Parkinson's Disease Foundation announces research awards totaling $1.2 million

EurekAlert

(July 1, 2010, New York, NY) The Parkinson's Disease Foundation (PDF) is pleased to announce awards totaling $1.2 million for research projects designed to understand the cause(s) of and find a cure for Parkinson's disease (PD).

The awards will support the work of 15 leading scientists and are provided through two key PDF research programs, International Research Grants and Research Fellowship Grants. The first program seeks to fund "high-risk/high-reward" projects that may have a significant impact upon Parkinson's science; the second aims to support the projects of scientists who are in the early stages of their careers.

Stanley Fahn, M.D., PDF's Research Director, commented, "The work of this year's grantees is replete with original ideas for improving our understanding of Parkinson's disease at the most basic levels, and finding new approaches to treating it. We need to be sure that the best talent is attracted to the challenge of solving Parkinson's and helping those who live with it. Funding the promising projects of scientists and young fellows, an area in which PDF leads, is the best way to make this happen."

Among the scientists behind this year's research projects are James Maas, M.D., Ph.D., of the University of California, San Francisco and Leo J. Pallanck, Ph.D., of the University of Washington. With his fellowship, Dr. Maas will be conducting research into the role of dopamine, the neurotransmitter whose loss leads to Parkinson's symptoms. Through his studies into a process called dendritic dopamine release, he hopes to shed light on how the brain controls muscle movement — and how the loss of that control develops in the course of Parkinson's.

Dr. Pallanck will use his research grant to investigate the potential of a surprising compound tobacco in saving the neurons lost in Parkinson's disease. He is searching for the exact chemical within tobacco that may protect neurons from the effects of Parkinson's. Dr. Pallanck says this discovery, "in turn, may one day lead to the identification of a potential treatment for Parkinson's."

A full list of 2011 research projects appears below and is available on the PDF website at www.pdf.org/en/results_funded [1]. In fiscal year 2010, PDF contributed $5.5 million towards Parkinson's research programs.

2011 International Research Grants and Fellowships

Ataxin-3-Mediated Regulation of Parkin Stability and Activity
Thomas Durcan, Ph.D.
Montreal Neurological Institute, McGill University

The Role of Alpha-Synuclein in Parkinson's Disease Dementia and Dementia with Lewy Bodies
Sonia George, Ph.D.
University of Minnesota

Telomere Biology in Patients with Incident Parkinson's Disease
Tobias Kurth, M.D., Sc.D., and Robert Y.L. Zee, Ph.D., M.P.H.
Brigham and Women's Hospital

The Regulation of Somatodendritic Dopamine Release
James Maas, M.D., Ph.D.
University of California, San Francisco

Identification of Neuroprotective Factors in Tobacco
Leo J. Pallanck, Ph.D.
University of Washington

Potential Role of DJ-1 in Modulating the VHL/HIF Pathway and its Relevance to PD*
David Park, Ph.D.
University of Ottawa

Mechanism of FADD Recruitment and Activation in Mutant LRRK2-Induced Neurodegeneration*
Hardy Rideout, Ph.D.
Biomedical Research Foundation of the Academy of Athens

Correlating the Structure of Membrane-Bound Alpha-Synuclein with Function and Toxicity
Khurshida Shahidullah, Ph.D.
Weill Cornell Medical College

The Contribution of Dopaminergic System in Pathological Gambling in Parkinson's Disease*
Antonio P. Strafella, M.D., Ph.D., F.R.C.P.C.
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
Toronto Western Hospital/Institute
University of Toronto

A Functional and Structural Neuroanatomic Analysis of Cognitive Impairment in Parkinson's Disease
Ryan Walsh, M.D., Ph.D.
University of Alabama at Birmingham

LINGO1 and LINGO2 in Parkinson's Disease*
Christian Wider, M.D., and Matthew J. Farrer, Ph.D.
CHUV Lausanne and University of British Columbia

Targeting the CMA Pathway in Cellular Models of Alpha-Synuclein-Induced

Neurodegeneration
Maria Xilouri, Ph.D.
Biomedical Research Foundation of the Academy of Athens

Creating a South American Genetics Consortium on Parkinson's Disease*
Cyrus Zabetian, M.D., M.S.
VA Puget Sound Health Care System, Seattle Division
University of Washington

SOURCE [2]

Source URL (retrieved on *08/21/2014 - 12:45am*):
http://www.mdtmag.com/news/2010/07/parkinsons-disease-foundation-announces-research-awards-totaling-12-million

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[1] http://www.pdf.org/en/results_funded
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