Established in 1995 with assets from the estate of Thomas Wallace Rogers, the dedicated fund grew from donations and wise investing. Rogers was a polio survivor who slept in an iron lung and sought the organization's help when his breathing problems worsened. He led an active life and ran his own securities business.

“I recall discussions he had with Gini Laurie about using positive pressure ventilation,” said Joan L. Headley, executive director of IVUN. “With the help of Oscar B. Schwartz, MD, a St. Louis pulmonologist, he added the PLV-100 (Philips Respironics) to his breathing aids. I think he would appreciate the fact that additional donors and the market greatly expanded his initial contributions.”

Longtime Board member and Chair of the Medical Advisory Committee, Fred Maynard, MD, said, “We are excited to double the amount of our research awards in order to accelerate the rate of investigation into useful solutions to the problems of our aging polio survivors who make up the majority of our membership.”

IVUN’s eighth Request for Proposals has changed from prior years. It is now a one-step process, rather than two, and the award will be given annually, with an option for $100,000 over a two-year period.

The application deadline for the grant to be awarded in 2014 is February 3, 2014. The recipient, if one is warranted, will receive notice by April 15th. An application is available on www.ventusers.org for the Thomas Wallace Rogers Memorial Respiratory Research Grant to study the management of neuromuscular respiratory insufficiency and to explore historical, social, psychological and independent living aspects of long-term home mechanical ventilation.

“In future years we may narrow the focus of the request to particular medical or social problems affecting ventilator users,” explains Daniel Wilson, PhD, Chair of the Research Committee. “We invite members of IVUN to suggest possible subjects for future research.”