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2012 PPD Beach2Battleship Triathlon Heroes Deliver Message of Bringing Life-Changing Medical Treatments to People in Need

PPD racers motivated to spread the word about clinical trials

WILMINGTON, N.C., (September 26, 2012) - Pharmaceutical Product Development, LLC ([PPD](#)) today announced the 2012 team of inspirational athletes serving as [PPD Heroes](#) and competing in the [PPD Beach2Battleship Triathlon](#) on Oct. 20.

PPD Heroes, including cancer survivors, cystic fibrosis patients and a Wilmington oncologist, are leading the effort to [raise public awareness about participating in clinical trials](#) for the development of life-changing medical therapies.

For people facing illness, a clinical trial can offer new opportunities for cutting-edge treatment and close medical supervision. Increasing the numbers of patients participating in clinical trials can help researchers accelerate development of new medicines.

"PPD Heroes demonstrate the incredible human spirit and determination needed to achieve far-reaching goals," said David Simmons, chairman and CEO of PPD and member of a triathlon relay team. "Overcoming serious illness takes courage, persistence and teamwork. These heroes' stories of triumph energize the people of PPD and fuel our passion for improving the health and well-being of people around the world."

The 2012 [PPD Beach2Battleship Heroes](#) team of triathlon competitors is:

[Emily Schaller](#), a cystic fibrosis (CF) patient and founder of the Rock CF Foundation, who has participated in multiple clinical trials. "When I was diagnosed with CF in 1983, at 18 months old, the average life expectancy was only in the high teens," she said. "Thanks to advancements made through clinical research, the life expectancy for CF patients has risen 20 years since then. Now, there are thousands of adults with CF who are not just living, but truly thriving."

[Birgit Arb, M.D.](#), an oncologist with Cape Fear Cancer Specialists in Wilmington, N.C., part of the New Hanover Regional Medical Center Physician Group. "My passion is to provide state-of-the-art care and support to adult patients with cancer - from diagnosis through treatment," she said. "Patient participation in clinical trials is one of the best tools for the development of new treatments and learning about the biology of cancer."

[Mary Kreis, Ph.D.](#), an associate professor at the California University of Pennsylvania. At 23 weeks pregnant, she had surgery to remove a melanoma and sentinel lymph node, then underwent a second surgery less than two weeks later, after doctors learned the cancer had spread. Clinical trials had helped researchers learn how to perform this type of operation. She gave birth to a healthy baby girl, named Viva to symbolize living life to the fullest. "Without clinical trials," she said, "my cancer may have been missed."

[Garrett and Eric Miller](#), In 2000, at age 6, Garrett had brain surgery to remove a tumor, leaving him profoundly visually impaired. Garrett received six weeks of radiation therapy and 64 weeks of chemotherapy, and he had to relearn to walk and talk. "We attribute Garrett's survival to the clinical trial he participated in," said his father, Eric. "The clinical trial took his survival rate from 50/50 at the beginning of treatment to 90 percent at the end of treatment and the close of the trial."

[Katie Reisinger](#), a speech therapist in Asheville, N.C. The Wilmington native uses daily breathing treatments and medications to ward off lung infections and maintain an active lifestyle as a CF patient. She began running in middle school and was on her high school track and cross-country teams. Reisinger has taken part in numerous clinical trials, she said, "so that the next generation of people with CF can have additional therapies available. It's a worthwhile investment in not only my future, but for the future of the entire CF community."

[Willie Vasser, Jr.](#), of Virginia Beach, Va., who was a healthy triathlete surprised to be diagnosed with leukemia in May 2004. Vasser, his wife Ellen, who is a pediatric oncology nurse, and his doctor began researching treatment options. "We discovered a clinical trial that showed promise," Vasser said. "I started the clinical trial chemotherapy in February 2005 and by September was in complete remission. Sadly, my son Brian was soon diagnosed with a more aggressive form of leukemia and died in November 2006. In his honor, I continue to do races and encourage others to consider a clinical trial when seeking treatment options."

[The PPD Beach2Battleship Triathlon](#) has been ranked among the top five iron distance triathlons in the world by Triathlete magazine. More than 2,000 athletes from 45 U.S. states and 10 other nations will participate, helping generate approximately \$4 million in local economic impact. Funds raised will benefit the Wilmington Family YMCA. PPD Beach2Battleship is produced by Set Up Events, one of the largest triathlon production companies in the U.S., with more than 150 events produced in eight states annually.

The full iron distance triathlon includes a 2.4-mile swim, a 112-mile bike ride and a 26.2-mile run, and the event also offers a half triathlon course. The race starts in Wrightsville Beach, winds through New Hanover, Pender, Sampson and Bladen counties and ends in downtown Wilmington.

About PPD

PPD is a leading global [contract research organization](#) providing [drug discovery](#), development and lifecycle management services. Our clients and partners include [pharmaceutical](#), [biotechnology](#), [medical device](#), academic and [government](#) organizations. With offices in 46 countries and more than 12,000 professionals worldwide, PPD applies innovative technologies, [therapeutic expertise](#) and a commitment to quality to help clients and partners accelerate the delivery of safe and effective therapeutics and maximize the returns on their R&D investments. For more information, visit www.ppd.com.

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