



May 7, 2013

Statement on ALS breakthrough from Terre Constantine,

Executive Director of Brain Research Foundation:

ALS (Lou Gherig's Disease) Breakthrough Underscores Importance of Collaboration To Brain Research

As the result of a major breakthrough by researchers at Northwestern University's School of Medicine, researchers studying amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), commonly known as Lou Gherig's disease, are now one step closer to unlocking the nature of ALS. The recent discovery which for the first time isolated motor neurons in the brain affected by ALS offers a glimmer of hope to those who currently suffer from the deadly disease which rapidly breaks down their bodies while leaving mental capacity in tact. Brain Research Foundation, Les Turner ALS Foundation, The National Institute of Health and Wenske Foundation all provided grants to fund this research. This research is a significant achievement in our understanding of ALS and is only possible because multiple foundations with a commitment to brain research joined with the NIH to support the work. As so often is the case, the achievement and commitment of the Northwestern University research team exceeds their funding for which we are all grateful. This achievement and how it came about dramatizes the urgent need for increased funding on brain research, especially from non-governmental organizations. Northwestern University's research team is one of hundreds throughout the U.S. working diligently to unlock mysteries surrounding all types of brain disease. Overall government funding for brain research over the last three years has been significantly

reduced in real dollar terms. It would be a man-made tragedy if work to advance discoveries like this was slowed due to a lack of funding.