



## Center Without Walls Program FORUM PANELISTS

MS Forum and Expo | Saturday, May 11, 2024

Fairmont Century Plaza  
10:00 am

Also available via Zoom Webinar

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_ghHpOCLBTQqIGJnXJ2dvBQ](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ghHpOCLBTQqIGJnXJ2dvBQ)

### ***Lilyana Amezcua, M.D. – USC***



Dr. Amezcua is an Associate Professor of Neurology, fellowship program director and recently appointed the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Champion at the University of Southern California (USC), Keck School of Medicine. She received her Bachelor of Science degree from the University of California Irvine in Irvine, California, and her medical degree from Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, followed by neurology residency and clinical fellowship in neuroimmunology and multiple sclerosis at USC. She received her Master of Science degree in clinical, biomedical, and translational science from USC, Preventive Medicine, under a Clinical Translational Science Institute NIH KL2 award. Her research is focused on racial and ethnic health disparities including modifiable (from non-modifiable genetic factors involved in disease severity and progression of MS. She has received numerous awards including induction into the Health Professionals Hall of Fame (2015) and National Health Care Champion.

### ***Peter Calabresi, M.D. – Johns Hopkins***



Peter A. Calabresi, MD is a Professor of Neurology, Neuroscience, and Ophthalmology at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, and Director of the Division of Neuroimmunology and Neurological Infections, and Co-Director of the Johns Hopkins Multiple Sclerosis Precision Medicine Center of Excellence. He attended Yale College and Brown Medical School and trained in Neurology at Strong Memorial Hospital in Rochester, NY, and Neuroimmunology at the NIH in Bethesda, Md. Dr. Calabresi has been the principal investigator or scientific advisor on several global phases 2 and 3 clinical trials. He has designed and directed several clinical trials investigating combination drug therapies in MS. Dr. Calabresi also mentors trainees and oversees translational laboratory research projects. His laboratory studies how to stop the immune attack and arrest neurodegeneration, and also strategies to promote myelin repair.

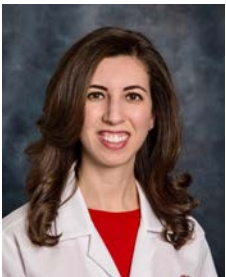
Dr. Calabresi has served on the Editorial Boards of the Journal of Clinical Investigation, Neurology, and the Multiple Sclerosis Journal. He served as Chair of a grant review committee of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society and was a standing member of the NIH Clinical Neuroimmunology and Brain Tumors Study Section. His specific laboratory research interest lies in understanding the mechanisms of T lymphocyte differentiation into effector memory T cells and how these T cells interface with glial cells in the brain to modulate remyelination. Dr. Calabresi has published over 400 research papers including numerous articles on imaging and the immunopathogenesis of MS. He was the recipient of a five-year NMSS Collaborative Center grant from the National MS Society to study endogenous remyelination in MS, and the Jacob Javits Neuroscience Investigator award from the National Institutes of Health. Dr. Calabresi is a member of AOA, was co-awarded the Barancik Prize for Innovation in MS research in 2015, and was elected to the American Association of Physicians in 2017.

### **David Hafler, M.D - Yale**



David A. Hafler, M.D. is the William S. and Lois Stiles Egerly Professor and Chairman Department of Neurology and Professor of Immunobiology, Yale School of Medicine, and is the Neurologist-in-Chief of the Yale-New Haven Hospital. He graduated magna cum laude in 1974 from Emory University with combined B.S. and M.Sc. degrees in biochemistry, and the University of Miami School of Medicine in 1978. He then completed his internship in internal medicine at Johns Hopkins followed by a neurology residency at Cornell Medical Center-New York Hospital in New York. Dr. Hafler was trained in immunology at the Rockefeller University and then at Harvard where he joined the faculty in 1984 and later became the Breakstone Professorship of Neurology at Harvard and was a founding Associated Member of the Broad Institute at MIT. In 2009 he moved to Yale as the Chair of the Department of Neurology. Dr. Hafler is a clinical scientist with a research interest in the mechanism of multiple sclerosis with over 400 publications in the field of MS, autoimmunity and immunology. He is a co-founder of the International MS Genetic Consortium a group that identified the genes causing MS. He has served as a member of the editorial boards for *Journal of Clinical Investigation* and the *Journal of Experimental Medicine*, and is co-founder of the Federation of Clinical Immunology Societies and leads the NIH Autoimmunity Prevention Center Grant at Yale. He was a Jacob Javits Merit Award Recipient from the NIH and has won many awards including Dystel Prize for MS research from the American Academy of Neurology, the University of Miami Annual Distinguished Alumni Award, the Raymond Adams Prize from the American Neurologic Association, and was the 2016 Frontier Lecturer at the AAN. Dr. Hafler has been elected to membership in the Alpha Omega Society, the American Society of Clinical Investigation, and the National Academy of Medicine.

### **Marwa Kaisey, M.D. – Cedars-Sinai**



Dr. Marwa Kaisey is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Neurology at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. Her clinical practice focuses on care of people with Multiple Sclerosis and other neuroimmune conditions. She is also actively involved with trainees of all levels: Dr. Kaisey serves as the fellowship director for neurologists training to become MS specialists and teaches the Cedars-Sinai neurology residents. She has won multiple teaching awards including the A.B. Baker Teacher Recognition Award from the American Academy of Neurology. Dr. Kaisey completed the UCLA neuroscience undergraduate major and served as the school's first Muslim student body president. She went on to the Coro Public Affairs Fellowship, a leadership and public policy program focused on the city of Los Angeles, before she attended the University of Michigan Medical School. She completed neurology residency at UCLA, where she served as chief resident, before finishing her training in the Cedars-Sinai MS fellowship. Dr. Kaisey is active in research and has several publications on the diagnosis and misdiagnosis of Multiple Sclerosis. She works on developing new tools to more quickly and accurately diagnose MS. She lives in Sherman Oaks with her husband and two children.

***Adam Kaplin, M.D., Ph.D., - President Mira1a Pharmaceutical and Adjunct Faculty Johns Hopkins***



Dr. Adam Kaplin completed his undergraduate training at Yale University and his MD and Ph.D. training at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. His research training experience includes having trained in the labs of two Nobel Laureates and completed his Ph.D. and postdoctoral training in the Lab of Solomon Snyder, MD, who was the 2005 recipient of the National Medal of Science (the highest scientific honor in the United States). Dr. Kaplin, who maintains his Adjunct Faculty appointment at Johns Hopkins, was the Chief

Psychiatric Consultant at the Johns Hopkins Multiple Sclerosis and Transverse Myelitis Centers. Dr. Kaplin investigated the biological basis of the effects of the immune system on mood regulation and cognition, and he provided neuropsychiatric care to patients afflicted with such comorbidities. His research is focused on understanding the biological basis of depression and dementia and discovering new ways to diagnose prognosticate and treat these diseases. Dr. Kaplin has transitioned to working in the pharmaceutical industry as the Chief Scientific Officer of MyMD Pharmaceuticals, which is developing first-in-class therapeutics for a range of autoimmune diseases and immune-mediated neuropsychiatric illnesses, and President of Mira Pharmaceuticals, developing novel Cannabinoid analog therapeutics with psychotropic and anti-inflammatory benefits.

***Rhonda Voskuhl, M.D. - UCLA***



Rhonda Voskuhl, M.D. received her MD from Vanderbilt University, did neurology residency at the Univ. of Texas Southwestern, and MS fellowship at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Dr. Voskuhl is the Director of the MS Program, the Jack H. Skirball Chair in MS Research, and a Professor of Neurology at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). Dr. Voskuhl was a recipient of the Harry Weaver Neuroscience Scholar Award and was PI of two separate five-year MS Collaborative Center Awards from the National MS Society. She is an internationally recognized expert in MS, doing translational work from the bedside (clinical observations) to the bench (research) to the bedside (novel clinical trials). Dr. Voskuhl has led

four novel clinical trials testing new treatments based on results from her laboratory. She received the UCLA Innovation Award in 2018, as well as the Berlin Institute of Health (BIH) Excellence Award for Sex and Gender Aspects in Health Research in 2018, a global award spanning all areas of health research. Dr. Voskuhl was selected for the Kenneth P. Johnson Memorial Lecture Award for MS research by ACTRIMS in 2019. She serves on Advisory Boards for the U.S. Department of Defense MS Research Program and the German Neurocure Clusters of Excellence. Dr. Voskuhl's clinical work focuses on MS diagnosis and treatment management. Her laboratory is currently funded by the NIH to discover neuroprotective treatments targeting cells in the central nervous system to reduce disabilities in MS patients.

***Emmanuelle L. Waubant, M.D., Ph.D. – UCSF***



Emmanuelle L. Waubant, MD, Ph.D., received her medical degree at the University of Lille, France. She then trained in France as well as at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) in adult neurology, neuroimmunology, and MS clinical research. She is currently Professor of Neurology and Pediatrics at UCSF. She has served as the Race to Erase MS medical director since 2001. She also directs the Regional Pediatric MS Center at UCSF and is the secretary for the American Committee on Treatment and Research in MS. Dr. Waubant serves or has served on the clinical care, fellowship, and research grant review committees of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society and on the advisory board of the Society's

Northern California Chapter. She is the Chair of the Clinical Trial Task Force of the International Pediatric MS Study Group. She is a member of the International Pediatric MS Study Group Steering Committee. She is ACTRIMS president-elect. She also directs several translational research projects and mentors medical students, fellows, and junior faculty on various clinical, research, and career development aspects in the field of MS and related diseases. In 2018, Dr. Waubant started an international consortium (International Women in MS) to foster a community of clinicians and scientists and contribute to mentoring and blossoming of junior women in the field of MS. Dr. Waubant's specific interests include the translation of promising agents from the bench to bedside to advance patients' care, and risk factors for MS susceptibility and disease modification in pediatric and adult MS.

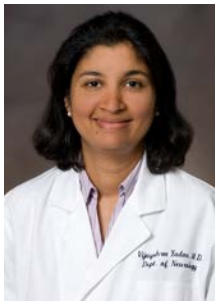
***Howard Weiner, M.D. – Harvard***



Howard L. Weiner is the Robert L. Kroc Professor of Neurology at the Harvard Medical School, Director and Founder of the Partners MS Center, and Co-Director of the Ann Romney Center for Neurologic Diseases at Brigham & Women's Hospital in Boston. The Partners MS Center is the first integrated MS Center that combines clinical care, MRI imaging, and immune monitoring the MS patient as part of the 2000 patient CLIMB cohort study. He has pioneered immunotherapy in MS and has investigated immune mechanisms in nervous system diseases including MS, Alzheimer's Disease, ALS, stroke, and brain tumors. He has also pioneered the investigation of the mucosal immune system for the treatment of autoimmune and other

diseases and the use of anti-CD3 to induce regulatory T cells for the treatment of these diseases. As part of his interest in the mucosal immune system, he is investigating the gut microbiome in MS. He is the author of the book CURING MS and the award-winning film documentary WHAT IS LIFE? THE MOVIE. In 2004, Harvard Medical School honored him with the establishment of the Howard L. Weiner Professorship of Neurologic Diseases. Dr. Weiner is the 2007 recipient of the John Dystel Prize for MS Research and the Koetser Memorial Prize for Brain Research. In 2012 he received the NIH Director's Transformative Research Award for investigating the innate immune system in Alzheimer's disease.

## ***Vijayshree Yadav, M.D. – Oregon Health Sciences***



Dr. Yadav is a MS Fellowship trained Board-Certified Neurologist and a Clinician-Scientist with joint appointments as a Professor of Neurology at Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) and a Veterans Affairs Merit Grant Awardee at the Veterans Affairs Portland Health Care Services (VAPORHCS). She is the Director of the OHSU Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Center, a Staff Neurologist at the VAPORHCS and an Assistant Director of Clinical Care at the MS Center of Excellence-West (MScOE) at the VAPORHCS. Dr. Yadav holds Endowed Professorship by Tykeson Family Foundation in Wellness Research since 2015. Dr. Yadav also serves as the Fellowship Training Director of the Joint MS and Neuroimmunology program at OHSU and VAPORHCS. She also holds a Master's degree in Clinical Research. Her research includes

examining the role of Vascular Disease Risk Factors on brain metabolism in people with MS using advanced brain imaging techniques. She is currently evaluating role of an oral antioxidant called Mitoquinone on fatigue in MS. She led a novel study evaluating role of low-fat diet in people with relapsing-remitting MS that showed significant improvement in fatigue. Her research has been funded by National Institute of Health, Department of Veterans Affairs, National MS Society, Private Foundations and Pharmaceutical Companies. Dr. Yadav's interest and research in Complementary and Alternative (CAM) therapies for MS has been recognized nationally and internationally. She has published several peer reviewed journal articles and regularly presents her research at national and international meetings.

## **Panelists with MS:**

### ***Mark Barondess***



A lawyer for 39 years, Mr. Barondess has earned a well-established national reputation as a respected aggressive civil trial advocate. As the co-founding partner of the forty-lawyer Los Angeles litigation boutique law firm, Miller Barondess, LLP, Mr. Barondess has developed a national stature of respect amongst members of the Bar and Judiciary, especially in the settlement or trial of complex high-profile litigation of matters in the civil litigation field and entertainment and family law practices. His high-profile clients have included a former major Presidential candidate, an Academy Award-winning best actress, Emmy award winners, Grammy Award winners, Rock & Roll Hall of Fame Inductees, and various sports legends including two Olympic Gold Medalists. In support of the community, Mr. Barondess is the

Vice-Chairman, General Counsel, and a Member of the Board of Directors of the We Are Family Foundation, a not-for-profit organization founded by music legend Nile Rodgers, which is dedicated to the vision of a global family by creating and supporting programs that promote cultural diversity while nurturing and mentoring the vision, talents, and ideas of young people who are positively changing the world. He also serves on the Board of Ambassadors of The Johns Hopkins Project Restore, which strives to restore hope, restore function and restore the lives of patients like him and families suffering from transverse myelitis and multiple sclerosis.

### ***Claudia Curry Hill (Moderator)***



Claudia Curry Hill was diagnosed with Primary Progressive MS over 30 years ago. An activist for women's health and the disabled, she is very active in founding and serving on Non-Profit and Community Boards and Committees, including the Race to Erase MS and Colorado, Wyoming MS Society Government Relations Committee, and is a spokesperson for Multiple Sclerosis. Claudia is married, the mother of three, and the owner of CCH Connections, a non-profit and event consulting group in Colorado. She believes that exercise, a positive attitude, and empowering yourself with all the information you can find to improve your quality of life.

### **Nancy Davis (Founder of Race to Erase MS)**



Nancy Davis, one of five children, was born and raised in Denver, Colorado. In 1987 she moved to California and now resides in Los Angeles with her husband and children. She is an extremely dedicated philanthropist, jewelry and now clothing designer, and author. Nancy was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis at the age of 33 in 1991. After being told by her doctors that she would be “lucky” to operate a remote control on her TV, she realized she was too young and too busy to let the disease stop her life in its tracks. She was determined to devote her time, relationships, and resources to finding a cure. Nancy’s hope, courage, and strength continue to inspire her to maintain a vibrant quality of life despite this chronic disease, but most of all, she remains positive, continues to live her life to the fullest, and is tireless in her efforts to find the cure for MS.

### **Chad King**



True to the meaning of its name, A Great Big World encompasses the GRAMMY® Award-winning artistry of Ian Axel and Chad King as well as the duo’s songwriting, scoring, collaborations, and projects across film, television, animation, theater, and beyond. The world fell in love with their music across a series of acclaimed albums. During 2013, A Great Big World delivered “Say Something” with Christina Aguilera. It notably reached 6x-Platinum status, gathered over 1 billion streams, and garnered a 2015 GRAMMY® for “Best Pop Duo/Group Performance.” Their 2014 full-length debut, *Is There Anybody Out There?*, debuted in the Top 3 of the *Billboard* 200 and went Gold. Meanwhile, they continued to captivate with *When The Morning Comes* [2015] and *Particles* [2021]. As creators who can write in either pop, folk, or even classical, their presence has unassumingly coursed through popular culture. Among countless syncs and licenses, the cast of *Glee* famously performed their song “This Is The New Year” in a 2013 episode, as well as their song “Rockstar” shortly thereafter. During 2018, they penned “Fall On Me” for Andrea Bocelli and his son Matteo Bocelli, and the duet graced the soundtrack and end credits of the film *The Nutcracker and the Four Realms*. They later wrote “Return to Love” for Andrea Bocelli and Ellie Goulding, and have since collaborated and released music with Ingrid Michaelson and Jason Mraz. In 2023, they contributed music to popular children’s brand Slumberkins® and most recently released “Nothing’s Impossible” featuring Rachel Platten, a song the duo wrote for Studio Ponoc’s feature film, *The Imaginary*. The pair is currently writing the musical adaptation of *Wonder*, based on the novel by R.J. Palacio and the Lionsgate film. Ian and Chad maintain a commitment to vulnerable, clever, earnest, and heartfelt songwriting above all. Chad King was a senior at New York University (‘07) when he was diagnosed with Relapsing Remitting Multiple Sclerosis. Since his diagnosis, he has continued to adapt to the challenges MS has brought to his life. Chad maintains an optimistic spirit and an unwavering commitment to his health and well-being.