

Raise Awareness and Raise Hope

Be part of the VBF 2008 International Day of Awareness

Hello, my name is Paige Salvador and I am the Executive Director of the Vascular Birthmarks Foundation. I am writing to ask you to please help us to raise hope for families whose lives are affected by vascular birthmarks by participating in our 2008 International Day of Awareness Campaign (May 15, 2008).

Thirteen years ago, my son Tyler was born with a fairly large facial hemangioma. My husband and I decided that if we could have Tyler's birthmark removed, we would. At that time, I had no idea that there was someone and some way to help him. I was told to wait. Leave it alone. It will go away. I believed the doctors and felt helpless and resigned to resort to a treatment of benign neglect. Then I met Linda Rozell-Shannon and VBF through a friend of mine named Maryann Ryan. Finally, I found hope. Linda referred me to a doctor who removed Tyler's hemangioma. To this day, I credit my friend Maryann Ryan with being one of the very first champions of awareness for VBF.

VBF helped me twelve years ago and still continues to help thousands of people every month. VBF can help everyone who is looking to understand treatment options or those who choose not to treat. But even though VBF has been at work for years educating patients, physicians, and the public about early diagnosis and treatment options for vascular birthmarks, there is still much more work to do. I know this because many patients go weeks, months or years before they seek help through our website, support groups, medical conferences and physician visits. So often we hear someone say, "I didn't know that someone could help." Together, we can change that.

Please be a part of raising awareness and raising hope this year by participating in our International Day of Awareness. Traditionally, we focus on May 15th each year since that has been the day that we have had a Congressional Proclamation making that day our International Day of Awareness, but you can help us any day of the year. Vascular birthmarks happen every day, every where in this world. Each day children are born all over the world with a vascular birthmark that needs medical attention. The parents of these children need us to help them find the best options for understanding vascular birthmarks and for finding treatment. Help us to raise awareness and funds needed to continue this important work. There is a way that each of us can help. I look forward to you joining us again *or* for the first time as a Champion of Awareness. Thank you.

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