

October 23, 2008

Visitors Per Week: 33,375

Impressions: 66,750

10/23. Chilly day in New York yesterday. Over at the Plaza, **Audrey Gruss'** Hope for Depression Research Foundation held its Inaugural New York Seminar and Luncheon.

Audrey founded HDRF in 2006 in honor of her mother, **Hope**, who suffered from clinical depression most of her late adult life. Diagnosed depression affects over 32 million people in the U.S. today and directly or indirectly, it impacts hundreds of millions all over the world.

The new Foundation's mission is to fund the most cutting-edge, international scientific research into the origins, diagnosis, treatment and prevention of depression and its related mood and other emotional disorders with the ultimate goal of finding a cure. HDRF's innovative research approach is called neuropsychology, which combines biology (the study of the brain) with psychology (the study of the mind and emotions).

The event had a special two-part format including a morning Scientific Seminar featuring two leading experts on Depression. The Seminar began at 10 a.m. with Mrs. Gruss introducing **Dr. Myrna Weissman**, Professor of Psychiatry, Columbia University, who discussed treating the family and depression ("Depression is a family affair"), **Dr. Dennis Charney**, Dean of Mt. Sinai Medical School and Head of the Psychiatry Department. Dr. Charney is a professor of neuroscience and pharmacology and systems therapeutics ("developing novel treatments for depression").

Panelists were **Dr. Harold W. Konigsberg**, professor of psychiatry, Mount Sinai School of Medicine (also an HDRF board member), **Dr. David Olds**, professor of Clinical Psychiatry, Columbia University (HDRF board member), and **Dr. Steven Roose**, professor of Clinical Psychiatry, Columbia University.



Linda Hamilton and Audrey Gruss

Guests learned that:

- "Depression funding" is at an all time low. We are no longer recruiting minds from abroad to do the research. Students here wanting to research depression are going abroad. **Evelyn Lauder** spoke of the problem of funding research on Tuesday at the Central Park Conservancy luncheon. The huge expenditure of the Administrations War Policies has sapped budgets for research Funding has never been worse and ironically science has never been better.
- Early onset of depression can be successfully treated, however, if it is overcome early, it is very likely to come back. Environmental factors must be changed.
- Research has shown that by protecting the genetically vulnerable, the cycle of depression can be stopped – Treat the patient, treat the child; that modifying the immediate environment plays an important role. When a mother gets treated, 33% of affected children get better.
- Symptoms of depression: Lack of energy, lack of interest in things once enjoyed, lack of hope; irritability, thoughts of death and suicide, will speak on emerging new treatments for depression (Suicide accounts for 8% of deaths in this country and that is a low number, because many suicides are not reported as such).
- Depression runs in families for generations. A good clue if a teenager is/will succumb to depression is if he/ she starts smoking. It is more often a sign of depression rather than a gateway to drug use, though depressed teenagers can turn to drugs to self medicate.
- Early onset of depression can be successfully treated, however, if it is overcome early, it is very likely to come back. Environmental factors must be changed. Depression is chronic.



This is a brand new project and Mrs. Gruss beat the drums wherever and whenever she could to create interest. Depression is a tricky subject and often misunderstood. Many times individuals do not realize that they are depressed despite their difficulties in functioning. There were about 60 who turned out for the panel discussions although several hundred turned out for the lunch.

At the lunch, actress **Linda Hamilton** spoke of her lifelong battle with bipolar disorder and how she is winning the fight, although it was an uphill climb until her situation was properly identified. There were many attending who related deeply to much of what was discussed and so there were many who left the luncheon feeling enhanced.

Luncheon Co-Chairs were **Catherine Adler, Jackie Drake, Jay McInerney** and **Lis Waterman**. Junior Co-Chairs: **Lauren Bush** and **Coralie Charriol**.

The gift bags were AMAZING: Cashmere wraps from Ralph Rucci, hats by Eric Javits, faux pearls by vital, and Cartier stationery, all in a lovely canvas bag.



Pat Patterson and John Loring



Cornelia Bregman, Jamee Gregory, and Frederick Anderson



Debbie Bancroft, Linda Hamilton, and Bettina Zilkha



Audrey Gruss, Jay McInerney, and Linda Hamilton



Patrick McMullan, Pat Altschul, and Brian Stewart





Bettina Zilkha, Debbie Bancroft, and Douglas Hannant



Michel Witmer



April Gow and Christopher Mason



Gaetana Enders



Victoria Wyman, Hunt Slonem, and Laura McCloy



Saundra Whitney, Vera Blinken, and Jackie Weld Drake



Marc Rosen and Cornelia Bregman



Eleanora Kennedy and Adrienne Vittadini

Jill Spalding



Kristi Witker and Sharon Bush

Catherine Cahill and Marqo Landenberg



Audrey Gruss and Chuck Scarborough

Lisa Selby

Chuck Scarborough and Audrey Gruss greeting guests



Ellen Scarborough and Cece Black



Stephanie Krieger and Gillian Fuller



Martin Gruss



Dennis Basso



Ellen Graham and Anka Palitz



Paola Rosenshein and friends



Marie Douglas-David