



## **Arlene Gorelick to Retire as President of the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan**

*Vice president of development to assume leadership of Foundation*

**SOUTHFIELD, Mich., October 11, 2017** – The Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan today announced that Arlene Gorelick, President, will retire effective October 31, 2016. Gorelick has led the Foundation for over 27 years, successfully guiding it through many substantive changes in its mission, focus and financial support throughout the last three decades.

Brianna Romines, Vice President of Development for the Foundation, will succeed Gorelick as President. Romines has been with the Foundation since 2005.

During Gorelick's tenure, which began in 1989, she led the transformation of the Foundation from the provision of medical care and research to its current priority of education and advocacy. Under her leadership, the organization won the 1996 Crain's Detroit Business Best Managed Nonprofit Award, and the Epilepsy Foundation of America gave it the Affiliate of the Year award.

Gorelick was twice named Executive of the Year (1997 and 2005) by the Epilepsy Foundation of America. She also played a leadership role in a number of coalitions and initiatives committed to Michigan and national health policy development. Gorelick's leadership also has left the Foundation on firm financial footing.

"The Michigan epilepsy community and the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan Board of Directors are incredibly grateful for Arlene's 27 years of service and leadership," said Steve Kuehn, incoming Chairman of the Board for the Foundation. "Arlene's dedication and strategic vision have helped to create a critical resource for the over 70,000 people in Michigan suffering from epilepsy."

Romines is an 11-year veteran of the Foundation and a passionate advocate for those with epilepsy.

In her role as Vice President of Development for the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan, Romines has had a direct hand in generating more than \$3.1 million in revenue which has benefited the epilepsy community in Michigan.

Romines is well known for her skills in community outreach, management of donor relations, fundraising, event management and for being an advocate both for her employees and the epilepsy community. [Read her bio here.](#)

## **The Impact of Epilepsy in Michigan**

Based on national data, the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan estimates the following\*:

- There are more than **70,000 people in the Michigan who currently have epilepsy** (up to 14,000 of whom are children).
- At least 23,000 of these individuals continue to have seizures despite treatment. This is called refractory or intractable epilepsy. Medical marijuana/CBD oil has shown promise in reducing seizures in these hard to treat cases.
- In the Metropolitan Detroit area alone, there are more than **27,000 people in who currently have epilepsy** (up to 5,000 of whom are children). Almost 7,000 of these individuals continue to have seizures despite treatment.
- An estimated **70 individuals in Michigan will die this year** from Sudden Unexpected Death in Epilepsy (SUDEP).
- In Michigan alone, epilepsy accounts for over **\$472 million in each year** in direct costs (medical) and indirect costs (lost or reduced earnings and productivity). In the Metro Detroit area, those costs total **\$184 million each year**.

## **Facts About Epilepsy**

- Epilepsy is the general term for a variety of neurological conditions characterized by recurrent unprovoked seizures. A seizure is a brief disturbance in the electrical activity of the brain that causes temporary changes in movement, awareness, feelings, behavior, or other bodily functions.
- Epilepsy is greater in prevalence than cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis and Parkinson's disease **combined**.
- 1 in 26 Americans will develop epilepsy in their lifetime.
- More than 3 million Americans and 65 million people worldwide have epilepsy.

## **News Media**

For additional information, please contact [Carla Boyd](#) at 616-438-7838.

## **About the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan**

The Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan leads the fight to stop seizures, find a cure, and overcome challenges created by epilepsy. Established in 1948, the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan is the only statewide nonprofit organization focusing on epilepsy. The Foundation strives to provide a number of important tools, resources, and necessary support that have proven to be valuable in helping individuals understand epilepsy and seizures. For more information, [please click here](#).

*Not another moment lost to seizures™*

*\*Based on U.S. census data and the best estimate of prevalence from [Epilepsy Foundation's website](#): 7.1 per 1,000 people.*



Brianna Romines, incoming President, Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan