

Contact: Melissa Chefec, MCPR Public Relations, 203-968-6625

For Immediate Release

**TIME FOR LYME GIVES RESEARCH GRANT TO DR. ROBERT THACH
AT WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY**

Study to focus on how disease-producing organisms are maintained in the environment

Greenwich, CT, January 2010 - Time for Lyme, Inc. a non-profit organization dedicated to research and education about Lyme disease is pleased to announce that they have just awarded a \$25,000 grant to Dr. Robert E. Thach, Professor of Biology at Washington University in St. Louis for his work on vertebrate reservoirs for tick-borne diseases in the central United States.

According to Dr. Thach, "Future development and implementation of strategies to control tick-borne diseases depend on understanding how these disease-producing organisms that ticks transmit are maintained in the environment. Through novel analysis of nymphal tick gut blood, sources of the tick's previous blood meals can be identified. In so doing, primary and secondary reservoirs can be determined. Discovering the carriers of the infected ticks will eventually help design methods to reduce human exposure to them and consequently, tick-borne diseases."

"We cannot omit prevention from our equation to solving the problem of tick-borne diseases", says Connecticut-based neurologist Harriet Kotsoris, M.D., medical director of Time for Lyme. "After all, if we reduce disease exposure, the burden to diagnose and treat will be substantially reduced," Dr. Kotsoris adds.

About Lyme Disease

Named for the Connecticut town where the disease first emerged, Lyme disease is caused by the bacteria *Borrelia burgdorferi*, which generally enters the body through a deer tick bite. Symptoms can range from fever, chills and body aches to joint swelling, weakness, severe fatigue, trouble concentrating and temporary paralysis. Most, though not all, people infected will see a bull's-eye rash at the site of the tick bite between three and 30 days after infection.

Although Lyme disease is most common in the Northeast, it's been found in all 50 states. Those who live, or spend time, in grassy or wooded areas are most at risk. According to the CDC, more than 20,000 cases of Lyme disease are reported each year. Yet because many diagnostic tests produce false negatives, the actual number of Lyme disease sufferers could be as high as 200,000—a figure that would make Lyme disease more prevalent in the United States than AIDS or the West Nile Virus.

Since 1991, the number of those infected with Lyme disease has doubled. The CDC classifies it as an epidemic.

About Time for Lyme

Time for Lyme is an organization dedicated to eliminating the devastating effects of Lyme disease and other tick-borne illness. Its mission is to prevent the spread of disease, develop definitive diagnostic tools and effective treatments, and to ultimately find a cure for tick-borne illness by supporting research, education, and the acquisition and dissemination of information. In addition, TFL continues to act as an advocate for Lyme disease sufferers and their families through support of legislative reform on the federal, state and local levels. www.timeforlyme.org.