



## *The Baby Alex Foundation Donor Newsletter-December 2009*

Dear Donors,

Thank you for your generous support of The Baby Alex Foundation.

As 2009 draws to a close, the foundation has raised enough in donations to provide one \$50,000 grant for pediatric brain injury research. We have another \$10,000 set aside for a second grant, which we will increase depending on the end of year funds we receive. If you have contacts who might be interested in supporting this underfunded area of medical research, please pass along our newsletter and encourage their support. The Baby Alex Foundation is run entirely on a volunteer basis, with no paid staff and minimal administrative costs, which allows us to dedicate the vast majority of donations directly to research.

### **The Dartmouth Hitchcock Project**

In 2009, the foundation awarded its first and only grant of \$10,000 to a project directed by pediatric neurosurgeon Dr. Ann-Christine Duhaime at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center. The project, titled *DEVELOPMENT OF A PORCINE MODEL USING ADVANCED MRI*

*TO STUDY SEVERE BRAIN DAMAGE FOLLOWING SUBDURAL HEMATOMA IN INFANCY*, is studying the effect of blunt trauma and low oxygen levels on the infant brain. It is Dr. Duhaime's theory that the combination of trauma, which triggers bleeding in the brain, and low oxygen levels, resulting from trauma-induced seizures, is the cause of what the medical field refers to as "black brain", where part or all of the child's brain dies, turns black and causes severe disability or death.

When we toured the research facility, Dr. Duhaime described a case of "black brain". A loving, responsible father playfully tossed his son onto his bed, a game they had played countless times. On this occasion, the child hit the bed in such a way as to cause bleeding in his brain, which then caused seizures and low oxygen levels. When the child left the emergency room, after the surgeons stopped the brain bleeding, no one imagined that in a few days, he would return with "black brain", his life altered forever.

In Dr. Duhaime's words, "*By testing our theory in a short-term anesthetized animal model that is very similar to human infants, we will gain a better understanding of how the injuries occur, how to treat the injuries to limit brain damage, and, most importantly, how to prevent them from happening.*"

One small grant, of only \$10,000, a sum often considered by the medical field as too insignificant for the effort involved in applying, enabled Dr. Duhaime to engage in research that may lead to a radical change in the way emergency rooms treat children with brain injuries. With your support this year, the foundation has already multiplied its 2010 grant giving many fold. Some day, thanks to the generosity of our donors, those grants will climb into the millions.

Imagine the possibilities.

Thank you,  
Nicky, Erik and Alex

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*The Baby Alex Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable organization which supports the neurological health of children. In pursuit of that goal, the foundation raises money to award grants to individuals and organizations engaged in pediatric brain injury research.*

[www.babyalexfoundation.com](http://www.babyalexfoundation.com)

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