



New Jersey Center for Tourette Syndrome  
AND ASSOCIATED DISORDERS

*Collaborative Partnerships  
for the Tourette Syndrome Community*

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## Tourette Syndrome expert Dr. Jay Tischfield delivers keynote address at annual New Jersey NAMI conference

*Dr. Tischfield's 80-minute presentation at the December 14 event centered around his collaboration with NJCTS to form the Cell and DNA Sharing Repository at Rutgers University*

JAMESBURG, N.J. – Dr. Jay A. Tischfield, Executive Director of the Human Genetics Institute of New Jersey at Rutgers University and the CEO of RUCDR Infinite Biologics, was the keynote speaker at the National Alliance on Mental Illness' annual New Jersey conference – “Pathways to Recovery” – on December 14 at the Crowne Plaza Monroe in Jamesburg.

Dr. Tischfield, who collaborated with the New Jersey Center for Tourette Syndrome & Associated Disorders (NJCTS) to create a Tourette Syndrome arm at RUCDR in 2007, delivered a 80-minute talk and PowerPoint presentation titled [“Mental Disorders in the Genomic Age”](#) and centered on his work in the ever-widening Tourette Syndrome genetics field.

“The object of the talk was advances in mental illness through genetics and I used Tourette's as the example,” said Dr. Tischfield, who has studied Tourette Syndrome – an inherited, misdiagnosed, misunderstood neurological disorder characterized by tics and affecting 1 in 100 kids and adults – for more the past 10 years. “In our current research we haven't yet found the genes that are responsible for most cases of Tourette's. But we are still in a fraction of 1 percent – a small fraction of 1 percent – in terms of researching the causative genes out there.”

Dr. Tischfield stressed to the crowd of several hundred – many of which were parents of children affected by mental and neurological disorders, as well as various health-care and medical professionals – that New Jersey, thanks to the work of New Jersey Center for Tourette Syndrome



Photo by NJCTS

**Dr. Jay Tischfield, left, takes Congressman Albio Sires (D-NJ8) on a tour of the NJCTS Cell and DNA Sharing Repository at Rutgers University.**

and its partnerships at Rutgers, is at the forefront of Tourette Syndrome research locally, regionally, nationally and even worldwide.

Since the NJCTS Cell and DNA Sharing Repository was founded more than 5 years ago, hundreds of families from New Jersey and around the globe have donated their DNA to help foster more genetic research. But thousands – tens of thousands, Tischfield says – more participants are needed.

“The repository has been a huge success, and it was New Jersey that made the first Tourette’s samples available to researchers across the world,” said Dr. Tischfield, whose repository now collects samples at 26 sites around the world. “The first requests came from Japan. People wanted DNA samples, and there were none available to them at the time, so I said, ‘Why don’t we start our project? Now, we have about 10 collection sites in the U.S., 11 in Europe and several in Asia. And if we wanted to have more, we could.”

Dr. Tischfield encouraged those in attendance affected by Tourette Syndrome to take advantage of the monthly interview and DNA sampling process that takes place at Rutgers University. Dr. Robert King, a professor of child psychiatry at the Yale University Medical School and medical director of the TS/OCD Clinic at the Yale University Child Study Center, comes to New Jersey to facilitate the process.

“The work taking place at the repository is invaluable and is vital toward one day finding a cure for Tourette Syndrome,” NJCTS Executive Director Faith W. Rice said. “In particular, we are indebted to Dr. Tischfield for the partnership the New Jersey Center for Tourette Syndrome has with Rutgers University and for helping make our mission of supporting families affected by this neurological disorder a reality.”

Near the end of his presentation, Dr. Tischfield was asked: “What can I do to help?”

“I think most people with Tourette’s would like to do something, but they don’t know what or how. Contributing blood to the repository, joining and helping NJCTS, and supporting the proposed federal Tourette Syndrome legislation are all good advocacy things someone with TS should do,” said Dr. Tischfield, discussing [bill H.R. 146](#) that was developed and introduced by New Jersey Congressman Albio Sires (D-NJ8). “If you have affected children, there’s a shot we can help them. But we need your help.”

The next interview dates at Rutgers University are January 23-24 and February 7. More information is available by e-mailing [familystudy@biology.rutgers.edu](mailto:familystudy@biology.rutgers.edu). More information about NJCTS is available by calling 908-575-7350 or by visiting [www.njcts.org](http://www.njcts.org). More information about the Cell and DNA Sharing Repository is available by visiting [www.rucdr.org](http://www.rucdr.org).

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