

Planning with **VISION**

Longtime Take Steps Participant Raises IBD Awareness

Thirteen years ago, while at a gastroenterologist appointment, Brenda Ruthizer picked up a pamphlet about the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation. Intrigued by the Foundation's mission, Brenda participated in the Take Steps event that year in Salt Lake City. Ever since, Brenda and her husband, Terry O'Hara, have been avid supporters. They are members of the Founders Society, having included the Foundation in their future plans with a gift from their living trust.

Diagnosed with Crohn's disease at the age of 12, Brenda's IBD journey has included numerous medications, surgeries, and hospitalizations. In addition to participating in research—she is currently part of a study looking at the prevention of COVID-19 in patients with IBD—Brenda is passionate about increasing awareness about IBD and inspiring those around her to get involved. When asked why she has stayed engaged with the Foundation over the years, Brenda's reply speaks volumes. “I do this because I am so intimate with it. I want to raise awareness and motivate others to invest in the mission—and find a cure. I ask my family, friends, and doctor's office all to participate in Take Steps and support my team.”

Now retired, she and Terry are frequent travelers and enjoy hiking and skiing. They continue to have a team in the Salt Lake City Take Steps walk each year. Their



Brenda and Terry at the 2021 Take Steps Walk in Salt Lake City, Utah.

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team, Brenda's Crohnies, raised the second largest amount out of all the teams in 2022.

“This disease is not visible—nobody knows you have it. I want to get more people involved, make them aware, fund research, and find a cure,” Brenda said. Amid their travels and caring for foster cats (35 to date), Brenda and Terry will continue to spread the word about IBD. And their planned gift will continue their incredible legacy of support in the future.

Reap Tax Savings by Giving from Your IRA

As we approach the end of the calendar year, many people consider making year-end charitable gifts. Those who are age 70½ or older can contribute directly from their IRA to a charity and avoid paying income taxes on the distribution. This is known as a qualified charitable distribution. It is limited to IRAs, and funds must be transferred directly from the IRA to an eligible charity to qualify for a tax break. If you withdraw the money from your IRA and donate it later, it won't qualify as a tax-free qualified charitable distribution.

For additional information on making a gift from your IRA, talk to your plan administrator or reach out to Susan Carriker, Senior Director, National Advancement & Planned Giving, at 252-597-5085 or scarriker@crohnscolitisfoundation.org.



What is the Founders Society?



At the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation, the Founders Society honors those who strengthen our vision and commitment by including the Foundation in their estate planning. Members of the Founders Society are listed in our Annual Impact Report and receive inside information and updates as to our mission advancement and research progress. If you have made

a planned gift commitment to the Foundation, and have yet to notify us, please complete the form enclosed with this newsletter or contact Susan Carriker, Senior Director, National Advancement & Planned Giving, at 252-597-5085 or scarriker@crohnscolitisfoundation.org. We hope to be able to welcome you into the Founders Society and share the impact your commitment will have on our vision—a future without Crohn's and colitis.



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A copy of our most recently filed financial report is available from the Charities Registry on the New York State Attorney General's website (www.charitiesnys.com) or, upon request, by contacting the New York State Attorney General, Charities Bureau, 28 Liberty Street, New York, NY 10005, or us at 733 Third Avenue, Suite 510, New York, NY 10017-3218. You also may obtain information on charitable organizations from the New York State Office of the Attorney General at www.charitiesnys.com or 212-416-8401.