registry of patients interested in joining clinical studies

Improving Treatment Options for Patients with Autoimmune Diseases

For Tracey Barnes, it started with a fall while walking her dog Lilly. The diagnosis: multiple sclerosis (MS), an often disabling disease in which the immune system attacks the coating around nerves.

“Although terrified—my brother died of an autoimmune disease—I was fortunate to have great doctors at Virginia Mason and the Benaroya Research Institute (BRI) to answer questions and help me make treatment decisions based on the latest research,” says Tracey, pictured above right with her mother, Judi Rising.

One of those doctors, BRI Director Jerry Nepom, received a Life Sciences Discovery Fund grant to expand autoimmune disease research programs, including MS, lupus, and type 1 diabetes. His team is unraveling the mysteries of how these disorders develop, designing better therapies, and ensuring that patients like Tracey benefit from research advances.

“The grant helped us educate patients about research and recruit them for studies, including one for an artificial pancreas and therapies to preserve insulin production in type 1 diabetics and stop MS progression,” says Dr. Nepom.

Tracey donates blood regularly for BRI studies aimed at improving MS prevention, early diagnosis and management. “Research gives me, all those alongside me, and all those to follow, hope for a better future.”

Life Sciences

DISCOVERY FUND

www.lsdfa.org