



# SADS Spokespeople

## **Michael J. Ackerman, M.D., Ph.D.**

Dr. Ackerman is an associate professor of medicine, pediatrics, and molecular pharmacology at the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine. He is also the director of the Long QT Syndrome/Inherited Arrhythmia Clinic and the Mayo Clinic Windland Smith Rice Sudden Death Genomics Laboratory. In November 2006, Dr. Ackerman became president of the Sudden Arrhythmia Death Syndromes Foundation (SADS) whose mission is to increase awareness of the cardiac channelopathies and provide support for families affected by such heritable arrhythmia syndromes, particularly long QT syndrome.

## **Alice A. Lara, RN, BSN**

Alice is the Executive Director of the Sudden Arrhythmia Death Syndromes (SADS) Foundation and has been in this capacity for the past six years. She spent eight years in nursing, nursing administration and teaching nursing and the past 14 years working in the nonprofit world—in administration, fund raising and consulting.

## **Nancy K. Adams**

Nancy Adams provides finance operations, business planning & analysis and accounting services to The Hope Heart Institute, a non-profit organization located in Seattle. The mission of The Hope Heart Institute is “to serve humanity through cardiovascular research and education. Nancy’s son Jesse died on May 21, 2003, of Sudden Cardiac Arrhythmia at the age of 21. Nancy’s son Jesse died on May 21, 2003, of Sudden Cardiac Arrhythmia at the age of 21. Jesse was diagnosed with PVC’s four years before his death during a routine sports physical while trying out for the High School Track team. “We were told that Jesse’s condition was in no way life threatening and he was permitted to participate in sports.” Jesse died peacefully at home in his sleep.

Nancy joined the SADS Foundation in 2004 and is a member of the patient family support network and active volunteer. She was asked to serve as Secretary/Treasurer of the SADS Foundation Board in 2006.

## **Denise Falzon**

Denise joined our Board in 2002. She has ‘worked’ for the SADS Foundation since she contacted us in 1993 after losing her 19-year-old son, Brian. Her volunteer efforts for SADS have been tireless—both in fund raising and in awareness activities. Even though she is a full time Realtor, Denise describes herself as “an activist” and holds different board positions with numerous professional, educational, charitable and social organizations.

“Thirteen years ago, my life as I knew it crumbled when my ‘healthy’ nineteen year old son, Brian, suddenly collapsed and died. Cause of death is inconclusive, but sudden arrhythmia due to LQTS was suggested due to a fainting episode that was misdiagnosed a year earlier. I have dedicated myself into raising awareness for SADS, as I truly believe my son, Brian, would be here with us now if he was diagnosed correctly. I do this in my son’s name so that he may never be forgotten. I pray and hope that in educating the public and medical professionals about the symptoms and warning signs of LQTS, we will be able to stop the senseless deaths of other young people.”

**Supporting Families. Saving Lives**