



Dear Christini Fund Friends,

We at the Christini Fund are beyond proud to announce that our very own Dr. Robert Naviaux has received the 2023 United Mitochondrial Disease Foundation (UMDF) Vanguard Award, an honor presented to an individual whose transformative contributions have substantially advanced mitochondrial medicine. This prestigious award, the highest bestowed in the field, recognizes Dr. Naviaux's pioneering work and dedication to furthering the importance of mitochondria in mainstream medicine.

Over the past 25 years, the Christini Fund has supported the life-saving research conducted by Dr. Naviaux and his team at UCSD's Mitochondrial and Metabolic Disease Center. Their efforts have led to significant breakthroughs in mitochondrial disease research, and they continue to work tirelessly towards a cure. In 1998, most children with Leigh's Syndrome, the most lethal form of mitochondrial disease, did not live past the age of two. Twenty-five years later in 2023, advances in mitochondrial medicine now help half of children born with Leigh's to live more than 20 years of age.

The Christini Fund was established in memory of Christine Shimizu who lost her battle to Leigh's Syndrome, just weeks after her second birthday. As Christine's physician, Dr. Naviaux's determination to help and give hope to those suffering from mitochondrial disease was exceeded only by the compassion he showed Christine and the Shimizu family.

Please join us in congratulating Dr. Naviaux on receiving the 2023 United Mitochondrial Disease Foundation (UMDF) Vanguard Award! He joins a distinguished group of individuals who have received this accolade since it was first awarded in 2013 to pioneering visionary Dr. Billi DiMauro at Columbia University.