

President's Report
Fiscal Year 2013



Dear FIRST Friends and Members:

This is my first letter to you as President of FIRST. Let me begin by extending our gratitude to Dave Scholl, past president, for his tireless efforts over the past six years to help bring us to the level of professionalism we have attained.

Our challenge for 2014 will be to expand on our successes of 2013, which was a very busy, energetic, and exciting year.

It was a very positive fundraising year as we saw unparalleled success in grassroots teams raising 21% more than 2012. More and more of our members are becoming involved and realizing that no matter how large or small their contributions are, every dollar counts. Additionally, we established a Major Gifts Committee to lead the mission of developing a multi-tiered major gifts campaign. We have also established an Investment Committee who works closely with SunTrust Bank to ensure our long-term stability and financial success.

Earlier in 2013, Maureen Neville was added to our team as Communications Director for FIRST, to help us strengthen our efforts and accomplish our mission of educating, inspiring, and connecting. Our means of communicating have been refreshed, and there has been dramatic positive communications added to our plan, including informational videos, enhanced social media activity, and additional electronic communications.

As for the research grant program, established in 2006, we continue to have three active medical research grants being funded, enabling the progress of ichthyosis research to continue an upward climb toward better treatments and, hopefully, an eventual cure.

We have also added new members to our Medical & Scientific Board, led by Dr. Leonard Milstone, totaling 32 members. Four new board members were welcomed this year to FIRST's Board of Directors. We are also fortunate that Dave Scholl agreed to remain on as Board Member Emeritus.

We have a very sound structure to help guide us and continue our positive growth following our long-term strategic plan. There is no doubt we have become the leading source of information and research in the world for ichthyosis and with that comes great responsibility.

I look forward to our continued success in 2014, and I am always open to your suggestions for improvement. Hopefully I will see many of you in Indy this summer!

Sincerely,
Mike Briggs