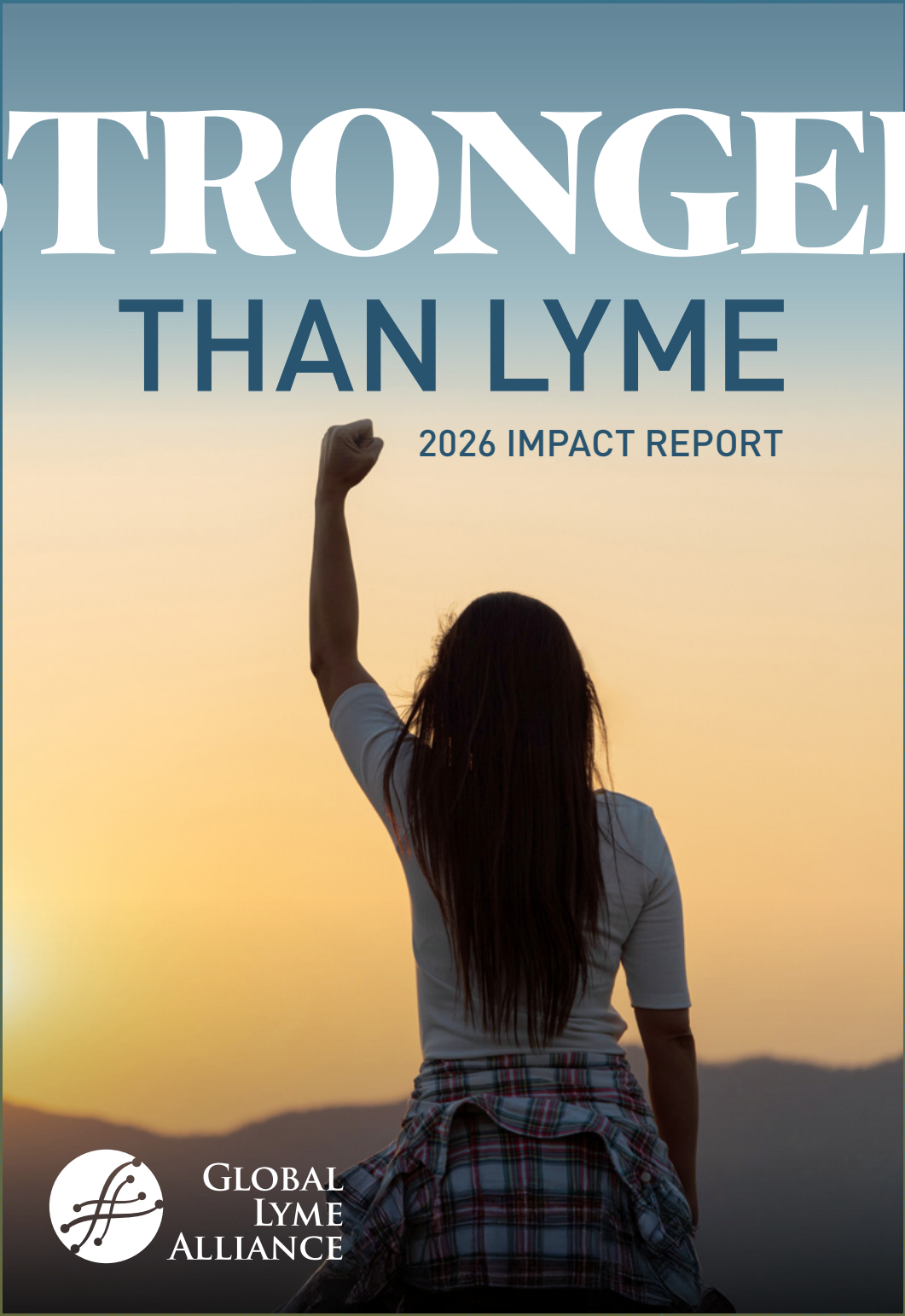


STRONGER THAN LYME

2026 IMPACT REPORT



GLOBAL
LYME
ALLIANCE



OUR MISSION

Cure Lyme and other tick-borne diseases through innovative research, awareness, and empowering the patient voice.

OUR VISION

A world free of Lyme and other tick-borne diseases.



A Message from Our Chairman

At Global Lyme Alliance, our work is rooted in a simple truth: meaningful progress happens when commitment never wavers. This year's Impact Report reflects that belief through our theme, **Stronger Than Lyme**, because every breakthrough we pursue, and every patient we support, is driven by a community that refuses to accept the status quo.

As a chronic Lyme patient myself, this mission is deeply personal. I understand how urgently patients and families need answers, and I have seen firsthand the power of sustained, focused effort. Over the past year, GLA's work has shown what is possible when dedication, rigorous science, and collaboration converge. Together, we have continued to fund innovative research, unite leading scientists and clinicians, and advance efforts to improve diagnostics, treatments, and patient outcomes. At the same time, we have strengthened support for patients and caregivers, ensuring no one faces this disease alone.

What sets Global Lyme Alliance apart is our ability to turn generosity into measurable progress. Every dollar entrusted to GLA is used with intention, discipline, and urgency. The results highlighted in this report are not abstract—they reflect real momentum toward a future in which Lyme patients receive earlier diagnoses, better treatments, and renewed hope.

As my term as Chairman concludes this June, I am filled with optimism. GLA is stronger than ever, and the future for patients is brighter because of you. When commitment becomes action, and action fuels discovery, commitment truly becomes a cure.

Thank you for standing with us and for believing in what is possible.

With gratitude,



Paul B. Ross
Chairman
Global Lyme Alliance

A Message from Our Chief Scientific Officer

As we reflect on the past year, I am encouraged not only by the progress GLA has made, but by the momentum we are building for the future. Our research efforts have been focused and intentional, guided by clear priorities and a commitment to advancing the science that has the greatest potential to improve patients' lives. Across the full continuum, from understanding disease biology to improving diagnosis, treatment, and long-term outcomes, we are laying the groundwork for meaningful and lasting impact.

GLA is also stepping into a broader leadership role. Beyond funding strong science, we are helping shape the direction of the field itself by bringing people together, strengthening the ecosystem that supports discovery, and working to ensure that scientific advances can translate more quickly into real-world benefit. This kind of progress does not happen by chance. It requires vision, coordination, and sustained investment.

This is a pivotal moment for the Lyme and tick-borne disease community. Scientific opportunity is growing, but turning promise into progress depends on continued commitment.

None of what we achieve is possible without the dedication and generosity of our community. Your support enables GLA to pursue bold ideas, maintain scientific rigor, and drive progress where it is needed most. Together, we can continue to accelerate discovery and bring renewed hope to patients and families who are counting on it.

With gratitude,



Armin Alaedini, PhD
Chief Scientific Officer

LYME AND GLA BY THE NUMBERS



Lyme disease continues to expand geographically and in incidence, with as many as **ONE IN FIVE PEOPLE** treated for Lyme disease experiencing ongoing symptoms, highlighting the need for continued research into diagnosis, treatment, and long-term outcomes



GLA is advised by **11 INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS** who rigorously review research proposals and help prioritize the highest impact studies



To date, GLA has awarded more than 75 research grants to scientists and physicians at leading academic institutions and hospitals, resulting in **OVER 190 PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS** in leading medical and scientific journals



Interest in GLA's research funding continues to accelerate, with the latest grant cycle attracting **MORE THAN DOUBLE THE NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS** seen in prior years

“Global Lyme Alliance’s funding of my research has been very important. GLA’s support has helped us draw many times more funding to continue our work.”



Catherine Brissette, PhD
Assistant Dean of Graduate and Postgraduate Studies; Professor, Department of Biomedical Sciences School of Medicine and Health Sciences
University of North Dakota

FUNDING THE NEXT BREAKTHROUGH

Announcing the 2026 Award Recipients

Understanding the Impact of Lyme Disease on Children

Led by Dr. Laura Prichett at Johns Hopkins University, this first-of-its-kind national study will examine how Lyme disease is associated with mental and behavioral health symptoms in children on a large, population scale. By generating the first comprehensive dataset of its kind, the project is designed to provide evidence to better inform future identification and care strategies for clinicians and families.

Pioneering a New Model for Chronic Manifestations of Lyme Disease

Led by Dr. Isaac Chiu and Dr. Jun Huh at Harvard Medical School, this highly innovative project investigates how Lyme bacteria may trigger lasting nerve damage and chronic pain by mapping interactions between the immune and nervous systems. The team aims to establish the first rigorously characterized animal model dedicated to persistent Lyme symptoms, opening the door to new treatment targets and accelerating the development of future therapies.

Discovering the Gut-Brain Connection in Lyme

Dr. Ilhem Messaoudi at the University of Kentucky is exploring how Lyme infection and commonly used antibiotics may disrupt the gut microbiome and weaken the intestinal barrier, potentially driving inflammation throughout the body. The findings could pave the way for developing microbiome-based diagnostics and innovative therapies that restore balance and improve recovery.

Advancing Towards a Urine Test for Lyme Disease

Building upon prior work supported in part by GLA, Dr. Brandon Jutras of Northwestern University, in collaboration with Dr. Lise Nigrovic at Boston Children’s Hospital, is developing a simple point-of-care test to distinguish active Lyme infection from prior infection. This breakthrough tool could enable faster, more accurate treatment decisions, reduce unnecessary antibiotic use, and bring clarity to families and clinicians.

Turning Viruses into Precision Therapy for Lyme

At the University of Kentucky, Dr. Brian Stevenson is engineering bacteriophages, naturally occurring viruses that infect bacteria, to selectively target and destroy Lyme bacteria without harming beneficial microbes. If successful, this work could launch a new generation of highly targeted, antibiotic-free treatments for Lyme and potentially other bacterial diseases.

Identifying the Genetic Drivers of Lyme Disease Severity

Dr. Rafal Tokarz at Columbia University is using advanced genetic sequencing technology to identify which strains of Lyme bacteria are most likely to cause severe or widespread illness. His research could enable precision diagnostics, earlier risk detection, and more personalized treatment strategies for patients in the future.

Ongoing Funded Research



With the support of GLA, Dr. Lise Nigrovic of Boston Children's Hospital has built the world's only pediatric Lyme disease biobank, supplying essential research samples.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

In partnership with Boston Children's Hospital/Harvard Medical School, GLA continues to support the world's only pediatric Lyme disease biobank. The repository now contains more than 60,000 biological samples from over 6,000 children across eight pediatric emergency departments, supporting critical research into diagnostics and disease mechanisms. To date, the biobank has enabled 18 research collaborations and produced 23 peer-reviewed publications, with nine active studies in 2025 focusing on biomarkers, immune response, and early-stage detection. Additionally, the Columbia Lyme and Tick-Borne Diseases Research Center, primarily funded by GLA, is leading two clinical studies exploring whether non-invasive nerve and brain stimulation therapies can help patients with persistent cognitive symptoms following Lyme disease.

SCIENTIFIC CONVENINGS AND LEADERSHIP

Beyond funding research, GLA plays a leading role in convening the scientific community. The 2025 GLA Research Symposium brought together top scientists, clinicians, and industry experts to share discoveries, identify research gaps, and chart the field's future priorities. A donor and supporter welcome dinner on the sidelines of the symposium created meaningful interaction between researchers, patients, and caregivers, giving the broader community an accessible glimpse into the work and progress happening in Lyme disease research.

THERAPEUTICS AND MECHANISTIC STUDIES

GLA-funded research is driving innovation in treatment and understanding persistent Lyme disease. Collaborative teams at Texas A&M University and the University of Connecticut are investigating whether bacterial remnants contribute to lingering symptoms and which antibiotics are most effective in clearing infection. At Tufts University, researchers are examining epigenetic changes in immune cells that may underlie chronic illness. Meanwhile, GLA-funded studies at Tulane University and Charité–Berlin University are advancing knowledge of bartonella infection biology, helping to shape new therapeutic approaches for patients with complex, multi-pathogen infections.



Research led by Brian Stevenson, Ph.D., could lead to new ways to treat and diagnose Lyme disease. © Pete Comparoni | UK Photo

DIAGNOSTICS RESEARCH

GLA continues to prioritize projects that enhance diagnostic accuracy and accessibility. At Johns Hopkins University, researchers are studying the relationship between Lyme disease and postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome (POTS) to improve diagnostic precision and understanding of persistent symptoms. At Northwestern University, researchers are investigating if a unique bacterial cell wall biomarker may allow detection of Lyme disease within days of a tick bite and inform the development of an early diagnostic test. Meanwhile, scientists at Tufts University are identifying genetic and immune biomarkers that predict chronic or relapsing Lyme disease outcomes.

Connecting Patients to Care and Community



GLA provides clinical referral and support services to help people with Lyme disease take control.

PHYSICIAN REFERRAL NETWORK

GLA's physician referral network remains a critical entry point for patients seeking Lyme-aware care. In 2025 alone, GLA helped connect more than 4,600 patients with experienced clinicians, reducing diagnostic delays and guiding individuals toward informed treatment pathways—often at the moment they need it most.

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES THROUGH LYME EDUCATION

GLA Ambassadors are passionate volunteers who help advance GLA's mission by raising awareness, educating communities, and supporting grassroots fundraising around the world. Made up of patients, caregivers, healthcare professionals, and advocates, Ambassadors lead presentations, partner with local organizations, and share critical information about Lyme disease prevention. Through their leadership and commitment, this growing global network supports GLA's commitment to help more people understand the risks of Lyme disease and the importance of early action.

PEER-TO-PEER MENTORSHIP & CAREGIVER SUPPORT

For many patients and caregivers, the most meaningful support comes from someone who has walked the same path. Through GLA's Peer-to-Peer Mentorship Program, participants are matched with trained volunteer mentors who provide empathy, guidance, and practical support. In 2025, GLA connected 280 patients and caregivers.

STORYTELLING THAT ADVANCES HOPE

Through the Lyme+ Podcast, Global Lyme Alliance amplifies the voices of patients, clinicians, and researchers to educate, inspire, and connect the Lyme community. Episodes feature personal stories, expert insights, and the latest research shaping the future of Lyme disease care.

Available on Spotify and Apple Podcasts.

Annual Research Symposium

WHERE THE BRIGHTEST MINDS IN LYME RESEARCH COME TOGETHER

Each year, Global Lyme Alliance convenes the brightest minds in Lyme disease research at the GLA Research Symposium. Held this year in Old Greenwich, CT, the Symposium brought together GLA-funded investigators, leading researchers, industry partners, and members of GLA's Scientific Advisory Board for two days of scientific exchange.

Researchers presented cutting-edge work across diagnostics, immunology, tick and *Borrelia* biology, chronic illness, and biobanking. The Symposium serves as a catalyst for innovation, creating a rare opportunity for scientists to collaborate, share ideas, and advance promising research while connecting with patients and supporters who make this work possible.



Researchers attend the GLA Research Symposium

Awareness Through Events



GLA's annual Gala, the Charity Golf and Pickleball Tournament, and special events like Project Lab Coat bring patients and their allies together to raise funds to defeat Lyme disease.

UNITED FOR A CURE GALA

The United for a Cure Gala remains one of GLA's most powerful platforms for celebrating progress and accelerating impact.

In 2025, the Gala raised **\$1.2 million** for Lyme research and patient support. Hosted by **Erich Bergen**, the evening featured a special appearance by **Chris Meloni** and Broadway star performances, bringing together donors, researchers, and advocates around a shared mission.

4TH ANNUAL CHARITY GOLF & INAUGURAL PICKLEBALL TOURNAMENT

More than 110 supporters gathered at Greenwich Country Club for GLA's 4th Annual Charity Golf Tournament and Inaugural Pickleball Tournament, raising \$250,000 to advance research, education, and advocacy. As participation continues to grow year over year, the event reflects the strength of GLA's community and the power of collective action, bringing together dedicated supporters and corporate partners to drive meaningful progress in the fight against Lyme disease.

PROJECT LAB COAT AT NEW YORK FASHION WEEK

In 2025, Lyme disease took center stage at New York Fashion Week through a charity runway event introduced by dedicated Ambassador **Christina K.** and supported by GLA Ambassadors.

The event brought celebrity advocates and national visibility to Lyme awareness—demonstrating the power of ambassador leadership to elevate the mission on major stages.

PROVIDING CARE AND HOPE

Across research, patient programs, grassroots campaigns, and signature events, GLA is building more than awareness—we are building pathways to care and sources of hope.

For every patient seeking answers, every caregiver seeking support, and every researcher pursuing breakthroughs, GLA stands as a connector, advocate, and catalyst for change.

Providing care and hope is not one initiative—it is the foundation of everything we do.



GLOBAL
LYME
ALLIANCE

Together, we are stronger than Lyme disease

Every day, we stand united in the fight for a future where Lyme disease and its coinfections are accurately diagnosed, effectively treated, and ultimately defeated.

You are not alone. Global Lyme Alliance provides trusted information, resources, and support to help those affected by Lyme disease navigate their journey.

GLA brings together the largest community dedicated to advancing Lyme disease research, independently funding the scientists working to unlock the next breakthroughs in diagnostics and treatment.

Together, we are changing the future of this disease. Our community of patients, researchers, advocates, mentors, and donors is united by a shared commitment

to accelerate progress and bring hope to those who need it most.

Every discovery and every step forward is made possible by this extraordinary community.

Together, we move closer each day to better answers—and ultimately, a cure.



Scan the QR code to fight for a Lyme-free world, or visit GLA.org/donate



Every day, GLA staff, researchers, volunteers and donors are working to create a Lyme-free future for our children, our families and our communities.