

MEDIA ADVISORY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Unlikely Rock Star



Dr. Pi-Nian Chang, Co-Founder of University of Minnesota FASD Diagnostic Clinic
Photo by: Sue Austin, Austin Images Photography

They just want to see him. Say hello. Shake his hand. That is how hundreds if not thousands of families coming to the University of Minnesota's FASD Diagnostic Clinic over the last thirty years have felt about this one man. Dr. Pi-Nian Chang. To these families, he is like the "rock star of FASD". They trust him. They value his opinion. And they know that even though he is a very busy man, he will always take the time to listen, look them in the eyes and show that he personally cares and respects each one of his patients and families that he has helped get a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) diagnosis.

Since 1978, when he co-founded the University of Minnesota's Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Clinic, Dr. Pi-Nian Chang has been the voice for the Fetal Alcohol

Spectrum Disorder field. For more than 30 years, this program has served as a focal point for clinical, research and education activities related to FASD. The professional impact Dr. Chang has made in this field throughout Minnesota as well as on a national and international level is second to none. The list of all of Dr. Chang's publications,

awards, appointments, and positions are unending. But the personal impact he has made is just as significant.

Dr. Chang will be retiring at the end of December, and it goes without saying that he will be missed greatly. But the legacy that he leaves behind will never leave us. Dr. Chang has helped us all see the gifts of people living with FASD. His work has helped us all see the challenges and joys of living with FASD.

To ensure that Dr. Chang's passion and work continues, he is handing the baton over to two very capable, creative and strong leaders in their own right, Dr. Jeff Wozniak and



Dr. Jeff Wozniak and Dr. Chris Boys, Co-Directors of the University of Minnesota FASD Diagnostic Clinic Photo by: Amy Zellmer, Custom Creations Photography

Dr. Chris Boys. Dr. Wozniak and Dr. Boys will take over as Co-Directors of the University of Minnesota FASD Diagnostic Clinic to continue the strong leadership from the University of Minnesota. They are the new Ying-Yang of the FASD community and complement each other very well. While Dr. Boys heads the leadership on the clinical side, ensuring that families are seen for diagnostic evaluations, Dr. Wozniak sees his role as

reaching out to connect the University of Minnesota to the community of research.

“Right now, we are proud to have been awarded a research grant from the National Institute of Health to study the effectiveness of a non-drug, nutritional supplement in optimizing brain development in Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD). This study is cutting edge. It's the first of its kind, anywhere in the world”, stated Jeff Wozniak, Co-principal Investigator on the study.

Jeff and Chris have big shoes to fill. Both came to the University of Minnesota specifically to train under Dr. Chang. Instead of being intimidated or overwhelmed, they are humbled, excited and energized to begin a new direction, taking all that they have learned from the FASD master and seeing what their own legacy might be in 30 years. “Our goal is to build research into everything we do clinically,” says Jeff. “That way, we can measure the impact of what we are doing. Ideally, that will mean moving more

toward intervention, whereas our focus to date has been on assessment.” They are quick to point out, “We can do some of these things because the FASD community is organized in Minnesota thanks to organizations like the Minnesota Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and because the resources at the U of M are unique”.

As many as 8,500 Minnesotan babies are born every year with prenatal alcohol exposure. (*CDC, 2006*). The lifetime cost for an individual with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) is \$2.9 million. MOFAS was founded in 1998 by former First Lady, Susan Carlson, and is the only statewide source for information, resources and support on FASD. The mission of MOFAS is to eliminate disability caused by alcohol consumption during pregnancy and to improve the life for those living with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders throughout Minnesota. For more information contact MOFAS at 651-917-2370 or toll-free 1-866-90-MOFAS (66327); 1885 University Avenue, Suite 395, St. Paul, MN 55104; www.mofas.org.

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