

## ALS Biomarker Progress & Discovery Prize Winners

**Harvey Arbesman, MD MS**, is a board-certified dermatologist and one of the winners of a 2007 Prize4Life Thought Prize, which was designed to award the best theoretical solutions to finding an ALS biomarker. Dr. Arbesman, who had never conducted ALS-related research prior to this Challenge, received a Discovery Prize for his team's identification of a potential skin-based biomarker that could function as a biologic correlate of ALS. Dr. Arbesman's team, comprised of researchers from Columbia's Neurology and Dermatology departments, adapted a technology used in the cosmetic industry, the Cutometer©, to non-invasively measure skin elasticity to see whether changes in this property of skin correlate with disease progression in ALS patients.

**Seward Rutkove, MD**, an ALS researcher and clinician who has worked in the ALS field for more than 10 years, received a Progress Prize for his proposed biomarker based on the observation that electrical current flows differently through healthy vs. diseased muscle tissue and these changes in current flow can be sensitively measured. His team is developing handheld technologies capable of taking these highly sensitive measurements to determine how changes in current flow correlate with disease progression in ALS patients.