

2015 Kate Foundation GALA

Saturday, September 12, 2015
5:00 p.m.
One Selden Avenue
Branford, Connecticut



In 2009, our daughter Kate was diagnosed with a neurological disorder called Rett syndrome. The genetic disorder almost exclusively affects girls, and it strikes families at random. Rett syndrome is sometimes characterized as a rare disorder, but it is as common as cystic fibrosis.

Girls with Rett syndrome develop typically for the first 6-18 months of life before abruptly losing their fine and gross motor skills. After learning to say words, grasp objects, and crawl on the floor, Kate's motor and language function stalled and then regressed. Now six years old, Kate has overcome many obstacles. She uses her eyes to communicate, enjoys friends at school and has made large strides in her therapy programs. But her potential remains hampered, and her quality of life is profoundly impaired.

In 2007, a research breakthrough gave girls with Rett syndrome and their families tremendous hope. Neurobiologist Adrian Bird, Ph.D. demonstrated a reversal of Rett syndrome in mice by restoring proper levels of a protein called MECP2, the same protein altered in girls with the disorder. The mice, genetically-engineered to have severe Rett syndrome, recovered normal function and became indistinguishable from healthy mice once the protein was restored using genetic engineering tools.

Now, leading neurobiologists believe it is no longer a question of *if* Rett syndrome can be reversed in humans, but *how* and *when* it will be accomplished. Projects are underway, but funding is needed. Learning more about MECP2 could help millions, as MECP2 has been implicated in autism, Parkinson's disease, learning disabilities, and schizophrenia.

On September 12, the Kate Foundation for Rett Syndrome Research will hold its 2015 fundraising Gala in Branford, Connecticut. The outdoor setting is a private residence with a beautiful lawn overlooking Long Island Sound. Live music, fine food and beverage as well as many valuable auction items are planned. Proceeds will benefit the Rett Syndrome Research Trust, a leading research organization exclusively focused on reversing Rett syndrome and other MECP2 disorders.

On behalf of our daughter Kate and girls around the world with Rett syndrome, we invite you to join us for a spectacular evening. To purchase tickets or sponsorships, please visit our website at www.katefoundation.org.

Thank you and we look forward to seeing you.

Sincerely,

Jeff and Sarah Canavan

**“Adrian Bird Ph.D.
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MECP2...”**

To buy tickets or sponsorships online, please visit www.katefoundation.org