

# GREEN and LAM

## UPDATE FALL 2009



A MESSAGE  
FROM  
CATHERINE  
LAWRENCE

*A funny thing happened on my way to writing this message.*

*As many of you know, I am not often at a loss for words. I have an uncanny ability to strike up a conversation with strangers ...taxi drivers, flight attendants and party supply store-owners! Actually I've told every person I've met in the past six months, how amazing my friends and family have been to me. I've told them how you all worked tirelessly to help organize and host one of the most exciting and important experiences of my life. That you came together to give of yourselves and reached out to your own communities to help finance the LAM science meeting and play a significant role in funding vital research into this horrific disease.*

*But what I realized on my way to writing this message was I hadn't yet articulated to all of you what your contributions have meant to me. The gathering of the great science minds, the laughter, the unwavering support of my friends and family is both overwhelming and humbling. I know you all are with me on the road to finding a cure.*

*Thank you from the bottom of my lungs.*

*Catherine*

### Men and Women are from MaRS!

"Innovation" and "gateway" are two of the words that I find so inspiring about the work that is being done at the MaRS Collaboration Centre and made it the perfect place to host the LAM Summit and kick off fundraising party last April.

The party was a wonderful chance for our tireless committee and volunteers to rub "lungs" with some of the brilliant scientific minds that flew from all over the world to



Committee member Craig Jarvis with Dr. Alfredo Gorio from the University of Milano.



Global TV anchor, Leslie Roberts interviews Dr. Amy Farber from Harvard. She is a LAM patient, and is the founder and CEO of the LAM Treatment Alliance.

attend. They all seemed to enjoy our "gift bags" complete with rubber chicken and a copy of Green Eggs and Ham, which motivated many relaxed conversations and welcomed our esteemed guests "Green Eggs and LAM" style!

Our posters were perfect in their direct simplicity and also had a sense of whimsy that is also part of our Green Eggs and LAM approach.

It was a great night of exchange with a fantastic mixture of scientists and supporters from all walks of life. Different ideas and thoughts not only of LAM but laughter and community created the perfect balance. It was a celebration motivating common ground. Little did I know that "the



Part of the energetic Green Eggs & LAM committee member team: (L to R) Chris Hart, Billie, Elaine Vacheresse, Robin Perry, Catherine, Phyllis Ellis and Christopher Tory.

Photos: Caley Taylor



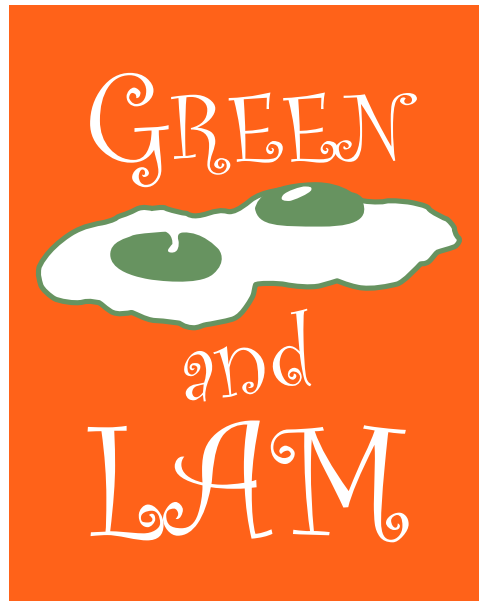
Over 200 yummy green eggs cupcakes were generously donated by “Lollicakes”, 559 Mount Pleasant Road, Toronto.



This year’s “LAMB” Brett Kelleher enjoying the evening with committee CFO Barbara Hackett and Catherine.



Fresh insight at the Summit from Dr. Jack Elias from the Yale School of Medicine.



human body” might be the only sentence I would understand the following day!! However we ALL understood the word “Cheers” as we celebrated the kick off to the Summit that evening.

What an extraordinary collaboration of great minds, as 30 international scientists and researchers gathered for 8 hours the following day to share, learn and exchange ideas about LAM. Although they had me (and lost me) at “Hello” I knew we were in the presence of greatness, their genius motivated toward the possibility of a cure for LAM. Dr. Amy Farber, created the focused agenda, and brilliantly facilitated the meeting.



Dr. Augustine Choi – Harvard Medical School takes a moment to familiarize himself with LAM.



LAM patients Yolanda Martins and Dr. Marsha Cohen, smile at the amazing gathering of minds.



Dr. William Stanford – University of Toronto shares a laugh with LAM expert Dr. Joel Moss – NIH, Bethesda, Maryland.

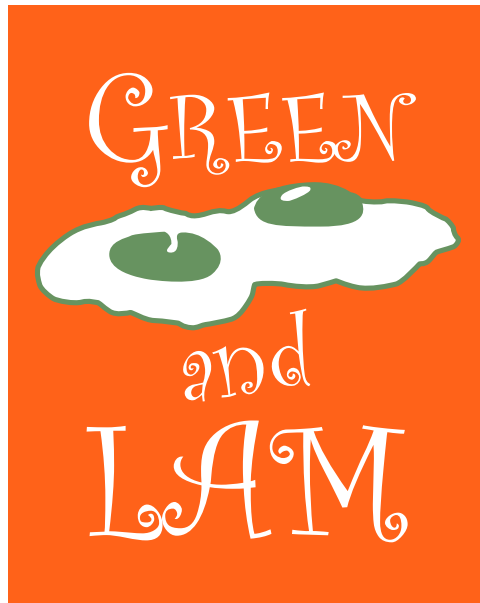


*Design and printing of educational LAM posters were generously donated by Scott Morris architects, Toronto.*



*Dr. Joel Moss is reminded that LAM is a women's disease. Dr. Lisa Henske (fourth from left) joined the fun with Catherine's friends and family.*

Dr. Gorio, eloquently summarized 6 years of LAM studies in 15 minutes. Some were lung specialists, others leading researchers in other respiratory diseases but the fact that research into rare diseases like LAM can inform more common diseases was important. Given an opportunity to converse with each other and brilliant LAM experts like Dr. Joel Moss and Dr. Lisa Henske will greatly accelerate the possibility of a cure for LAM and other lung diseases. Watching their excitement and enthusiasm was astounding. It was somewhat like when we found cupcakes with eggs on them in green and white for the event (thank you Billie)!! It's all about point of difference!!!



*Journalist Mary Ann Colihan conducts an interview with Dr. Henske during the Summit "Kick-Off" party.*



*Loot bags given to the scientists injected humour and fun into this serious subject.*



*The meeting of great minds: (L to R) Dr. Andras Nagy – University of Toronto, Dr. Robin Tuder – University of Colorado School of Medicine, Dr. William Stanford – University of Toronto, Dr. Bela Suki – Boston University, and Dr. Caroline Owen – Harvard Medical School.*



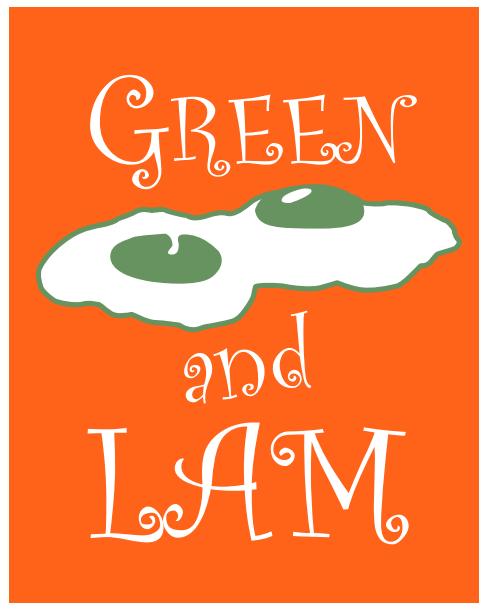
*Dr. Jeannie D'Arimento and Dr. Kirin Chada with Dr. Bela Suki.*



*Dr. Param Dedhia of Canyon Ranch, Tucson, Arizona laughing with Catherine and Dr. Les Kobzik of Harvard School of Public Health.*

Our kick off party raised \$60,000 dollars that financed the Summit and contributed an additional \$15,000 to the \$130,000 which is now directly at work in the lab. As part of the engine that powered this unique day, you not only helped gather international scientists and researchers who are already dedicated to LAM, you also helped enlist new minds who are now committed to joining the race against the disease. Thank you.

The scientists who attended were inspired by this day that included not only intense and productive information sharing but also a spontaneous environment that promoted open dialogue that has continued since the event.



*Volunteer committee members Phyllis Ellis and Jennifer Tory.*



*Thank you so much to all the participating scientists and researchers. Some, pictured here, were able to join the launch party.*



*Catherine and Lois Rice. The Rice family has generously supported LAM from the outset of Catherine's diagnosis.*



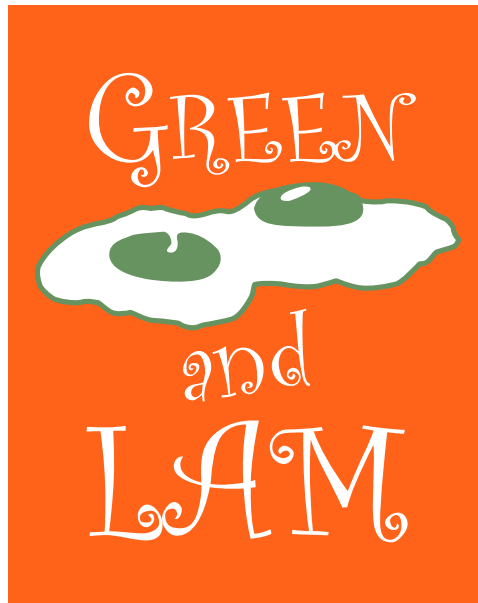
Maverick Public Relations president Julie Rusciollelli and Robin Perry pose with Catherine wearing the "Nice Pair" apron.



More avid LAM supporters: (L to R) Stephen Blaney, Jerome Morse (Catherine's husband) and Hart Pomeranz.

Thanks to the support of other funders, 100% of the event proceeds have gone directly to LAM research.

LAM is a women's disease. It has no common or typical set of symptoms; each case presents itself in a unique way. This fascinated most of the Summit attendees not familiar with LAM. The fact that it is difficult to diagnose and presents itself so uniquely also became a motivator for many to express great interest in contributing their knowledge and work toward a cure. LAM is aggressive and attacks relentlessly. The researchers are approaching the task of finding a cure with the same fervor. We are able now, because of this event and



Philanthropist Cheryl McEwen, co-founder of the McEwen Centre for Regenerative Medicine at the University Health Network.



Enjoying a great evening: (L to R) Dr. Param Dedhia and Lynn Goldman with Catherine's children Ben, Allie and Claire Morse.



Dr. Joel Moss and Catherine sharing a fun moment about Green Eggs and LAM.

others, to directly contribute to the scientists and researchers at the University of Toronto who are tirelessly working in labs today, and to spread awareness encouraging fast diagnosis and outreach.

We look forward to the day the scientists announce a cure for LAM.

I don't have a "perfect pair" right now but I have a great apron! I have a difficult and challenging disease but I have amazing friends, family and supporters that have joined me and other women battling in the fight against LAM. I can't run for a cure but I can help chase down every possible doctor, researcher or scientist until I find one. There is no way I could do it without you. Sometimes it's hard to receive but one thing this disease has given me is the stillness to see and feel the love and support around me.

Thank you.



*Catherine with loving, supportive friends (L to R) John Anderson, Chris Hart, Catherine, Tracy Adair and Kathryn Anderson.*



*Leslie Roberts quarterbacked the MaRS "Kick-Off" party with his trademark eloquence and humour.*



**COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Leslie Roberts	Barbara Hackett
Judy & Craig Jarvis	Nancy Rowland
Jane Berry Chisholm	The Honourable Justice Gloria Epstein
Phyllis Ellis	Deborah Scott
Robin Perry	Dr. Marsha Cohen
Victoria Foley	Christine Hart
Bonnie Levy	Elaine Vacheresse
Christopher Tory	Jennifer Tory
Billie	Gill Evans
Jane Chisholm	



*LAMB Brett Kelleher and Dr. Jane Yu from Harvard.*



*Catherine thanks Tim Sellers for his support of this exciting MaRS event.*

# FLASH from the LAB

One of the mysteries of LAM is that we don't know where it comes from. We need information as to where and how LAM starts in the body. In the past, Dr. Bill Stanford's lab at the University of Toronto has been able to take adult cells of different types (skin, hair, etc) and reprogram them into stem cells. When the stem cells are allowed to differentiate randomly in culture, they appear to differentiate better into their cell of origin.

Dr. Stanford has taken a LAM cell line from a LAM patient sent by Dr. Lisa Henske in Boston, and has attempted to reprogram those cells.

## Update from Dr. Bill Stanford:

"The update is that we have attempted to reprogram LAM cells from a patient into an induced pluripotent stem (iPS) cell line to develop a cell culture model of LAM.

Unfortunately, the drug inducible strategy we used to express the reprogramming factors (the reprogramming factors are used to convert cells into stem cells) kill the LAM cells. Thus, we learned these LAM cells are very sensitive to the drug (an antibiotic, doxycycline) we used to reprogram the cells. It is tempting to think that we may have stumbled onto a drug that could kill LAM cells in patients. However, we don't know if this patient's LAM cells were sensitive to the drug before or after their cells were placed in culture many years ago. Moreover, this same drug, doxycycline, was tested in LAM patients a number of years ago with modest results. However, we have informed other researchers about the drug sensitivity to determine if other LAM cells are also sensitive to this drug. We are developing other strategies to reprogram the LAM cells and model this disease in the culture dish. In fact, our current reprogramming experiment looks promising. In a few weeks, we'll know for sure if we have LAM iPS cells. This will be exciting and allow us to perform a number of important experiments including analyzing the propensity of the LAM iPS cells to differentiate into different cell types, which could provide insight into the cell of origin of LAM."

GREEN  
and  
LAM



*Dr. William Stanford, Canada Research Chair in Stem Cell Bioengineering and functional genomics.*

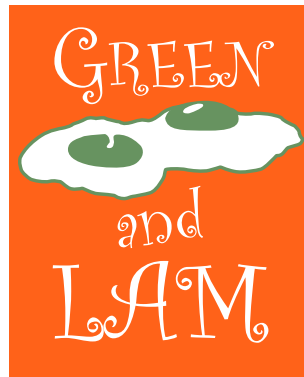
# WOOL OF FAME

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