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NATIONAL LYME ORGANIZATION ACHIEVES \$1,000,000 MILESTONE

The National Research Fund for Tick-borne Diseases, Inc. (NRFTD), the nation's only non-profit organization dedicated exclusively to funding scientific research in the rapidly expanding field of tick-borne diseases, is proud to announce that its funding campaign has now surpassed the \$1,000,000 mark. Leo J. Shea III, Ph.D., NRFTD National Chairman, states "This is a milestone for the NRFTD, and a wonderful vote of confidence in our mission. We believe that our primary focus on funding research will advance the cause of scientific understanding of Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases. Our plan is to raise funds aggressively across the country to insure that this needed research continues. It will result in scientific evidence that will clarify the pathogenesis of tick-borne diseases and thus, enhance their diagnosis and treatment. We hope to rapidly increase our donor base and seek to raise several million dollars to support the needs of researchers worldwide."

Most recently the NRFTD announced the awarding of four research grants totaling \$240,000 under its 2006 Pilot Project Grant Program. The grant winners included Dr. Wayne Hynes of Old Dominion University, Dr. Brian Stevenson of the University of Kentucky College Of Medicine, Dr. Jason Carlyon, also of the University of Kentucky and Dr. Patricia Holman from Texas A&M University's College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences.

Catherine F. Morrissey, NRFTD Research Board Chair, noted, "Grant winners are selected following a rigorous peer-review process by the NRFTD's prestigious Scientific Advisory Board (SAB), made up of distinguished international researchers, using guidelines akin to those established by the National Institutes of Health. In addition to selecting projects that adhere to the highest standards of quality, the likelihood that a project's results will lead to additional long term funding by the National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation or other scientific or biomedical agencies is strongly considered." In addition to the SAB, the NRFTD is assisted by guidance from an Ad Hoc Review Committee made up of scientists with expertise in specialized areas of tick-borne disease research. The scientific advisory team scrupulously reviews grant proposals annually and makes funding recommendations that will impact the understanding of tick-borne illnesses. To date the NRFTD has funded research studies at Columbia University and a number of other academic institutions.

About the National Research Fund for Tick-Borne Diseases, Inc.

The NRFTD is a nonprofit, tax exempt organization devoted strictly to raising funds in support of scientific research on tick-borne diseases. It aims to advance scientific understanding of these complicated infections by sponsoring innovative research at premier institutions throughout the world.

The NRFTD was founded in 1999 to address the complex and critical research questions raised by thousands of patients afflicted with emerging tick-borne diseases, including Lyme disease, relapsing fever, anaplasmosis, babesiosis, bartonella and ehrlichiosis. The need for answers has grown markedly as Lyme disease continues to spread throughout the country and as other tick-borne infections have been recognized as public health threats.

For more information about the NRFTD, or to make a tax-deductible donation, please visit www.nrftd.org.