

Alex Manfull Fund Announces New Board Members with Strong Advocacy Ties

New members committed to driving action on PANDAS/PANS research, diagnosis and treatment

ARLINGTON, VA, UNITED STATES, October 29, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [The Alex Manfull Fund \(TAMF\)](#), a New Hampshire-based nonprofit whose work drives national research, education and treatment of the neuroimmune illnesses known as [PANDAS/PANS](#), has announced the addition of three new members to its Board of Directors and the reappointment of two incumbent members in new capacities.



TAMF is committed to changing the landscape on PANDAS/PANS via targeted research and education and couldn't be more pleased to welcome these Board Members to help us drive the action that's needed"

Susan Manfull, PhD, Executive Director of The Alex Manfull Fund

Daniela Sosa-Sarkar, PsyD, a licensed clinical psychologist in the US and Venezuela, as well as founding member of the Virginia Alliance for PANS/PANDAS Action (VA4PA), will assume the role of President. Bill Stadler, a certified financial planner, registered financial life planner, and consultant with Mercer Advisors, has been appointed Secretary. He replaces Christine Metzner, who served in this and other capacities from Oct. 2021-Oct. 2024.

Other new appointees include Angie Gentile, VP of Engagement and Impact at Perpetuo Films and founding member of VA4PA, who takes on the mantle of Vice President. She's joined by Jessica Carter, a food and beverage industry expert and health advocate, and Shari Strulson, an education specialist and member of the California Coalition for PANS/PANDAS Advocacy, which recently helped pass groundbreaking legislation mandating insurance coverage for treatment of these illnesses.

The appointments are effective through Oct. 31, 2026. Other TAMF Board Members include:

- Nancy Dougherty, Principal of NVantage Consulting LLC
- Sheilah Gauch, LICSW, Principal of Dearborn Academy
- Paul Murphy, TAMF Treasurer, Bay Area nonprofit consultant, and former Budget and Policy Director to Santa Clara County Supervisor Cindy Chavez
- Marina Selenica, advisory member of the POND Brain Bank, Georgetown University

The Board of Directors complements the [TAMF Scientific and Medical Advisory Board](#).

Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorder Associated with Streptococcus (PANDAS) is part of a broader category of diseases known as Pediatric Acute Onset Neuropsychiatric Syndrome (PANS). PANS and PANDAS are disorders triggered by bacterial and/or viral infections in which the immune system attacks healthy brain tissue, leading to life-altering brain inflammation, an array of debilitating side effects, and even death.

Despite their prevalence among children and young adults, PANDAS/PANS are poorly understood and typically misdiagnosed, and treatments often inappropriate and inadequate.

"The Alex Manfull Fund is committed to changing the landscape on PANDAS/PANS via targeted research and education and couldn't be more pleased to welcome these Board Members, new and old, to help us drive the action that's needed," says Susan Manfull, PhD, Executive Director of TAMF.

New TAMF President Sosa-Sarkar adds: "I'm excited to collaborate closely with our dedicated board, team, and supporters as we continue the crucial work of advancing education and research to improve outcomes for patients and their families."

Since its inception in 2018, TAMF has been instrumental in establishing the POND Brain Bank at Georgetown University Medical Center, as well as medical fellowships on PANDAS/PANS at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical School and at Georgetown. TAMF has funded additional state-of-the-art research at Harvard/Massachusetts General Hospital and the University of Arizona. TAMF is internationally recognized for its ability to convene global experts for cutting-edge symposia covering the newest research and treatments, holding an annual 5K awareness-raising event in Washington, DC, co-organizing an annual Advocacy Day on Capitol Hill, and many other innovative initiatives.

ABOUT THE ALEX MANFULL FUND

When Susan and William Manfull lost their only child to PANDAS, they established The Alex Manfull Fund in their daughter's memory to support research and increase awareness about these disorders, especially in adolescents and young adults, and to advance education for physicians, mental health professionals, and educators, helping them to recognize and treat these disorders. To learn more about The Alex Manfull Fund, visit:

Website: <https://thealexmanfullfund.org/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TheAlexManfullFund>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/the_alex_manfull_fund/

Untangling PANDAS & PANS Podcast: <https://untanglingpandasfans.buzzsprout.com>

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