Research prizes honoring Richard Levine, MD, MPH and Frederick Zuspan, MD

MELBOURNE, FL – August 31, 2011 – The Preeclampsia Foundation today announced the creation of two new memorial donation funds, as well as an agreement with the International Society for the Study of Hypertension in Pregnancy (ISSHP) to administer one of ISSHP's well known prizes named in honor of Dr. Fred Zuspan and to help perpetuate its endowment. Both these actions aim at furthering preeclampsia research.

Dr. Fred Zuspan (1922-2009) and Dr. Richard Levine (1940-2011) made significant contributions to our understanding and management of preeclampsia, and energized research in this previously understudied area of obstetric medicine. The Zuspan Awards, currently two $1,000 USD prizes, are awarded biennially at the ISSHP's World Congress and recognize two young investigators whose clinical abstracts are considered outstanding. The Levine Award, which will be formed this year, will fund travel grants for young investigators to present their research at scientific meetings and further encourage these investigators to pursue preeclampsia as their career research field.

Zuspan, a dominant figure in maternal-fetal medicine for over 50 years, devoted his career to improving care, conducting and encouraging others to research preeclampsia. In 1963, he developed and promoted an intravenous magnesium sulfate regimen to treat preeclampsia/eclampsia that now, internationally adopted, remains the standard for treating this disease over 45 years later. In the 1970s, he co-hosted the invitational meeting at the University of Chicago that led to the formation of the ISSHP, also serving as one of its initial presidents. He was a member of the NIH-sponsored Working Group on Hypertension in Pregnancy that produced the 1990 report of the National High Blood Pressure Education Program, a major collaboration where internists and obstetricians resolved differing preeclampsia management practices. He edited the American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology for four decades, introducing a focus on preeclampsia. As a department chairman for decades, he was the impetus for many of his young faculty to focus their investigative careers in preeclampsia. He was also a decorated WWII pilot and, during his later years in practice, a medical missionary to Zaire.

Levine, a renowned epidemiologist, had a productive and highly varied career, working for the Peace Corp, Centers for Disease Control & Prevention and, early in his career, the Alabama Health Department. In 1991, he joined the Epidemiology Branch of the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) where, for the remainder of

his career, he focused on preeclampsia. During the 1990s he led a major multicenter trial to determine if calcium supplementation could prevent preeclampsia, work that inspired the World Health Organization's own studies and their current preventative and therapeutic calcium projects in countries where calcium intake is low. Levine's insight to store samples from that trial led to his more recent signal collaborative studies demonstrating that measuring maternal blood levels of proteins called antiangiogenic factors could predict preeclampsia weeks before it manifested clinically, especially the more devastating early-onset preeclampsia. In more recently published works, he again collaborated in studies that have clarified relationships between both thyroid disease and obesity with preeclampsia.

Both funds are accepting donations now. Contributions may be mailed to Preeclampsia Foundation, 6767 N. Wickham Road, Melbourne, FL 32940. The specific fund designation should be noted on the check's memo line. Alternatively, credit card donations can be accepted on the Foundation's website at www.preeclampsia.org .

**About the Preeclampsia Foundation:** The Preeclampsia Foundation is a U.S.-based 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization established in 2000. It is dedicated to providing patient support and education, raising public awareness, catalyzing research and improving health care practices, envisioning a world where preeclampsia and related hypertensive disorders of pregnancy no longer threaten the lives of mothers and babies. For more information, visit www.preeclampsia.org
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