

Diabetes Fundraiser Helps DRIF Get Closer To Cure

By *Debbie Greco Cohen*

The Diabetes Research Institute Foundation (DRIF) held its 13th Annual “Cooking For a Cure” fundraiser on April 11. Co-chaired by Nassau County Legislator Delia DeRiggi-Whitton and Rebecca Castronovo, the event was a huge success. Both women have daughters who were diagnosed with type 1 diabetes when they were very young and have been deeply involved with DRIF for well over a decade. “I would like to thank the committee and all those who support the DRIF, especially Stacy Sissons McKenna and Sue Herbst for helping to organize this great event,” event co-chair Delia DeRiggi-Whitton said.

The DRI runs the largest and most comprehensive research center dedicated to finding a cure for diabetes. In type 1 diabetes, the immune system mistakenly destroys insulin-producing islet cells in the pancreas. The DRI’s focus is to develop a biological cure by replacing those cells.

A very promising study for which the DRIF recently received FDA approval to conduct in clinical trials is their BioHub. This bioengineered “mini organ” contains thousands of insulin-producing cells that sense blood sugar levels and release the precise amount of insulin needed, thereby mimicking the function of a normal pancreas. The BioHub containing the donor islet cells

is transplanted into the omentum, which is an apron-like lining covering the abdominal organ. The BioHub acts as a “scaffold,” holding the cells in place until they naturally adhere to the wall of the omentum, after which point, the BioHub naturally dissolves.

“We know that transplanted islet cells have already functioned in some patients for more than ten years,” DRIF Long Island Regional Director Anthony Childs said. “THE DRIF is building on that progress by developing the BioHub, a bioengineered min-organ, to reach a biological cure for type 1 diabetes.”

“The BioHub is the most promising clinical trial yet for a biological cure for diabetes,” DeRiggi-Whitton added. “I am so proud to be part of an organization that can help potentially the 29 million Americans and 370 million people worldwide with diabetes to live longer, healthier lives.”

Visit diabetesresearch.org/diabetes-clinical-trials for details on this breakthrough treatment as well as the Diabetes Research Institute Foundation overall.

Deadline for Letters To The

Editor is Tuesday before

the Thursday publicaiton.

Letters should be sent to:

Mail@goldcoastgazette.net

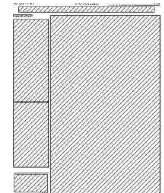




Photo caption (photo credit – Tony Gallego)
(drifgroup) **DRIE** Director Anthony Childs, event organizer Stacy Sissons McKenna, Glen Cove Mayor Reggie Spinello, Councilman Joseph Capobianco, event organizer Sue Herbst, Event Co-Chairs Rebecca Castronovo & Delia DeRiggi-Whitton and Councilwoman Pam Panzenbeck.
(drifgirls) DeRiggi-Whitton and Mayor Spinello with Della's daughters (l to r) Amanda, Christine and Ariann Whitton.