



# FARA NEWS

February 4, 2011

Dear FARA Directors, Advisors and Friends,

**FARA has received a 4 star rating from Charity Navigator, America's largest and most-utilized independent evaluator of charities.** This is the highest possible rating. "Only one-quarter of the charities evaluated by Charity Navigator have received this designation, indicating that Friedreich's Ataxia Research Alliance executes its mission in a fiscally responsible way, and outperforms most other charities in America. This "exceptional" designation from Charity Navigator differentiates Friedreich's Ataxia Research Alliance from its peers and demonstrates to the public it is worthy of their trust."

In 2006, FARA was at a decision point - stay a smaller all volunteer organization with virtually no overhead or grow exponentially and take on the fiscal responsibility associated with that decision. FARA's directors made the decision to invest in growth so that more progress could be made, faster, on our most important mission - curing Friedreich's Ataxia. In doing so we have been very vigilant about keeping our operating and fundraising costs as low as possible. FARA still relies on dedicated volunteers and supporters, who lead our organization, raise funds and awareness, and support many operational activities. This has allowed us to focus our human and financial resources on advancing the science and growing the FA research community through funding more competitive research grants every year, growing our clinical research infrastructure, investing in drug discovery and development tools, and hosting important scientific meetings to promote collaboration.

The FARA staff is incredibly proud of this recognition and we will continue to remain lean and efficient and focused on our mission. We are not building an organization to stand the tests of time; we are building to bring treatments and a cure to this devastating disease.

Finally, after receiving this excellent news yesterday one of FARA's most prominent and cutting-edge research teams released this video about their work. FARA and our partner, FARA-Australasia, have provided several research grants to Drs. Dottori and Pebay during the past two years to directly advance the creation of these most valuable cells. Take a few minutes to watch this video - these new cell models are amazing. They will allow us to test and develop drugs more quickly and effectively and open up new avenues of stem cell and genetic therapies for FA.

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RzNiPcORnaY&feature=youtube\\_gdata\\_player](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RzNiPcORnaY&feature=youtube_gdata_player)

Thank you all so much for your continued leadership and support.

Best regards,

Jennifer Farmer  
Executive Director