



University Health Network

April 19, 2006

Avery's Journey
Ericka Dixon-Williams
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Dear Ericka, Avery and All Who Help Retinoblastoma,

The Retinoblastoma Team in Toronto is deeply appreciative of the dedication of Avery's Journey to support research so that future retinoblastoma children will have the opportunity of ever more effective therapy. At the 2006 Biennial Fundraiser you raised \$4000, which we gratefully received and used to advance understanding of retinoblastoma.

We report that the serious work of our retinoblastoma team, including parents, children, medical professionals, scientists and students, has achieved several major breakthroughs in 2006. Particularly exciting is a newly discovered gene, KIF14, which appears to promote the growth of retinoblastoma, lung and breast cancer cells. Surprisingly, low levels of KIF14 in the tumor is the best predictor of the success of lung cancer patients to fight their disease.

Specifically, the \$4000 from Avery's Journey supported studies showing that reducing the amount of KIF14 slows growth of tumor cells in culture, and decreases the capacity of the tumor to re-grow from a few cells. We will now conduct detail studies of how to reduce KIF14 in retinoblastoma tumors, which be the basis of powerful new therapies, potentially without the side effects of chemotherapy.

In all our hard work, we are encouraged and inspired by your ongoing dedication to future retinoblastoma children, so clearly shown by the enthusiasm and support from Avery's Journey.

Thank you very much! Together we can change the outcome of a rare blinding cancer for children worldwide.

Yours sincerely,

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