



**A Community Celebration  
to Benefit Spinal Cord Injury Research**

**WINTER GARDEN WORLD FINANCIAL CENTER  
NEW YORK CITY**

**SUNDAY, JUNE 6, 2004**

**A Message from the Producer:**

**One Story: Hope for Many**

In August, 1983, New York dancer/choreographer Carey Erickson sustained a severe spinal cord injury as the result of a diving accident at Louse Point, Long Island. With two cervical vertebrae shattered, his prognosis was severe, permanent paralysis. In an instant, like thousands of individuals each year, Carey found himself faced with hard decisions to be made about his life, his career and his future.

At that time, doctors were able to ameliorate the effects of spinal cord injury, but hesitated to make promises of mobility they could not keep. In 1983, we, Carey's family and friends, could not have imagined that he would be among the first few to defy the odds. Within five months of his accident, Carey took his first steps, and went on to dance again. Under the care of neuroscientist Wise Young and his team at NYU Medical Center, Carey was part of the first clinical trial of *methylprednisolone*, the drug that became protocol for the treatment of spinal cord injury in the acute phase.

Carey's recovery from quadriplegia stands as a milestone in the amazing advancements in spinal cord injury research since that time. Dr. Young, part of a pioneering global network of scientists focusing on unified research efforts, continues his dedication to the cure as head of the W.M. Keck Center for Collaborative Neuroscience based at Rutgers University. Dr. Young also serves as a tireless activist on health and social issues which affect spinal cord injured individuals and their families across our nation.

Thanks to the collaborative efforts of injured individuals, their families and caregivers, forward-thinking health-care advocates, generous funders, and compassionate men and women from every walk of life, advances in patient care, visibility in the political arena and increased social awareness are helping spinal cord injured individuals achieve an enhanced quality of life.

Simultaneously, with advancements in technology and the combination therapy approach championed by Dr. Young and his colleagues, scientists around the globe are experiencing research outcomes that simply were not imaginable even five years ago. This April, following a data-exchange trip to several nations across the globe, Dr. Young summed up the state of spinal cord injury research simply and eloquently, "We are there. We are ready. We must not lose time in putting these results to clinical trial."

From the hundreds of injured individuals who are beginning *Rally* pledge drives in their communities across the country, to our supporters and sponsors, from our performers and volunteers for June 6th, to Dr. Young and his colleagues, to those who will be honored for their unfailing contributions to the field in countless ways, and for those whose injuries have created a passion for advocacy, *RALLY FOR THE CURE* brings together a remarkable group of people whose dedication and vision have brought the cure within our reach. In the words of Dr. Young: "It is no longer *if* - it is *when*".

Carey's first steps inspired my journey to this event some 20 years ago. Since that time, countless steps have been fought and struggled for, taken and applauded, one by one. Though Carey lost his fight with an unrelated illness in 1990, he left a promise of hope for the future. As we reaffirm and fuel this global effort, we know that the future is now. Together, we can keep that promise.

**For information on being part of this celebration, please contact:**

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**To learn more about our June 6th event, please visit: [rallyforthecure.org](http://rallyforthecure.org)**