

CONTACT:  
Vincent Del Gaizo  
908-303-9037  
[Vincent@friendsofcarra.org](mailto:Vincent@friendsofcarra.org)  
[www.friendsofcarra.org](http://www.friendsofcarra.org)

March 10, 2010

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **\$8 MILLION IN STIMULUS FUNDS TO SAVE THE LIVES OF CHILDREN**

**New York, NY.** – The \$800 billion dollar stimulus bill passed by congress last year is under extreme scrutiny by the media but little attention is focused on the positive results of this bill. Last September, the Childhood Arthritis and Rheumatology Research Alliance (CARRA) was awarded \$8 million dollars in research grants to find treatments for the number one cause of acquired disability in children.

Over 300,000 children in the United States have some form of pediatric rheumatic diseases such as arthritis, lupus, dermatomyositis, scleroderma, and vasculitis.

“These two grants will result in better care for children and provide them with a better future,” said Vincent Del Gaizo, president of the Friends of CARRA. “Parents trust the treatment that doctors are providing for their children and the information gained from this research will provide the needed information to determine the proper risk versus reward of certain treatments.”

The National Institute of Health awarded a grant of \$7 million to lead principal investigator and CARRA steering committee member, Dr. Laura Schanberg from Duke University to develop the disease registry CARRA-Net. This grant will develop the infrastructure, identify data points, and support data entry at 60 nationwide CARRA clinics.

CARRA-Net will provide the opportunity for affected children at every CARRA clinic to participate in high quality clinical and translational research. The ultimate goal of the grant is to bring pediatric rheumatology research to a level that will dramatically improve the outcomes and quality of life for all children with rheumatic diseases.

The National Institute of Health awarded an additional grant of \$1 million dollars to fellow lead principal investigator and CARRA chair Dr. Carol Wallace from the Seattle Children’s Hospital to develop comparative effectiveness research in four main pediatric rheumatic diseases; arthritis, dermatomyositis, lupus and localized scleroderma.

Termed CARRA-Rx, this grant will determine the best care protocols for each of the four main diseases and allow for analysis of safe treatments, identify long term complications, comparisons of effectiveness of long term outcomes, develop standards of care, and set benchmarks for quality care. This methodology and process will serve as a template and guide for similar efforts in other pediatric rheumatic diseases.

-more-

CARRA-Rx is a huge step toward having 100 percent participation from every afflicted child in a study that could ultimately lead to a cure.

Those interested in supporting children with rheumatic diseases can visit [www.friendsofcarra.org](http://www.friendsofcarra.org) or [www.carragroup.org](http://www.carragroup.org) for more information.

# # #

For more stories, photos, and videos, please contact Vincent Del Gaizo, president of Friends of CARRA at 908-303-9037 or [vincent@friendsofcarra.org](mailto:vincent@friendsofcarra.org).

[www.friendsofcarra.org](http://www.friendsofcarra.org)