



## MEDIA RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### Launch of the Canadian Rheumatology Association Foundation

**Canadian Rheumatology Association, February 9, 2023** – The Canadian Rheumatology Association (CRA) is pleased to announce the launch of the Canadian Rheumatology Association Foundation (CRAF). The foundation was born out of the vision of the CRA, a national voice for practicing rheumatologists and researchers with an interest in rheumatic diseases.

While the CRA focuses on promoting and advancing the field of rheumatology by organizing networking, training and education opportunities for clinicians, students, allied health professionals and researchers, the CRAF will focus on funding research and training of future Rheumatologists.

Dr. Ahmad Zbib, Executive Director of the CRAF, shares, “While we have great therapies for several rheumatic diseases, we still do not have cures, and in some cases, we don’t even have great treatment options for certain conditions. Research presents opportunities to change that. We hope to build a sizeable endowment, which will help us to continue, and ideally grow, our funding of research.”

We are pleased to announce that Dr. Vandana Ahluwalia, past president of the Canadian Rheumatology Association, is the founding Chair of the CRAF Board. Dr. Ahluwalia is a respected physician and is a member of the Rheumatology Division of the William Osler Health Centre in Brampton, Ontario. Her leadership and passion for this project will provide the guidance needed to achieve our mission to serve Rheumatologists so they can deliver the best care possible to their patients.

*“I am excited to be a part of this next step in the evolution of the CRA to fully support Canadian Rheumatology research. It is an honour to support and provide leadership in this way to ensure we continue to innovate and make a difference in the lives of our patients.”*

Vandana Ahluwalia, MD, FRCPC  
Chair, CRAF

Established as a registered charity on June 21, 2022, the CRAF was officially launched at the CRA and AHPA Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) in Québec City on Feb. 9, 2023. The annual meeting, held for the first time in person after three years, welcomed over 600 delegates. At the official launch event for the CRAF, keynote speaker Paul Nazareth, vice-president, Education & Development at the Canadian Association of Gift Planners (CAGP), celebrated the announcement and shared his experience with the delegates about how the CRAF can achieve their philanthropic vision.

For more information on how you might be able to support the CRAF, please visit [crafoundation.ca](http://crafoundation.ca).

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