NATX Has a New Executive Director

NATX is pleased to introduce Lauren Hoffman-Arriaga as our new Executive Director. She is a familiar face to the organization as she has served as a board member for the past five years, most recently as the Vice Chairperson. Lauren arrives from a background in public health as an epidemiologist. Her data driven approach will guide operations and support organizational decision-making while her passion for improving health opportunities for the community aligns with NATX’s mission. She is looking forward to seeing NATX grow as we mature together as an organization.

Update from the Executive Director Lauren Hoffman-Arriaga

As an organization whose mission is to best serve you as a network of neuropathy patients, caregivers or providers, NATX took time to evaluate our performance during the first half of the year. We examined how our services were meeting your needs, what kind of support neuropathy patients are looking for, and methods for increasing our impact. Moving into the second half of the year, NATX is processing your feedback and moving forward to enhance our activities. In the upcoming support group meetings, there will also be a focus on living life well with neuropathy. NATX is proud to offer expert speakers at our meetings, however, that is limited to those who are able to make it to meetings. We understand many neuropathy patients have trouble getting to meetings for various reasons. As a solution, we will be exploring ways to reach more people by providing educational content online. Watch for these updates on our website and social media pages.

Our vision is that anyone in Texas afflicted with or affected by neuropathy receives the support and education they need to live better. We continue to work for improving the quality of life of neuropathy patients. We could not do this without you!

あなたのお礼を承らせて \n
NATX は新しい執行役を \n
NATX は、新しい執行役Lauren Hoffman-Arriagaを紹介することができました。彼女は組織内での既存のメンバーであり、過去5年間で重要な役割を果たし、特に副会長として。ランセンは公衆衛生のエピデミオロジーの専門家です。そのデータを基にしたアプローチは、活動を支援し、組織の成長とともに、私たちが成熟するのを助けるための基盤を築きます。彼女の組織の業務を指導する意欲を示し、健康の機会を改善することを志すコミュニティとの関係がNATXの使命を同じくします。彼女は、NATXが成長するのを助け、私たちは成熟して一緒に活動するのを期待しています。

執務主任からの更新Lauren Hoffman-Arriaga

私が組織に関する役割を有する人々を最大限に活用することを目的として、NATXは開発および維持するための各サービスの性状を検証しました。2020年の前半における私たちの評価を基に、私たちはあなたのフィードバックを受理し、活動を改善していきます。次に、2020年の後半において、NATXはあなたのフィードバックを受理し、活動を改善していきます。次に、NATXは新しい執行役Lauren Hoffman-Arriagaを紹介することができました。彼女は組織内での既存のメンバーであり、過去5年間で重要な役割を果たし、特に副会長として。ランセンは公衆衛生のエピデミオロジーの専門家です。そのデータを基にしたアプローチは、活動を支援し、組織の成長とともに、私たちが成熟するのを助けるための基盤を築きます。彼女の組織の業務を指導する意欲を示し、健康の機会を改善することを志すコミュニティとの関係がNATXの使命を同じくします。彼女は、NATXが成長するのを助け、私たちは成熟して一緒に活動するのを期待しています。

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Finally, NATX is partnering with the Foundation for Peripheral Neuropathy to bring you the Annual Patient Conference Austin, Texas this year! This year’s conference taking place on September 14th will be centered around “Living Your Best Life with Peripheral Neuropathy.” Topics will include the latest in neuropathy research, physical and emotional health skills, and clever adaptations for your lifestyle. Attendees can participate in person or virtually across the country. Join for this patient-centric conference at the Foundation for Peripheral Neuropathy’s website. We look forward to seeing you there!

Thank you for making NATX what it is today! We are only able to support our clients and members because of your support and generosity.

Our vision is that anyone in Texas afflicted with or affected by neuropathy receives the support and education they need to more effectively handle neuropathy and reach their highest potential.

Cindy Frey

Growing up in a small town in Michigan, Cindy was surrounded by relatives who were affected by foot problems. Several of them were tested at a university to determine if anyone had Charcot-Marie- Tooth or CMT, a hereditary type of peripheral neuropathy. They found the disease was being caused by a mutated gene passed down from Cindy’s maternal grandfather. Cindy explained, “I was about three years old at the time and doctors said I was too young to be tested.” Most of her relatives had to wear orthotics or special arch supports in their shoes to help them walk while their feet developed high arches and hammer toes, a common characteristic of CMT.

Her sister started having problems when she was in her 20s, working all day standing on her feet. She still has a lot of difficulty finding shoes to fit her properly. Her mother started when she was in her 20s and it led her to hold on to something to help her balance. As Cindy’s mother put it, “She took one step forward, then two steps back.” One of her aunt’s great-uncles went as far as to have surgery to straighten the bones in her feet.

Although the neuropathy plagued her mother, sister and other relatives, Cindy didn’t really have any symptoms until about 15 years ago. Around that time, she received an injection for an unrelated medical condition and shortly thereafter started feeling numbness in her feet. A few years ago, her doctor ran a nerve conduction test to confirm that she too had CMT and found that she also had neuropathy in her hands.

The most common causes of neuropathy are a result of a life event, be that a result of chemotherapy, injury or diabetes. But for hereditary forms of neuropathy, people are born with genes that trigger neuropathy. For some, neuropathy has been part of their life as long as they can remember, for others, like Cindy, symptoms develop later in life, while even others will inherit the genes and never have neuropathy symptoms. If neuropathy runs in your family, you may ask your provider if they recommend genetic testing for you.

On living with her hereditary neuropathy, Cindy says, “NATX has been a great source of information. I enjoy the doctors and other practitioners that are invited to speak at our meetings. I even met a few people with CMT through the group as it helps to know you’re not alone!” She has been a long-time supporter of NATX and regularly attends the monthly support group meetings in Austin.

For her overall health and well-being, Cindy exercises routinely, eats a whole foods plant-based diet, and receives regular chiropractic and massage treatments. She doesn’t take any prescription medications. Cindy continues to live well with her neuropathy, and was honored to be a contributing author in the book, Thresholds: 75 Stories of How Changing Your Perspective Can Change Your Life, which shares inspirational stories, including Cindy’s about overcoming challenges. You can purchase her book on Amazon Smiles!
Women with Type 2 Diabetes Found More Likely to Get Neuropathy than Men

A recent research study has found that in type 2 diabetes (T2D) patients, women are more likely to experience neuropathic symptoms. The study, originally set out to determine if a vitamin D deficiency in patients with T2D increases their risk for neuropathic pain, did not find significant link between vitamin D and neuropathy in T2D patients. Studies are beginning to show an “association” between neuropathy and the sex of the patient.

The research team discovered that there were more women with neuropathic pain, 23.4% were female, they concluded that the sex was the only significant predictor of neuropathic pain in T2D patients. The scientists did acknowledge, however, that future studies on this topic are needed, and more research should be done to have more conclusive results. They stated, “The current study is the first report that did not find any association between vitamin D levels and neuropathy in patients.”

Sources:

Support Group Meeting Highlight: Driving and Neuropathy

The ability to drive is an integral part of our daily lives and holds a lot of meaning to all of us. As our ability to drive is our ability to access the community, provides us with independence, and is intimately tied into our self-worth. Some people might be concerned that as we age or our neuropathy symptoms worsen, that we’ll lose the ability to drive. Megan Frances, MS, OTR, DSW, owner of Functional Stability and Mobility, spoke with us this summer and provided various resources for driving safety and information on potential driving options. Her company provides driving evaluations and training focused on keeping clients safely on the road for as long as possible. Symptoms such as foot and hand numbness, slowed response time, loss of balance, and difficulty seeing how much pressure you are pressing on the gas pedal can significantly impact your ability to safely drive. Medications and related side effects are also an important consideration when considering driving safety. You can check how your medications might affect your driving at roadready.org. It is important to speak regularly with your doctor about how your symptoms are progressing and if you notice them affecting your driving. Your physician can recommend a referral to an Occupational Therapist Driver Rehab Specialist (OTDRS), who can complete comprehensive driving evaluations and inform you about how your specific symptoms are impacting your driving. You may find that you could benefit from adaptive modifications such as hand controls, a left foot accelerator, and/or steering wheel modifications to increase your safety, help you continue driving longer and help you live your best life.

If you found the information from Megan beneficial and want to learn more, join us at the Foundation for Peripheral Neuropathy Patient Conference on September 14th where she will provide more modification tips for driving to make your life more accessible.

Neuropathy Alliance TX (NATX) has a new book for each of the Support Group Libraries. "How to Live Well with Chronic Pain and Illness" by Tori Bernard. Amazon describes the book, "Chronic illness creates many challenges that may subtly or not-so-subtly affect your relationship with others, relationship issues with strangers, family, and isolation, and solitude..." Below author Belinda Bernard addresses these challenges and many more using practical examples to illustrate how mindfulness, equanimity, and compassion can help readers make peace with a life turned upside down... Bernard shows how to cope and make the most of life despite the challenges of chronic illness. Benefit from:

• Mindfulness exercises to mitigate physical and emotional pain
• Concrete advice for negotiating the everyday hurdles of medical appointments, house chores, and social obligations
• Tools for navigating the storms illness can place on relationships.

Several chapters are devoted toward family and friends of the chronically ill, helping them to understand what their loved one is going through and how they can help. Humorous and empathetic, Bernard shares her own struggles and setbacks with unflinching honesty, offering invaluable tips on avoiding common mistakes and finding hope. For more information, please check out the book from NATX's Library and purchase it online. As a special thank you to support us while you purchase.

Neuropathy Alliance TX (NATX) partners with the American Diabetes Association to offer programs for people with diabetes. Learn about our National Patient Conference, come to our local events, and find other resources for driving safety and information on potential driving options. If you think you may need further assistance, please contact us at contact@neuropathyalliancetx.org.