



*Advancing care in high-risk
pregnancy through
research and education*

2015 Annual Report

The Pregnancy Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit whose mission is to advance care in high-risk pregnancy through research and education.

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Message from the Chair



Dear Friends of The Pregnancy Foundation,

Thank you for your support in 2015. The Foundation was created to advance care in high-risk pregnancy through research and education, and we rely on your contributions to sustain our programs.

In this annual report, you will read about the recipients of our awards and how their projects and activities have impacted their careers and will lead to improvements in the care of women with high-risk pregnancies in the United States and around the globe. We celebrated the very successful launch of our new Queenan Fellowships for Global Health with a tribute dinner to Dr. John Queenan in February. For the first time, we also awarded Bridge Funding to one of our Scholars thanks to the generous support of the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology Educational Foundation.

We strengthened our administrative infrastructure and enhanced our communications through a new website and a quarterly e-newsletter. Visit ThePregnancyFoundation.org to learn more about us. We work in tight collaboration with the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine and through the efforts of many, contributions to the Foundation have reached the highest level of annual giving so far in this past year.

Thank you to all Board members, Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine members, and others – including professional societies, Departments of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and MFM divisions and practices – who have made a donation to The Pregnancy Foundation in 2015. We are particularly grateful to our corporate sponsors and our Corporate Council, and extend a special thank you to Lumara Health for their substantial donation to our programs this year.

Finally, none of our progress could have been made without the incredible support and work ethic of the two Michelles – Michele Prince, our Administrative Director, and Michelle DiVito, our Scholarly Activities Coordinator.

On behalf of The Pregnancy Foundation Board of Directors, thank you again for your contributions to the future of our profession. We could not support the Scholars and create opportunities for practicing MFMs, fellows, and residents without your generous donations.

With gratitude and respect,

Mary E. D'Alton, MD
Chair, Board of Directors

Pregnancy Foundation/AAOGF Scholars Program

Our premier scholarship, funded jointly with the American Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists Foundation (AAOGF), is designed for future academic physician leaders who seek additional research training in maternal-fetal medicine. Applicants for this highly selective 3-year award must have recently completed MFM subspecialty training or be in the second or third year of an ABOG-approved MFM fellowship program. The total annual funding for each scholar is \$120,000.

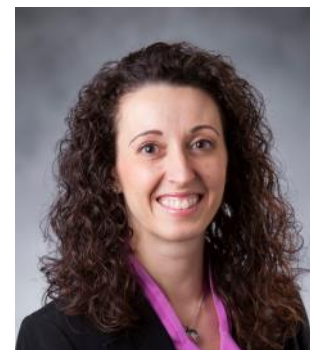
2016–2019 Scholar

Jennifer Bushman Gilner, MD, PhD

Duke University

The role of regulatory T cells in the maternal-fetal rejection phenotype of preterm birth

Pregnancy represents a unique natural allograft scenario in which immunologically mismatched organisms must tolerate direct apposition, yet maintain immunologic activity against external pathogens. This is analogous to organ transplantation, where tolerance of the grafted organ (and its foreign antigens) requires active regulation of immune responses. T Regulatory cells (or “Tregs”) are a unique subpopulation of CD4+ lymphocytes that play a critical role in establishing immune tolerance and therefore preventing allograft rejection. In the case of pregnancy, the fetus represents a foreign graft, and immune rejection may lead to adverse pregnancy outcomes such as preterm birth. Given the biologic parallels between organ transplantation and pregnancy, Dr. Gilner hypothesizes that Tregs play a parallel role in pregnancy—specifically to induce tolerance in the mother, and prevent rejection which could lead to preterm birth. To date, regulatory T cell function has only been studied in the broadly defined “spontaneous” or “medically indicated” preterm birth cohorts. Dr. Gilner will focus on the cohort of preterm births with a molecular phenotype of maternal anti-fetal rejection, given that Treg suppressive function is well established as a critical mechanism in maintenance of alloimmune tolerance. This innovative approach will allow for a careful characterization of the molecular immunology of affected pregnancies, and will be critical to the development of targeted detection and treatment strategies for reducing the burden of preterm birth.



PAST RECIPIENTS

Foundation/AAOGF Scholarship Award

2015-2018 K. Joseph Hurt, MD, PhD
2013-2016 Hilary Roeder, MD
2012-2015 Joy Vink, MD
2010-2013 Mark Alanis, MD*
2010-2013 Jacob C. Larkin, MD
2009-2012 Antoinette Dulay, MD
2007-2010 Emily Su, MD
2006-2009 Francine Einstein, MD
2005-2008 Janet Andrews, MD
2004-2007 Donna Neale, MD
2003-2006 Michael House, MD

SMFM Scholarship Award

2002-2004 Rachel G. Humphrey, MD
2001-2003 Rodney Edwards, MD
2000-2002 Michal Elovitz, MD
1999-2001 Sean Esplin, MD
1998-1999 Lynda Hudon, MD
1997-1998 Kim A. Boggess, MD
1996-1997 Samuel Parry, MD
1995-1996 Stephen K. Hunter, MD
1994-1995 Susan Seligman, MD
1993-1994 Kee-Hak Lim, MD
1992-1993 Tracey A. Cowles, MD

*funded solely by the SMFM Foundation

Pregnancy Foundation/AAOGF Scholars Program



2015–2018 Scholar

K. Joseph Hurt, MD, PhD

University of Colorado, Denver

Hydrogen sulfide regulation of myometrial contractility and parturition

Dr. Hurt investigates the signals regulating parturition timing with the goal of developing new targets and therapies to prevent preterm birth and the consequences of prematurity. Specifically, his lab examines the role of the small molecule gaseous messenger, hydrogen sulfide (H₂S), in maintaining uterine quiescence and promoting normal fetal development. Approaches for this work include a range of techniques from organ bath pharmacology and biochemical assays, to molecular biology and mouse genetic models. The team is currently working to define the unique myometrial signaling target(s) of H₂S and the compartment-specific regulation of H₂S-producing enzymes in the uterus, placenta, and fetus. His local mentors for the Foundation/AAOGF Scholarship include Thomas Jansson, MD, PhD, Nanette Santoro, MD, and Henry Galan, MD.

"The benefits of the Foundation/AAOGF Scholarship extend far beyond the research funding and crucial protected research time. I had heard of the very special nature of the award before I applied, but that became strikingly evident during the annual summer Scholar Retreat. We experienced the current generation of leaders in ob-gyn investing in and promoting us to become the next generation of cutting-edge investigators, taking valuable time from their own busy careers to help us advance ours. The camaraderie among the scholars, too, is encouraging and sincere. I am honored and inspired to be part of the group."

2013–2016 Scholar

Hilary Roeder, MD

University of California San Diego

Treating Prediabetes in the First Trimester: A Randomized Controlled Trial

Dr. Roeder's project is built upon the hypothesis that pregnant subjects with prediabetes (HbA1c at or above 5.7% or fasting glucose at or above 92 mg/dL) randomized in the first trimester of pregnancy to strict glycemic control and pharmacotherapy as needed will have less fetal adiposity and adverse neonatal outcomes than those who receive the diagnosis of GDM but do not initiate care until the third trimester. The primary outcome, umbilical cord C-Peptide above 90th percentile is a measure of neonatal adiposity. Another related outcome is neonatal fat mass which will be calculated based on length, weight, and skinfold thickness within 48 hours of delivery. Additionally, neonates born to mothers in both arms will be followed for 12 months after delivery in order to determine if weight-for-length differs between first trimester and third trimester treatment of GDM.



"The generosity of The Pregnancy Foundation has enabled me to become a true clinical researcher and a better physician. With the financial support and protected time awarded by this organization, I have been able to obtain the mentorship and instruction to design and implement a gold-standard clinical trial that could change the way diabetes in pregnancy is managed in the future. I look forward to analyzing my results and presenting the findings. Thank you to the Foundation for your guidance and encouragement while building the foundation of my career."

Pregnancy Foundation/AAOGF Scholars Program



2012–2015 Scholar and 2015 Bridge Funding Award Recipient

Joy Vink, MD

Columbia University Medical Center

Evaluating the Biochemical & Biomechanical Etiologies of Cervical Insufficiency

Preterm birth remains a significant obstetric dilemma that affects 1 in 9 pregnancies in the U.S. every year. Etiologies of preterm birth vary, but the final pathway always involves premature cervical remodeling and dilation of the cervix which leads to preterm birth. When the cervix remodels prematurely, it fails to stay closed under the stretch forces from the uterus, resulting in premature dilation and delivery of the fetus. Anthrax toxin receptors are cell surface receptors that resemble integrins (stretch-sensing proteins) and are involved in extracellular matrix homeostasis by activating matrix metalloproteinases (MMP). Previous studies the Kitajewski lab (Dr. Vink's mentor) serendipitously noted that anthrax toxin receptor 2 (ANTXR2) knock-out mice exhibit a parturition defect characterized by increased collagen in the cervix, suggesting that defective extracellular matrix remodeling may be an etiology for unsuccessful parturition. Over the next year, with the support of the Foundation's Bridge Funding Award, Dr. Vink will evaluate if stretching human cervical smooth muscle cells activates the ANTXR2/MMP pathway leading to extracellular matrix remodeling. Her goal is to determine if women with premature cervical remodeling have human cervical smooth muscle cells that exhibit abnormal stretch-mediated extracellular matrix remodeling which results in a mechanically weaker cervix that prematurely dilates leading to preterm birth.

"The Pregnancy Foundation/AAOGF Scholars Award was an incredible opportunity to interact with brilliant scientists who continuously encouraged me to grow and develop my work. I cannot say thank you enough to the mentors on the Scholarly Activities Committee – their guidance and support has been an invaluable source of inspiration, and I would not be where I am today without them."

Bridge Funding Award

The Pregnancy Foundation introduced a one-year bridge grant of \$75,000 in 2015. This award was made possible with generous support from the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ABOG) Education Foundation. The Pregnancy Foundation Bridge Funding Award is designed to stabilize a research program of a promising physician scientist in the field of perinatal biology and medicine who has not been successful in obtaining independent research funding or who has a temporary lapse in funding.

Bridge funds are intended to enhance the likelihood of successful application for other funding opportunities by enabling ongoing research productivity and by ensuring that essential research personnel are not lost due to lapses in funding. Priority is given to programs with a strong likelihood that the investigator will successfully garner independent external funding by the end of the award. Funded research projects will address important problems in perinatal biology and medicine. We are working on securing funding to be able to offer this award on an ongoing basis.



Garite Mini-Sabbatical Grant

This grant honors Dr. Thomas Garite who was instrumental in the creation of the mini-sabbatical program during his tenure as Chair of the Board of Directors. Practicing MFMs and MFM fellows receive funding for a research project or clinical experience with a mentor at another institution for up to 8 weeks. The Foundation provides \$10,000 in annual funding for up to two recipients through this grant.

2015: Niamh Condon, DO

MFM Fellow at Pinnacle Health Hospital, Harrisburg, PA

Dr. Condon completed a four-week rotation with Dr. Lawrence Platt at the Center for Fetal Medicine and Women's Ultrasound in Los Angeles, CA where she gained a greater understanding of fetal cardiac anatomy, physiology, and pathophysiology and learned about the unique requirements of fetal echocardiogram in the diagnosis of structural malformations of the heart.



"I feel very thankful that I have had this experience. It has re-affirmed for me that research will continue to be an integral part of my career after the completion of my fellowship."

Meg Hill, MD

"I am grateful and indebted to The Pregnancy Foundation for this once in a lifetime opportunity that has changed my practice and career as an MFM."

Steve Rad, MD



"This sabbatical has equipped me with training that will enable me to launch my career as an academic MFM specialist with specific experience in translational research."

Pranita Nirgudkar, MD

"...the mini-sabbatical was rich beyond my expectations and became an incredibly interdisciplinary experience with great breadth and depth, clinical application to MFM, and invaluable networking."

M. Camille Hoffman, MD



Past Recipients

2014

M. Camille Hoffman, MD
Pranita Nirgudkar, MD*

2013

Meg Hill, MD*
Steve Rad, MD*

2012

Erica Berggren, MD*

2011

Maureen P. Malee, MD, PhD
Michelle Silasi, MD*
Lisa E. Moore, MD

2010

Mary Vadnais, MD*
Hai-Lang Duong, MD*
J Newton, MD, PhD*

2009

Erika Werner, MD*
Daniel Katz, MD*
Gretchen L. Koontz, MD
Caroline Stella, MD

2008

Camille Kanaan, MD
Lama Tolaymat, MD

*Maternal-Fetal Medicine Fellow

Quilligan Scholars Program

The Quilligan Scholars Program was established in 2013 in honor of Dr. Edward J. Quilligan, a leader and mentor in the field. The program provides mentoring and educational opportunities during the final two years of obstetrics and gynecology residency with the goal of recognizing and identifying future leaders in maternal-fetal medicine. Funded attendance at two SMFM Annual Meetings and a weekend biostatistics course are highlights of the program.



2016 Quilligan Scholars



Aleha Aziz, MD, MPH
Montefiore/Albert Einstein



Michelle Debbink, MD, PhD
University of Michigan



Jessica Page, MD
University of Utah



Kartik Venkatesh, MD, PhD
Brigham & Women's/Mass General



Sarah Wernimont, MD, PhD
University of Iowa

"I look forward to returning to the meeting annually to continue to develop the relationships established through the Quilligan Scholars Program."

Sarah Rae Easter, MD

2015 Quilligan Scholars

Yalda Afshar, MD, PhD
Jacques Balayla, MDCM
Mark Clapp, MD, MPH
Ahizechukwu Eke, MD, MPH
Ibrahim Hammad, MD



2014 Quilligan Scholars

Sarah Rae Easter, MD
Mohak Mhatre, MD
Malavika Prabhu, MD
Emily Scibetta, MD
Amanda Yeaton-Massey, MD



"I'm confident my career in MFM will be shaped significantly by this experience and I look forward to becoming a mentor myself one day."

Emily Scibetta, MD



Queenan Fellowships for Global Health

The Queenan Fellowships for Global Health were established in 2014 in honor of Dr. John T. Queenan. The program offers four opportunities for research and education in obstetrics within resource-limited settings. Regular and associate members of SMFM are eligible to apply. The goal of these fellowships is to train future leaders in perinatal health to provide bold and sustained advancement in obstetric practice in underserved areas around the globe.

2015 Queenan Fellows



Kelli D. Barbour, MD
MFM Fellow
University of Utah
International Agency
Mentored Research Fellowship
(\$15,000)



Ingrid Liff, MD
MFM Fellow
Massachusetts General Hospital
Investigator-Initiated
Research Project Award
(\$15,000)



Lucie V. Moravia, DO
MFM Fellow
Wellspan Health-York Hospital
Visiting Teaching Fellowship
(up to \$5,000)



Yusuf Ahmed, MD
Consultant Ob/Gyn
University Teaching Hospital
Lusaka, Zambia
Travel Fellowship
(funded attendance at SMFM Annual Meeting)



"I had the great honor this year to help lead the effort to recruit our inaugural Queenan Fellowship awardees. The selection committee worked together effectively, including navigating new procedures and adding important details to the process. After many emails and calls, each of the four 2015 Queenan Fellowships were awarded to great candidates. We

hopefully paved the way for a very successful program for years to come, to closer involvement of SMFM and the Pregnancy Foundation with Global Health, and, most importantly, to saving and improving the lives of mothers and their babies worldwide."

Vincenzo Berghella, MD
 Chair, Queenan Selection Committee



Queenan Fellowships Tribute Dinner

February 5, 2015 | Hilton San Diego Bayfront



The Pregnancy Foundation is grateful to all who attended the Queenan Tribute Dinner on February 5, 2015 and supported the inaugural year of the Queenan Fellowships for Global Health Program. Thanks to the generosity of all our donors, the Foundation raised nearly \$500,000 since the summer of 2014 and these fellowships have become a reality.

2014-2015 Contributors

\$43,000

The Queenan Foundation: Lynn Q. Beauregard, Jennifer Pivrotto, Anne Queenan, Carrie N. Queenan, John T. Queenan, John T. Queenan, Jr, Michael Queenan, Jane Q. Steen, and Susan M. Valk

\$38,000

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Queenan Fellowships Tribute Dinner

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The Pregnancy Foundation's Literature Alert Series is a subscription service that highlights recently published articles of particular interest to maternal-fetal medicine specialists from approximately 30 journals. Subscribers receive the Literature Alert by email each month and every issue contains 10-15 of the most important abstracts for MFMs from journals such as Nature, JAMA, The New England Journal, BJOG, The Gray Journal, The Green Journal, Pediatrics, Prenatal Diagnosis, Journal of Ultrasound in Medicine, Circulation and many more. A committee of dedicated volunteers compiles the Literature Alert each month. Annual subscription rates are \$100 for SMFM fellows and \$250 for regular members of SMFM and others. Online subscription is available on our website.



"The Literature Alert Series has been successful in 2015 thanks to the hard work of the committee members who review about 30 journals each month. I am thrilled to work with fantastic volunteers and such a supportive Board. This program continues to be a great resource for SMFM members. We anticipate an increase in paid subscribers over the next few years. In 2016 a link to the Literature Alert subscription page will be available on ACOG's website, allowing other Ob/Gyns an opportunity to subscribe to the series."

Tony Sciscione, DO
Literature Alert Series Chair



First Year Fellows Retreat

The Foundation sponsors the annual First Year Fellows Retreat with the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine. The retreat provides new MFM fellows the opportunity to learn more about the Foundation and the Society, as well as meet and hear from experts in the subspecialty. Many life-lasting friendships and professional associations are formed during this weekend. In 2015, our five inaugural 2013 Quilligan Scholars were first year MFM fellows who attended the retreat at Eaglewood Resort in Itasca, IL.

"This was an opportunity to meet some of the great minds you read about in publications or textbooks. I could not have imagined sitting face to face with them around the same table, joking and laughing together. It was indeed an awesome experience for me."

"I enjoyed the time with faculty and each other during meals and the specific advice about curriculum and signing up for various societies—but in the end, the best part was just that the faculty were so engaged and open and truly seemed approachable and caring."

First Year Fellows Retreat Attendees



Contributors

Thank you for supporting our research and educational programs—you have contributed to advances in the care of patients with high-risk pregnancies. This report recognizes donations made to all Pregnancy Foundation programs between January 1, 2015 and December 31, 2015. Great effort was made to include all contributors in this report and to ensure the accuracy of names and titles. If we have erred, please accept our apologies and let us know so we may make corrections in the future.

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Michael Foley, MD

Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine for

Stephanie Martin, DO

Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine for

Anthony Sciscione, DO

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CerviLenz in honor of Daniel O'Keeffe, MD

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The Pregnancy Foundation gratefully acknowledges the members of our Corporate Council in 2015. These industry partners support our mission to advance care in high-risk pregnancy through research and education and our recognized on our website and at an annual luncheon at the SMFM Meeting.



We look forward to welcoming Alere, Clinical Innovations, Duchesnay USA and Omnia Education in 2016!

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Administrative Director

"I was honored to join The Pregnancy Foundation staff in 2015. As a prenatal genetic counselor, I am comfortable in the world of maternal-fetal medicine and have great admiration for the work of MFMs. I wholeheartedly believe in our mission and look forward to continued success for the Foundation in 2016."



Michelle DiVito, RN, MSN
Scholarly Activities Coordinator

"I have had the privilege to coordinate the Pregnancy Foundation/AAOGF Scholar Program since 2007. It is incredibly rewarding to interact with our scholars, the future physician-scientist leaders in our field. Their passion and commitment to research is inspiring and I am proud to be part of this program."

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Given annually for outstanding contributions to the Foundation

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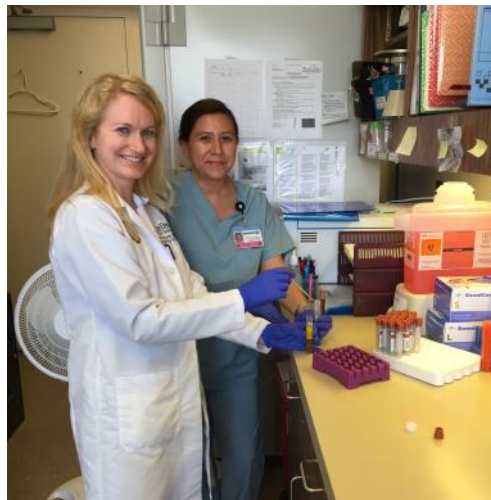
"2015 was a good year for our Corporate Council program—we received \$90,000 in revenue and recruited three new members. In addition, four organizations will join in January 2016. At the 2016 SMFM Meeting, we hope to recruit more members and plan to visit with our current membership and thank them for their support."

Dan O'Keeffe, MD
Executive Vice President, SMFM



"We continue to attract top notch trainees to pursue research in the field of perinatal biology and medicine through our Scholars Program. With the support of AAOG and ABOG, we are proud to provide a unique opportunity for energetic academics in our field, who seek to pursue research that enriches our knowledge and can promote better care for pregnant women."

Yoel Sadovsky, MD
Scholarly Activities Committee Chair



Support the Foundation

Advances in the care of patients with high-risk pregnancies are made possible by individuals who believe in education and research. Supporting talented maternal-fetal medicine specialists through the formative stages of their careers will expand research in high-risk pregnancy and will benefit our subspecialty and our patients. You can support research and education in maternal-fetal medicine by making a gift to The Pregnancy Foundation.

ONLINE

You can make an online donation to The Pregnancy Foundation using your credit card. Visit ThePregnancyFoundation.org/make-a-donation to make your contribution today.

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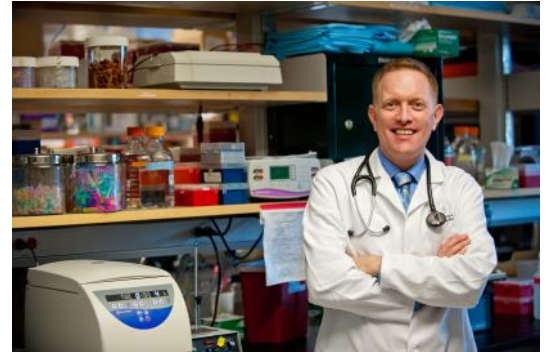
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You can call the Foundation's office at 202-314-2307 to make a credit card donation. Our business hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Eastern Time.

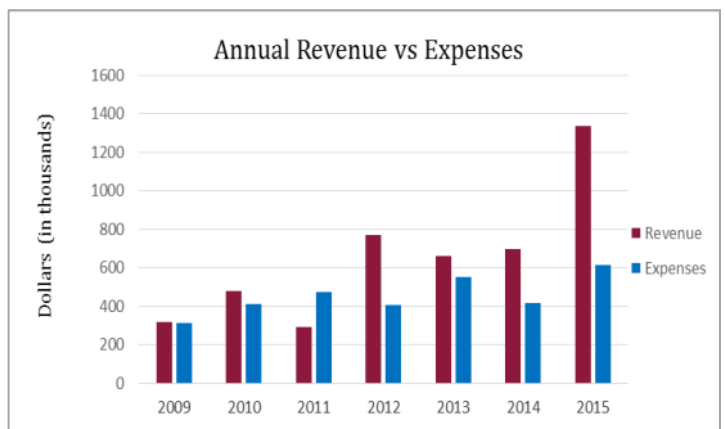
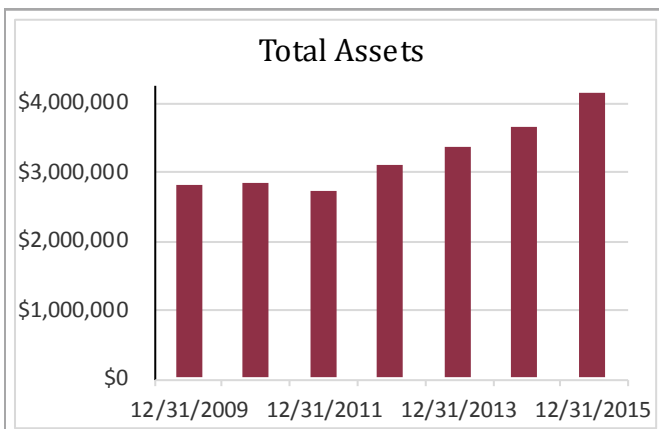
OTHER WAYS TO GIVE

To join our Leader's Club, make a contribution in honor of your mentor, or make a memorial donation, please call the office or email us at thepregnancyfoundation@gmail.com.



2015 Financial Information

These data are based on preliminary financial reports for the year ending December 31, 2015.





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