



May 2, 2020

Ms. Stella Pavlides
American Vitiligo Research Foundation
1848 Murray Avenue
Clearwater, FL 33755

Dear Stella,

On behalf of my entire team in the Pigmentary Disorder Clinic at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH), thank you for the privilege of sharing our heartfelt admiration and gratitude for your tireless hard work and advocacy on behalf of patients with vitiligo.

As we know, vitiligo is a highly visible condition that results from the loss of pigment producing cells in the skin, causing patches of depigmented skin often on the face and large portions of the body. This has been absolutely debilitating for many of my patients, causing major psychological consequences and a profound impact on the quality of lives. In our vitiligo clinic at MGH, my patients come from all ethnic backgrounds and walks of life, and many patients travel from other countries across the globe to seek our care because they are so desperate for help. For those who mistakenly think of vitiligo as a cosmetic condition, I hope that they will one day have the opportunity to hear the experiences of my patients who don't go out in public because they feel disfigured, who as children have become the targets of ridicule and bullying, and who come from cultures where their families are told they have leprosy and excluded from the opportunity to marry.

Since those affected by vitiligo are so often isolated, marginalized, and without the capability to effectively advocate for themselves, your work and your organization are so incredibly important and valuable. It has been so moving for our clinical team to work with you and see the contribution and impact you have already had on our patients. Our pediatric patients have been so excited to see the vitiligo dolls that you sent for them, a precious gift for children who do not otherwise get to see depictions of beauty in world that are diverse enough or look like them, and send the message to them that they too look normal and beautiful. Thank you so much also for the insightful interview that you gave to our team as we wrote the vitiligo guidebook for our patients this past year called "Facing Vitiligo." Sharing your personal experiences, wisdom and the community of advocacy you have created with newly diagnosed patients has been invaluable to those who are just beginning their journey of external and internal healing.

On behalf of all of us working to help and advocate for patients with vitiligo, thank you.

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