



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**FORMER GOVERNOR PAUL CELLUCCI TO LAUNCH FUNDRAISING MISSION
TO FIGHT ALS FROM FIELD AT FENWAY PARK**

***UMass ALS Champion Fund to Fuel Research Breakthroughs at UMass Medical School;
May 19 Proclaimed “ALS Champion Day” in the Commonwealth and the City of Boston***

WORCESTER, Mass. — In recognition of the critical need for new treatments for ALS, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis or Lou Gehrig’s Disease, former Massachusetts Governor Paul Cellucci will announce plans on Thursday, May 19, to raise millions of dollars in support of the ALS research breakthroughs happening at the University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMMS) and in the laboratory of Robert H. Brown, Jr., DPhil, MD, one of the world’s leading and most promising ALS researchers.

The fundraising initiative, the UMass ALS Champion Fund (www.UMassALS.com), will be introduced by Cellucci in a special event at Boston’s Fenway Park on Thursday, May 19. In support of the launch, and in recognition of his distinguished predecessor, Governor Deval Patrick has declared Thursday, May 19, 2011, as “Paul Cellucci / ALS Champion Day” in the Commonwealth. The Fenway event will also feature city representatives, including Boston Mayor Thomas Menino, who will declare the day as “Champion Day” in the City of Boston through a formal proclamation. Governor Cellucci announced in January that he has been diagnosed with ALS and is being treated at UMMS by Dr. Brown.

News of Cellucci’s diagnosis ignited an outpouring of support from friends, colleagues and elected officials across the commonwealth and the country, including Menino, former Governor Jane Swift and former White House chief of staff Andrew Card, who will join Cellucci for “Champion Day” and the fund launch at Fenway Park on Thursday.

Governor Patrick and all of the former Governors of Massachusetts have agreed to serve as honorary chairs of Governor Cellucci's fundraising effort.

"I am proud to continue my career in public service by leading the [UMass ALS Champion Fund](#) efforts," said Cellucci. "A champion helps to deliver great victories, and Dr. Brown is a true champion of ALS research. But, victories are a team effort. Dr. Brown and his colleagues at UMass Medical School need our support."

Brown is widely recognized as a pioneer in neurodegenerative disease research and for 30 years has dedicated his career to unlocking the secrets of ALS, an invariably fatal degenerative disorder that causes progressive muscle weakness, leading to paralysis and death within five years of diagnosis. There is currently no treatment that does more than slightly slow the progression. Brown has been a leading visionary for ALS treatment and part of nearly every fundamental ALS breakthrough to date, including the identification of mutations in a gene that is responsible for 20 to 25 percent of the rarer, familial form of the disease. Brown's work has opened a window into ALS that has drastically changed the research landscape and provided patients and loved ones touched by ALS with something very rare: hope.

"The [Champion Fund](#) is about all of us coming together to help Dr. Brown and his colleagues pursue leads and breakthroughs *now* that might otherwise take years to attract funding from traditional sources," said Michael F. Collins, MD, UMMS chancellor. "As a result, this fund will make us better prepared to 'seize the moment' when highly promising ALS discoveries are made."

"Governor Paul Cellucci has spent his entire life working on behalf of the people of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. It is typical of the Governor that he is using the challenges that he currently faces to advance ALS research and treatment for the benefit of many other people," said Larry Cancro, Red Sox Senior Vice President/Fenway Affairs.

The [Champion Fund](#) aims to extend and supplement the already great fundraising initiatives benefiting UMMS and Dr. Brown and team. "We have been very fortunate to receive support from a diversity of groups, including the locally-based organization, [Angel Fund](#), and national

partner, CVS Pharmacy, both of which have been raising money for this laboratory and acting as champions in the fight against ALS for more than 10 years,” said Brown. “The Champion Fund will allow us to complement those funding sources so that we will all work together to augment the overall effort and increase the funding.”

To become a “champion” in the fight against ALS, or for more information on the [UMass ALS Champion Fund](#) and the promising work of Dr. Brown and his team, visit www.UMassALS.com, or join the fight on Facebook (Facebook.com/UMassALS) or Twitter (@UMassALS).

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About the University of Massachusetts Medical School

The University of Massachusetts Medical School, one of the fastest growing academic health centers in the country, has built a reputation as a world-class research institution, consistently producing noteworthy advances in clinical and basic research. The Medical School attracts more than \$255 million in research funding annually, 80 percent of which comes from federal funding sources. The mission of the Medical School is to advance the health and well-being of the people of the commonwealth and the world through pioneering education, research, public service and health care delivery with its clinical partner, UMass Memorial Health Care. For more information, visit www.umassmed.edu.

About Governor Cellucci

Argeo Paul Cellucci, a native of Hudson, has kept an active schedule and has enjoyed a “quiet, private life” with his family since leaving public office after 35 years. Cellucci graduated from Boston College in 1970 and Boston College Law School in 1973; he won his first statewide position—state representative—in 1976. In 1990, he became lieutenant governor under William F. Weld, and rose to acting governor in 1997, when Weld stepped down to become U.S. ambassador to Mexico. Cellucci was elected governor outright in 1998 and held the post until 2001, when then-president George W. Bush named him U.S. ambassador to Canada. Four years later, Cellucci left the ambassadorship to work in the private sector and today he practices law with the Boston law firm McCarter & English.

