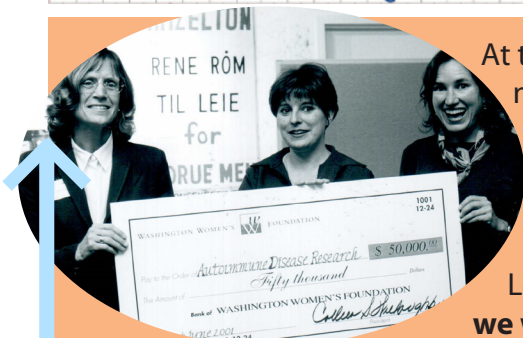


Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
"Pregnancy and the Female Bias in Autoimmune Diseases"
\$50,000 in 2001

20^{for}20
stories years

Building On 20 Years
Our Foundation is strong because of you!



At the turn of the 21st century, Dr. J. Lee ("Lee") Nelson wanted to test a novel idea: that a woman's health is affected not just by her own genes but also by "reverse inheritance" acquired from her children's cells during pregnancy. When Lee submitted a grant request to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to test her hypothesis, her request was denied because her research was deemed too "far-out." At that point, Lee turned to private philanthropy. She says, "With the support of WWF, **we were able to develop the technology needed for this purpose, test our hypothesis, and the results fully supported what we had proposed.**"

The \$50,000 WWF Pooled Fund Grant that Lee received in 2001 has had far-reaching impact. Lee's research forged an important conceptual advance in how medical researchers view an individual's biological self. The successful research funded by the WWF grant also helped Lee to receive more funding, including grants from the NIH, and perform further studies. Using the initial methodology and findings, Lee and other researchers have been able to extend what they learned about the effect of maternal-fetal cell transfer **to try to find new ways to treat and prevent autoimmune diseases and some types of cancer, including leukemia.**

Of receiving the grant from WWF, J. Lee Nelson says, "**It is difficult to obtain support for medical research, and a grant such as the one we received from WWF can be a life-line - sometimes the only reason work can continue.** There was a special quality of WWF's grant that made it especially inspiring for me personally - **the grant felt as if it carried the support and encouragement of many wonderful women.**"



Dr. J. Lee Nelson WWF member since 2002
2001 Grantee, Autoimmunity Researcher and Rheumatologist

After receiving her grant from WWF, Lee was inspired to join as a member. When asked why she joined, she says, "Because there is always more to know and more to do in medicine and research, it was easy for my time to be fully absorbed and lose touch with everything else. **I joined WWF because I wanted a broader appreciation for all of life's activities.**"

Lee says that her WWF membership has given her a more knowledgeable perspective on areas outside of her professional expertise, especially in human services, education, and the arts. **She's been inspired to take on leadership challenges;** Lee launched and is the Editor of a medical journal called *Chimerism*, and she regularly moderates and contributes to conferences. On her philanthropy, Lee says, "I am more aware of various nonprofits and have diversified my giving based on what I learned serving on grant committees."

Why does Lee continue to support WWF? In addition to being truly inspired by the collective giving model WWF founder Colleen Willoughby created, Lee says, "**Leveraging the joint knowledge and effort of many individuals results in a quantum leap, and we help each other to most intelligently and wisely invest our resources and time.** To add to all these benefits, I am inspired and encouraged by the spirit of generosity and caring and by the extensive knowledge of members who have become new, wonderful friends."