

# TWO FOUNDATIONS, ONE GOAL



1. The Wallock Family, pictured left to right, front row: Randy, Audrey and Michael Wallock; back row: Dana and Keith Wallock, David, Jake, Heather and Hunter Gittleman.



2. Michael Davis with his daughter, Sydney.

The beginnings of the Foundation for Diabetes Research (FDR) somewhat mirror that of the DRI Foundation. It all started in New Jersey with a group of parents of children with diabetes who banded together to do whatever was necessary to find a cure for their loved ones. Their mission – to fund research to find a cure for type 1 diabetes.

The FDR was founded in 1999 by approximately 90 families. In less than a decade, the organization has doubled its membership, and its grassroots efforts have provided seed funding in excess of \$2 million for various diabetes research projects. Approximately half of those funds have been contributed to the cure-focused work of the Diabetes Research Institute.

*"We're a small organization, but we raise a decent amount of money each year through two events, a golf tournament in August and a fashion show in October that draws 600 to 800 people,"* stated **Michael Wallock**, who is FDR's grant committee chairperson and previously served as its first president and chairman of the board. *"Bottom line, we're looking for a cure, and DRI has been in our scope for a long time."*

FDR's current president, **Michael Davis**, further explained that the FDR grants funds to selected research programs by a peer review process. The FDR's first grant funded a "fast track" laboratory at the Institute, and they have since funded studies by the DRI's Dr. Ricardo Pastori and Dr. Juan Dominguez Bendala. He added, *"It is important that we affiliate our organization with the leading diabetes research centers in the world, and I think our history shows that DRI is just that."*

Mr. Davis, whose 16-year-old daughter, **Sydney**, was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes in 1998, visited the DRI with his wife, **Leslie**, during a Florida vacation. *"As a layman, I consider myself to be tuned in to research, but the tour made everything sink in. We could see and feel how unique the DRI truly is."*

The Wallocks couldn't agree more. Michael and his wife, **Audrey**, have been dedicated to diabetes causes ever since their daughter, **Heather**, was diagnosed with type 1 in 1980. She was 8 years old.

*"I'm not a scientist or a doctor. I became active in fundraising because I felt it was the only way I could do something for my daughter in a proactive way,"* said Michael, who is a vice president of the Wharton Group, an independent insurance broker. *"When the Foundation for Diabetes Research first started funding projects at the DRI, Audrey and I went down voluntarily to take a tour. We were very impressed with what the DRI is doing."*

While remaining dedicated to the FDR, Michael demonstrated his steadfast commitment to the Diabetes Research Institute by joining the DRI Foundation's National Board in early 2008. He summed up his support by saying, *"I've been active in the diabetes cause for so long that I thought at my age now I would be able to take it easy. My daughter is in good health. She's on the pump and doing well. But after she had my grandson, I realized that the battle is not over."* He concluded, *"I will do as much as I can for my local organization and for the DRI. Ultimately, it's what I feel is our best chance for a cure."*