

Parkinson's visionary leader Nathan Slewett to receive Presidential Order of Merit

The University of Miami has announced that Nathan Slewett, volunteer chairman of the board for the National Parkinson Foundation, will be bestowed the Presidential Order of Merit during a private ceremony Friday, January 12, 2001, at the Lowe Art Museum on the Coral Gables campus.

Slewett, a longtime partner and supporter of the University, will be honored for more than 20 years of voluntary service to the National Parkinson Foundation, in which he helped bring cooperative Parkinson's disease research and clinical care to the forefront of healthcare priorities.

"The University of Miami is honoring Mr. Slewett for his boundless devotion in advancing research and clinical efforts for Parkinson's disease here at the University of Miami School of Medicine," said President Edward T. Foote II. "Through his leadership at the National Parkinson Foundation and collaboration with the University of Miami, we have been able to attract the most talented neurological scientists to the School of Medicine."

As chairman of the National Parkinson Foundation, Slewett was instrumental in cultivating the foundation's relationship with the University of Miami School of Medicine. The University's association with the National Parkinson Foundation began in 1979 — the same year Slewett joined the board. As he became more intimately involved in the day-to-day operations, he helped nurture a partnership that has evolved into a Parkinson's disease powerhouse. Together, they established the University of Miami-National Parkinson Foundation Parkinson Center in 1999, which is currently researching methods of treatment and management of Parkinson's disease, such as the use of surgery, including deep brain stimulation, development of new drugs and

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the role of genetics. The UM-NPF Parkinson Center also provides state-of-the-art clinical care for patients from South Florida and other parts of the world.

"The Center is a great benefit to the School of Medicine and the Department of Neurology," said Walter G. Bradley, D.M., FRCP, chairman of the Department of Neurology. "Through this partnership, we are delighted to have renowned Parkinson researchers Dr. William Koller and Dr. Abraham Lieberman join our faculty and serve as medical and research directors for the National Parkinson Foundation."

"The National Parkinson Foundation has become the extraordinary institution it is today through Mr. Slewett's leadership," said John G. Clarkson, M.D., senior vice president for medical affairs and dean of the School of Medicine. "His contributions to the research and treatment of Parkinson's disease have benefited the University of Miami School of Medicine as well as research institutions globally. He developed the concept of the Centers of Excellence, which resulted in 52 research facilities throughout the world joining the fight in finding a cure for Parkinson's disease and other neurological disorders. In addition, he helped to establish a day care center for 150 Parkinson's patients here on the medical campus."

Longtime friend and colleague Bernard J. Fogel, M.D., dean emeritus of the School of Medicine, was ecstatic to hear that Slewett was receiving one of the university's top honors.

"Nat has been an outstanding steward to the National Parkinson Foundation," Dr. Fogel said. "He has voluntarily made NPF his full-time mission in life. As chairman of the board, he has gone into work every business day for the last 16 years and has traveled the world to cultivate relationships with the medical and philanthropic community — all for the sake of finding a cure for this debilitating disease. It is through his leadership in helping bring scientists, corporations, foundations and individual donors together that we have made the advancements we have in neurological research."

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Slewett, a New York native and retired attorney, has dedicated his life to help find the cause and cure of Parkinson's disease and other neurological diseases. He is also founder of Boys Town in Jerusalem and a Trustee of Temple Beth Shalom of Miami Beach. He has been recognized with the prestigious Volunteer of the Year award by the National Society of Fund Raising Executives. Slewett, who has additionally served two terms as president of the National Parkinson Foundation, has two sons and four grandchildren.

Established in 1957, the Presidential Order of Merit was created to recognize notable achievements and contributions of individuals on behalf of the University of Miami. It is one of the university's most prestigious awards, which is presented at the discretion of the president. Slewett will be the 66th recipient of the Presidential Order of Merit.