

**David Higgins, Ph.D.**



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Michael J. Fox Foundation (formerly Parkinson's Action Network)

Public Policy Council

Patient Advocate, Parkinson's Disease

Appointed by Controller

Dr. Higgins earned his Ph.D. in molecular biology and genetics from the University of Rochester in New York, followed by a postdoctoral fellowship at the National Cancer Institute before moving to San Diego in 1990. He has held positions at several biotech companies including Invitrogen, Chiron, Idun Pharmaceuticals and Oxford BioMedica. He has served as an Adjunct Associate Professor of Biology at SDSU and as an Instructor in the biotech technician-training program at SD City College. Dr. Higgins currently serves as the Parkinson's Patient Advocate member of CIRM's governing board the ICOC.

For Higgins, Parkinson's disease is a family legacy. His maternal grandmother suffered from PD - and she participated in the earliest levodopa clinical trials in the late 1960's. In early 2014 his mother died with Lewy Body Dementia. His maternal uncle and great uncle also suffered PD. In December 2011 - almost 11 years ago - Higgins was diagnosed with PD himself.

Higgins has become an advocate for people with Parkinson's disease and their caregivers/care partners. He uses his personal experiences to guide this advocacy work, focused on improving quality of life issues through education, support, training, networking and increased research funding leading ultimately to a cure.

He lives in the North Park neighborhood of San Diego with his husband and their 3 dogs.