

## **Participants Young and Old Gear Up for BRI Triathlon July 20**

**SEATTLE - (July 15, 2008)** – Athletes of all ages from throughout the Pacific Northwest will swim, cycle and run their way to fitness in the Benaroya Research Institute Triathlon at Seafair Sunday, July 20 at Seward Park. Event donations will support autoimmune disease research of Type 1 diabetes, multiple sclerosis and rheumatoid arthritis at Benaroya Research Institute at Virginia Mason.

A participant expo will be held at Benaroya Research Institute July 19 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. No race-day registration is available.

This year, event organizers expect nearly 2,000 participants and more than 350 children in the five events, including the Sprint Triathlon, two-person and three-person relays and Splasher and Dasher events for children. Participants in the Sprint Triathlon start with a half-mile swim followed by a 12-mile bike ride and 3.1-mile run. Kids age 12 and younger may participate in the Splashers or Dashers events. Splashers swim 50 yards, bike one mile and run .2 miles, and dashers swim 100 yards, bike one mile and run .4 miles.

As of a week before the event, the youngest registered participant is 4-year-old Cooper Thompson of Seattle and the oldest is 70-year-old John Upthegrove of Burien. Cooper's dad, Tom Thompson of Seattle, says, while grandpa has arthritis (which the event benefits) the primary motivator for Cooper to participate is to keep up with older brother Parker.

As for Upthegrove, who has participated for the past seven years, "I just really enjoy this event. My goal was to make it to 70, but I may have a few more years in me." Upthegrove hopes his involvement will encourage others of any age to get out and be active.

All athletes that complete the Benaroya Research Institute Triathlon at Seafair will receive an official finisher's medal. An awards ceremony will follow. Awards will be given to the top three men and women overall, top three athletes in each age group and top two teams in each category. Prize money will also be awarded to the top three men and women overall.

### **About Benaroya Research Institute at Virginia Mason**

Benaroya Research Institute at Virginia Mason (BRI), founded in 1956, works to unlock the mysteries of the immune system. Its team of world-renowned scientists is focused on identifying causes and cures for devastating diseases including diabetes, arthritis, heart disease and cancer. BRI is an international leader in immune system and autoimmune disease research with a focus on translating laboratory discoveries to real-life applications. For more information, visit [www.benaroyaresearch.org](http://www.benaroyaresearch.org).