

# IRSF names Kaminsky new CSO

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Media Contacts:

Kathryn Kissam

IRSF Board of Directors

(804-519-6231)

kkissam@rettsyndrome.org

Stephen Bajardi

Executive Director, IRSF

(203-722-6195)

sbajardi@rettsyndrome.org

International Rett Syndrome Foundation Names Steven G. Kaminsky, Ph.D

Chief Scientific Officer

CINCINNATI, OH: January 20, 2012 – The International Rett Syndrome Foundation (IRSF), the world's largest and most comprehensive not-for-profit organization that funds novel research for treatments and a cure for Rett syndrome, has announced Steven G. Kaminsky, Ph.D. as its new Chief Scientific Officer. Dr. Steven Kaminsky, former vice president for research at the Uniformed Services University in Bethesda, Maryland, is joining IRSF on January 23rd to lead their aggressive scientific research agenda. Dr. Kaminsky has a long distinguished career serving at a senior level for several universities and as a program officer at the National Institute of Health (NIH). With his extensive leadership experience and connections, one of Dr. Kaminsky's first major initiatives will launch more effective relations between IRSF and federal agencies including the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the NIH to promote further support for Rett syndrome research. He will also collaborate with IRSF's Scientific Advisory Board, Medical Advisory Board and other noteworthy investigators to sharply focus IRSF's future research program in basic and translational research.

"We enthusiastically welcome Steve's leadership and scientific vision to our IRSF team," says Kathryn Kissam, chair of the IRSF board. "Steve's proven track record and vast teaching, research and grant writing background will propel our organization forward in our quest to develop disease-modifying treatments to reverse Rett syndrome," says Kissam.

Rett syndrome is a unique autism spectrum brain disorder that is first recognized in infancy and seen primarily in girls, but can be rarely seen in boys. In 2007, a landmark study showed the reversal of Rett syndrome in a genetic mouse model. This key finding established the principle of reversibility of Rett syndrome, suggesting many symptoms of Rett syndrome and related disorders are reversible, even at later stages. Recently, scientific breakthroughs have been able to reaffirm the potential for disease reversibility and viable therapy options in the lab.

Stephen Bajardi, executive director of IRSF, reports, "After a vigorous national search process, we are pleased to announce we have found an intensely committed and qualified professional to lead IRSF's role in the international effort to develop treatments and identify the eventual cure for Rett syndrome. With the addition of Dr. Kaminsky, I have no doubt we are well positioned to pursue the IRSF Strategic Research Plan to expand our position as the leading private funder of Rett syndrome research and to vigorously pursue strong partnerships with industry, organizations and government to speed drug discovery and repurpose existing medicines. Dr. Kaminsky's extensive background working with NIH will place him in Bethesda, Maryland in close proximity to the various federal and private agencies essential to IRSF's global scientific effort."

#### About Steven G. Kaminsky, Ph.D.

Author of numerous publications and abstracts, Dr. Kaminsky earned his bachelor of science in biology from Hobart College, received a masters degree in biology from Northern Michigan University and earned his doctorate degree in pathology at the State University of New York at Buffalo. He is a member of several advisory boards including StrongStar Consortia for Psychological Health and the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program.

Dr. Kaminsky lives with his wife and two daughters in Frederick, Maryland. Kaminsky enjoys biking, hunting, golfing and dancing.

#### About IRSF and Rett syndrome

The International Rett Syndrome Foundation (IRSF) is the largest and most comprehensive not-for-profit 501c3 organization for parents, scientists, interested professionals and others concerned with Rett syndrome. The mission of IRSF is to fund research for treatments and a cure for Rett syndrome while enhancing the overall quality of life for those living with Rett syndrome by providing information, programs and services. IRSF is a proud recipient of the 4-Star rating from Charity Navigator. For more information, please visit IRSF's website at: [www.rettsyndrome.org](http://www.rettsyndrome.org).

Rett syndrome strikes all racial and ethnic groups, and occurs worldwide in 1 of every 10,000 female births. Symptoms appear after an early period of apparently normal or near normal development until six to eighteen months of life, when there begins stagnation of skills, followed by a regression. Soon, stereotyped hand movements such as handwashing, gait disturbances, and slowing of the normal rate of head growth become apparent. Other problems may include seizures and disorganized breathing patterns. Currently, there is no cure or significant treatment for Rett syndrome.

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