

August 10, 2016

Mr. Omar Itum
Chairman of the Board
Alliance for Veteran Support, Inc.
784 Columbus Avenue, Apt. 17F
New York, NY 10025

Dear Mr. Itum,

I am writing to update you on the success of the *Veteran/Amputee Skin Regeneration Program* in the Department of Dermatology at Johns Hopkins Medicine. We are grateful to have received \$50,000 in 2014 from the Alliance for Veteran Support. Because of your organization's generosity, we have been able to move the project forward and leverage your gift to apply for federal funding.

Private support is critical. There are often gaps between federal funding cycles. Private philanthropy allows us to sustain and grow the program. Your gift funded the cost of one technician who assisted with laboratory studies and clinical trials. Without this technician, our work would have been delayed. Your support helped dramatically enhance the timeline of translating the latest discoveries into clinical strategies that will improve the lives of veteran amputees.

Below are a few of our recent successes because of the grant we received from Alliance for Veteran Support.

- 1) We transferred our "stem cell expansion process" out of the laboratory and into "clinical grade" facilities for use in patients.
- 2) We collaborated with the Johns Hopkins Cellular Therapy Core to optimize our protocols, thus creating the most effective stem cell therapy possible.
- 3) We were awarded a grant from the Department of Defense Armed Forces Institute for Regenerative Medicine #2 (AFIRM2) Consortium and will receive close to \$1,000,000 over the next five years (ending in 2018) to fund testing and optimizing of our stem cell therapies. The application process is very competitive and grants are only awarded to a select group of laboratories across the United States.
- 4) We were awarded a National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant from the National Heart, Blood and Lung Institute to expand fibroblasts in multiple sites, including the City of Hope Beckman Research Institute. This expansion will allow us to rapidly accelerate our therapies. (This is a non-monetary grant. The Institute grows stem cells and provides data to us.)

- 5) We were awarded an NIH R01 grant with total funding of \$2,000,000 over the next five years (ending in 2018) to study the basic biology behind this therapy. Our proposal was in the top 10th percentile.
- 6) We received approval from the FDA for clinical trials to begin to test whether fibroblast stem cells can create new, tougher skin in healthy individuals.
- 7) To date, we have enrolled 12 volunteer subjects in the clinical trials. The first human subjects look promising and provide exciting molecular proof that could lead to an entirely new therapy for veteran amputees.

The \$50,000 grant we received from Alliance for Veteran Support has allowed us to continue our work and apply for further funding. We are very encouraged by the success of the *Veteran/Amputee Skin Regeneration Program*. We believe this therapy will be transformative for veteran amputees, giving them the opportunity to wear a prosthetic without pain, discomfort, and skin breakdown—thereby improving their overall quality of life.

We are very grateful for the Alliance for Veteran Support's philanthropy and we hope that you will continue to invest in our work.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Garza", with a stylized flourish above the name.

Luis Garza, M.D., Ph.D.