



 **TEAM U2FP**  
unite 2 fight paralysis

**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**2021**

 **unite2fight**  
paralysis

# HIGHLIGHTS IN 2021



**Quinn Brett, MA**  
Board of Directors



**Jason Stoffer**  
CAN Manager



**Johnnie Edwards, JD**  
Board of Directors



**Jim Hamer**  
Board of Directors



**Lucia Webb**  
Operations Director

## NEW BOARD & STAFF | Representation Matters

**Quinn Brett** (T11 ASIA A) fell while climbing El Capitan and is now a National Parks Service employee and social media influencer with over 16,000 followers on Instagram. Quinn just had a documentary released this year about her journey with an SCI, *An Accidental Life*.

**Jason Stoffer** (L1) is a former mountaineer, long distance hiker, wild-land firefighter, search and rescue technician, EMT, and Law Enforcement Officer. As CAN Manager, Jason is on the verge of getting an SCI bill introduced in Colorado this year. He also raised \$10,000 for U2FP in just a month last year by participating in Team U2FP's Freestyle Challenge Race (formerly Run-Walk-Roll), using his adaptive bike to ride a 100-mile trail in one day!

**Johnnie Edwards** is the mother of a son with an injury (T6-7), and holds a law degree from the Birmingham School of Law. Johnnie's son Justus was just featured on the Today show, as he graduated from Berry College in Georgia this year, using a walker to accept his diploma.

**Jim Hamer** is the director of DP Clinical's SCI Program, where he has managed numerous acute and chronic SCI clinical trials which include drug, device, and stem cell therapy trials. Jim was recently elected to serve as Treasurer for the U2FP Board.

**Lucia Webb** brings a combination of social justice advocacy experience with a background in event and organizational management. As U2FP's new Operations Director, she has already overseen our largest Team U2FP fundraising year ever.

# U2FP's Annual Symposium Breaks Attendance Record

Because presentations were structured thematically around the notion of 'strategies' - Advocacy, Collaboration, Clinical Research, Sexual Function, & Regeneration - we were able to highlight some groundbreaking work this year, notably:

- ONWARD, our 2021 Networking Sponsor, had the opportunity to share the details of their transcutaneous/epidural clinical trials. They've since completed recruitment for the transcutaneous study, and have just implanted their first proprietary epidural stimulator.
- Neurosurgeon Uzma Samadani showed how she is implanting epidural stimulators in an outpatient setting with effect - and getting insurance to pay for it.
- Watch these sessions, as well as many other great presentations and panel discussions, from this year's symposium for free: [u2fp.org/2021-symposium.html](http://u2fp.org/2021-symposium.html)



## Stats

**379** attendees from 14 countries, representing over 85 unique companies or organizations.



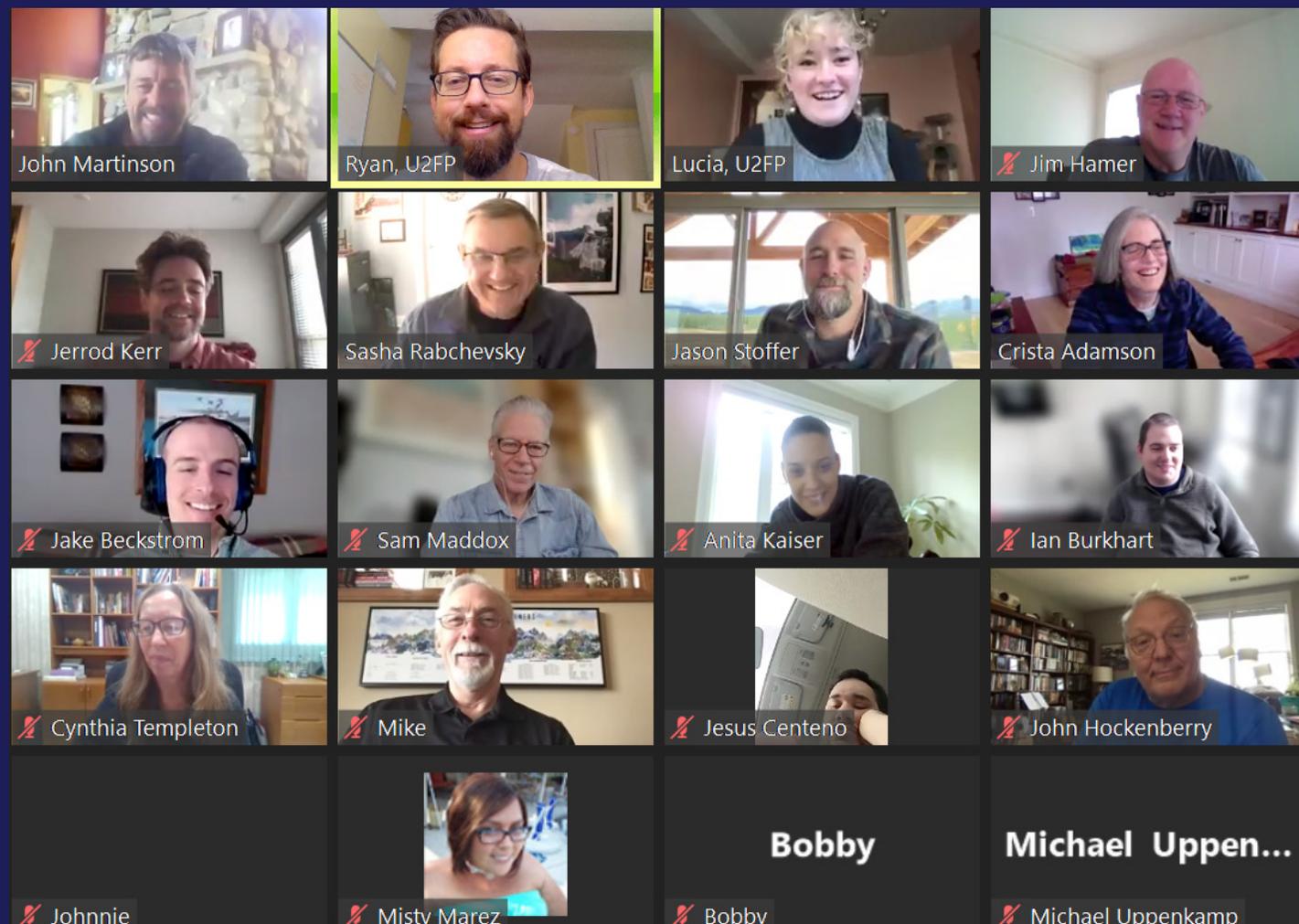
## Value

We provided discounted registrations totaling **\$21,575** in cumulative savings for event attendees



**U2FP did a fantastic job of pulling together so many experts in the field. Anything we can do to promote collaboration and accelerate progress is to be championed"**

- Peter Nowell



# HIGHLIGHTS IN 2021



## Team U2FP Goes the Extra Mile

**\$53,800**

was raised by Team U2FP participants in 2021 - our highest amount ever!



**27 Racers**

signed up to challenge themselves physically while fundraising to advance the movement for curative therapies



### Race Events

- The Bank of America Chicago Marathon
- The Medtronic Twin Cities Marathon & 10 Mile Races
- And our DIY race event, the Run-Walk-Roll\*

This was the second year of our DIY race event, where participants designed their own courses and pace. Courses and difficulty levels varied from 5K runners and walkers in the Midwest, a Pacific paddleboard event on the West Coast, to a 100-mile adaptive trike ride through the Montana Rockies!

*\* The Run-Walk-Roll has been renamed this year to The Freestyle Challenge*

# SPOTLIGHT ON 2022

## Testifying for a Wisconsin SCI Research Grant Bill (AB873)

On April 6th, seven SCI advocates and their families showed up at the capitol in Madison, Wisconsin to testify in support of our \$3M SCI Research Grant bill: Max Rammer and his father, Doug; John Martinson; Samantha Troyer; Dr. Murray Blackmore (SCI researcher from Marquette University); Rob Kozarek; and Mike Mohr. This group gave a diverse, powerful ac-

count of their struggles with the injury along with strong, evidence-based reasoning for why investing in restorative SCI treatments is the right thing to do. Our Champion, Rep. Jimmy Anderson (who also has an SCI and testified himself on behalf of our bill) said it was some of the most effective and impactful testimony he's seen in his time as a legislator. Read each advocate's testimony here: [u2fp.org/wi-testimony.html](https://u2fp.org/wi-testimony.html)

“

I'm excited because [legislation like this bill] is already working in other states, and we can make it work here. We aren't just requesting money; we are requesting money to be allocated in a really smart way.”

- Mike Mohr (pictured)



# SPOTLIGHT ON 2022

## Launching Lab Rats

At our Symposium this past fall, we talked for the first time about our nascent effort to actively place individuals with an injury into SCI research labs.

The benefits for the lab are obvious: having a person with lived experience of the injury embedded with their research team helps them avoid all sorts of faulty assumptions and pitfalls, saving them valuable time and money.

Conversely, the 'SCI Consultants' - as we refer to them - gain a deep appreciation of the complexities, challenges and constraints faced by a research lab. These collaborative partnerships have the opportunities to produce better, faster treatments, while creating a smarter, more nuanced community of SCI advocates in the process.



### Placements

As of this writing, U2FP has coordinated placement of

**10** SCI individuals into **3** labs,

with two more individuals in the process of being placed.



### Power in Progress

This innovative placement strategy is a win-win for the Scientific & SCI Communities! To learn more, visit: [u2fp.org/get-involved/lab-rats.html](https://u2fp.org/get-involved/lab-rats.html)

“

“I want to say a few things to any scientist who’s considering doing this. First, it’s strategically smart - it’s gonna make you look good and it’s gonna make your lab better.

But what I can’t say enough is - it feels really good too. It makes coming to work a little bit better. It’s just a really great experience. And I think that you’re gonna look back on your career and think that this is something that you’re really glad that you did.”

- Murray Blackmore, PhD  
The Blackmore Lab,  
Marquette University



# move me

## Move Me documentary (formerly The Cure Map)

It's been a long journey, but Kelsey Peterson's documentary about living with an SCI - *Move Me* - is now on the film festival circuit across the country! So far, the film has been shown or selected at Full Frame Documentary Film Festival, ReelAbilities NYC, and Minneapolis/St. Paul International Film Festival. Because so many of you helped kickstart the funding for this documentary, it's worth revisiting how it all got started.

Back in 2015, Kelsey was one of several advocates who joined Matthew Rodreck and others in their successful campaign to pass \$5M in SCI Research funding at the Minnesota state legislature (what would become U2FP's Cure Advocacy Network).

This legislative victory gave Kelsey an itch to take the movement to cure paralysis in a more personal and artistic direction. U2FP agreed to become the sole fiscal agent for her nascent film project in 2018. Kelsey worked hard and in 2020 won highly sought after funding from ITVS Open Call to pay for post-production. Since then, the film has evolved into a personal look at Kelsey's re-engagement with dance (which was her vocation pre-injury). Her participation as a choreographer/performer in Gabriel Rodreck's performance piece, *A Cripple's Dance*, anchors much of the film and sends Kelsey in a new direction, reflecting on the tender balance between hope for restored function and living one's life to the fullest in the present moment.

**Sustaining Supporters**

Jake Anderson & family  
 Chris Barr  
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 David Dvorak  
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 Mildred Whiteside  
 Jane Wierbicky  
 George Woodworth

DP Clinical  
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 Help Hope Live

**Individuals**

Karen Abate  
 James Anderson  
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 Peter Baillon  
 Bruce Bowman  
 Mark Bradley  
 Michael Burris  
 Adele & Jim Crawford  
 Elizabeth DeMoss  
 Roger Watts  
 Susan Donahue  
 Joseph Donat  
 Judith Durkee  
 Ann Dvorak  
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**2021 Symposium Sponsors**

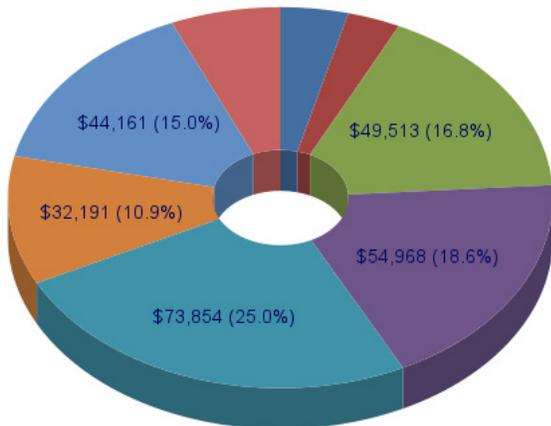
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 Hong Kong Spinal Cord Injury  
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 Christopher & Dana Reeve  
 Foundation  
 Kennedy Krieger Institute  
 NervGen Pharma  
 Push to Walk  
 Conquer Paralysis Now

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 Center  
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 Varian Medical

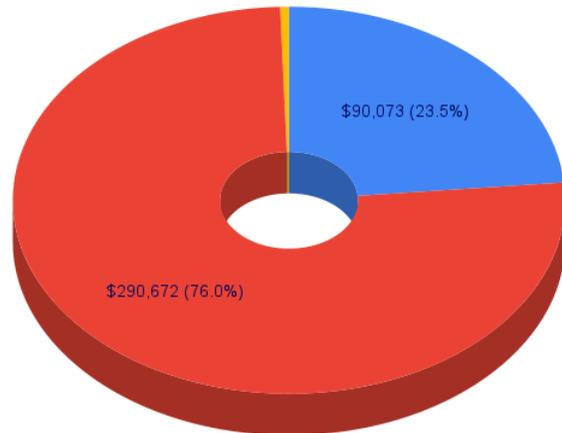
*U2FP sincerely appreciates the generosity of all our donors. The donors listed above made cash or in-kind gifts or grants totaling \$250 or more over the past 12 months and/or contribute regularly as Monthly Donors. We apologize for any oversight in listing donors. Please contact our office to update our records.*

**2021 Expenditures**



● Scientific Advisory Board 
 ● Team U2FP 
 ● Cure Advocacy Network 
 ● Annual Symposium 
 ● Communications/Education 
 ● Fundraising 
 ● Other 
 ● Administration

**2021 Revenue**



● Program Service Revenue 
 ● Grants & Donations 
 ● Investment Income

**\*These pie charts reflect audited financial information for Unite 2 Fight Paralysis  
 Unite 2 Fight Paralysis relies almost exclusively on public contributions and grants to provide our services.**