

IFOPA Appoints Executive Director

- *New position underscores longstanding commitment to the FOP community and the continuing evolution of the organization*

CASSELBERRY, FL – February 8, 2016 – The International FOP Association (IFOPA) announced today that it has appointed Michelle Davis-Wingate as the Association’s Executive Director.

Ms. Davis-Wingate has nearly 20 years of experience in nonprofit leadership, organizational development, and fundraising, including almost eight years in health-related and rare disease organizations. She will lead the IFOPA’s daily operations, programs and fundraising efforts in support of the organization’s dual mission to find a cure while supporting families affected by fibrodysplasia ossificans progressiva (FOP), an extremely rare and severely disabling genetic condition for which there is currently no effective treatment.

As Executive Director of the IFOPA, Ms. Davis-Wingate will oversee the world’s leading nonprofit resource for FOP with over 500 members in more than 60 countries around the world. The IFOPA’s programs and services are focused in four primary areas, including research, education, support programs for FOP members/families, and global advocacy.

“On behalf of the IFOPA Board of Directors, I am delighted to welcome Ms. Davis-Wingate as the new Executive Director,” said Board Chair Paul Brinkman. “Her wealth of experience and demonstrated leadership in the nonprofit sector will help the IFOPA realize its vision in the years ahead.”

Ms. Davis-Wingate will be the principal steward of the IFOPA’s resources, engaged in various fundraising activities. She will oversee membership support and outreach, play a key role in long-term strategic planning, and foster the growth of the Association’s international components.

“The FOP research landscape has evolved rapidly and significantly in recent years, to the credit of the many families, researchers, and IFOPA leaders who supported and guided the organization in its first 25 years,” said Betsy Bogard, the IFOPA’s Global Research Development Director. “This places new and exciting challenges in front of the organization, making it the right time to bring in Ms. Davis-Wingate in the Executive Director role to help us meet those challenges,” added Ms. Bogard.

Ms. Davis-Wingate comes to the IFOPA from her position as Chief Development Officer for the PKD Foundation, where she led fund development activities raising more than \$7 million a year. Prior to working at the PKD Foundation, Ms. Davis-Wingate served as Executive Director for Nonprofit Connect, a Kansas City-based membership organization. She began her career in fundraising at the National Kidney Foundation. Ms. Davis-Wingate was named one of Ingram Magazine’s Top 40 under 40 in Kansas City in 2007. She graduated cum laude from Missouri State University in 1996 with a Bachelor of Science in Organizational Communication.

About Fibrodysplasia Ossificans Progressiva (FOP)

FOP is a rare genetic disease in which soft tissue transforms permanently into bone, ultimately imprisoning those afflicted in a second skeleton of bone. Bridges of extra bone develop across the joints, progressively restricting movement and leading to eventual immobility. The disease is caused by a point mutation in the gene encoding the ALK2 receptor, rendering it overactive. Researchers estimate that there are approximately 3,000 individuals living with FOP worldwide.

About the IFOPA

Founded by Jeannie Peeper in 1988 to end the isolation formerly associated with FOP, the IFOPA is a registered 501(c)(3) organization that has evolved into the world's leading nonprofit resource for FOP. The organization celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2013 and has raised more than \$18 million in resources for its objectives.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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