**RHEUMATOID AWARENESS DAY 2015**

**3rd Annual Rheumatoid Awareness Day Campaign**

Rheumatoid Awareness Day was established by RPF in 2013, and is observed on February 2, giving people with the chronic illness known as rheumatoid arthritis, or rheumatoid disease, a day of recognition. Because the disease is commonly presumed to be a type of arthritis, awareness about the systemic nature of the disease is lacking, causing problems with disability accommodations, clinical care, healthcare costs and research funding.

- Rheumatoid Awareness Day Twitter Chat to discuss raising awareness and working to overcome misconceptions
- “15 Seconds of Fame” video challenge asking people to share why we need a cure for Rheumatoid Disease
- Awareness Campaign: 15 Ways to Spread Awareness for Rheumatoid Disease in 2015
- Focused messaging on replacing the word “Arthritis” with “Disease” to more accurately name this chronic illness

Learn more at [rheum4us.org](http://rheum4us.org)
In 2015, RPF held its first scholarship program for individuals and families who are affected by rheumatoid disease. We recognize the financial strain that rheumatoid arthritis can place on a family and the career challenges many people with rheumatoid disease face. In light of that, we are happy to be able to offer some support to those looking to advance their education and/or change careers.

- Unique scholarship program, available to students with rheumatoid disease or who have a parent with the disease
- Applicable toward any higher education institution
- Open to any age to allow financial assistance to older students who may need to change careers due to the affects of RD
- Two $1,000 Scholarships awarded

2015 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

MELISSA ELLER

"I wanted to express my gratitude to you all for this opportunity. I had given up hope on ever being able to become an event planner but now thanks to this scholarship I can say that my dream job is within reach now!"

MANDY JONES

"I am pursuing my dreams to become a biomedical engineer. I have been accepted to Saint Louis University, University of Alabama-Birmingham, and The University of Tennessee, with scholarship to all three. Take that, RA!"
Patient Videos in Rheumatology Offices

The Rheumatoid Patient Foundation has collaborated with the ContextMedia:Health Network to provide content on a patient education TV network to doctors' offices across the country, including over 800 rheumatology offices.

Patients Supporting Patients in Their Doctors' Offices

Our hope is to provide educational resources that are easy to understand and to provide encouragement and support to others with rheumatoid disease during their time spent in doctors' waiting rooms. Rheumatoid disease can be confusing and isolating; and sometimes just hearing from another voice who understands can provide hope.

- Over 800 rheumatology offices across the United States
- 3 RPF videos in circulation
- Over 12 MILLION impressions
RPF believes that sharing our own personal stories about living with rheumatoid disease is a great way to provide support for others. Knowing we are not alone in our experiences can be one of the most encouraging things. RPF published a series of blog posts in 2015 featuring RPF members and supporters. We thank our supporters who are willing to share their stories and help others who are going through similar situations.

There is one thing that has helped me deal with all the losses and changes this disease brings. One day I decided to stop focusing on what I could no longer do, and started focusing on what I COULD DO. That shift in perspective has been very helpful. I feel more empowered in my life as a result.—Roberta Wands

—Roberta Wands
Blood Donations for Rheumatoid Disease Research

One of the goals of the Rheumatoid Patient Foundation is to contribute to and promote scientific discovery that leads to a cure. In 2015, we partnered with Sanguine Bioscience to provide one simple way that people with rheumatoid disease can get involved to help accelerate research and perhaps get us one step closer to that ultimate goal of a cure.

- One-time blood donation – available to be conducted in the participant’s home
- Each qualified participant received $50 for their donation
- Sanguine provided RPF with a $25 donation for each referred participant
GET INVOLVED:
15 WAYS YOU CAN SPREAD AWARENESS OF RHEUMATOID DISEASE

1. Share Awareness Images on Social Media
2. Sport Awareness Gear or Colors
3. Add a Twibbon to your Social Media Avatars
4. Change your Facebook Cover Photo
5. Join #Rheum Chat on Twitter
6. Hand Out Awareness Cards
7. Get an Official Proclamation for Rheumatoid Awareness Day in your Locality
8. Tell Your Story
9. Become a Member
10. Support our Partners
11. Create a 15 Second Awareness Video
12. Educate Yourself to Better Educate Others
13. Host a Fundraiser
14. Donate a Photo for use in RPF Publications
15. Plan Your Own Rheumatoid Awareness Day Celebration

Learn more at rheum4us.org