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**The American Parkinson Disease Association Awards $1.3 million in Research Grants and Continues to Lead the Way to *Ease the Burden – Find the Cure* for Parkinson’s Disease**

***New York, NY, July 23, 2015*** – The American Parkinson Disease Association is pleased to award $1.3 million for 2015-2016 research funding to support four Post-Doctoral Fellowships, eight Research grants to junior investigators, three Summer Student Fellows and eight APDA Centers of Advanced Research

The grants are awarded through a competitive application process and reviewed by APDA’s Scientific Advisory Board (SAB). The SAB is comprised of scientists with nationally recognized expertise in a variety of leading edge research areas within the field of Parkinson’s disease. A scoring process and rigorous review of the applications is conducted by the SAB when it convenes annually to review the proposals. In order to be considered for funding, only applications which meet the highest quality are recommended for approval by the SAB. Scoring of the grants includes three major areas of criteria including: overall significance and impact in the field of Parkinson’s disease, the appropriateness of the principal investigator and the academic and scientific environment for the proposed project, and the feasibility of the proposed budget and time period for completion.

 “*What sets APDA funding apart is its track record of launching the careers of the best and brightest scientists working on Parkinson’s disease. This research enables the exploration of new ideas and conceivably holds the key to therapeutic interventions, prevention, treatments and the cure,*” commented SAB Chairman, David G. Standaert, MD, PhD, John N. Whitaker Professor and Chair of Neurology and Director, Division of Movement Disorders at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

APDA has been a funding partner in most of the Parkinson’s scientific discoveries in the last 50 years including the work of Dr. George C. Cotzias, which led to establishing the effectiveness of high oral doses of Levodopa in treating PD; the work of Dr. Roger Duvoisin and his team that led to identifying the role of heredity and environment in PD; the research of Dr. Menek Goldstein establishing the role of dopamine agonists in PD treatment; and the research at Robert Wood Johnson Medical Center, which led to the discovery of a mutation in the gene alpha-Synuclein, named PARK1.

Leslie A. Chambers, APDA President & CEO, stated that, “*In its relentless pursuit to Find a Cure, APDA pledges to continue to fund research initiatives to meet the collective goal of one day putting an end to this devastating neurological disorder that affects more than one million Americans.*”

**Browse all APDA funded investigators by visiting** <http://www.apdaparkinson.org/research/apda-funded-research/>

**Four Post-Doctoral Fellowships**wereawarded to support post-doctoral scientists whose research training holds promise into new insights of geriatric psychology, pathophysiology, etiology and treatment of Parkinson’s disease.

* Fabienne C. Fiesel, PhD, Mayo Clinic, Jacksonville, FL
* Xi Chen, PhD, Van Andel Research Institute, Grand Rapids, MI
* Serene Paul, PhD, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT
* Emily Rocha, PhD, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA

**Eight Research Grants**were awarded to junior investigators affiliated with and performing Parkinson’s disease research at an academic institution.

* Tim Bartels, PhD, Brigham & Women’s Hospital, Boston, MA
* Jacqueline Burre, PhD, Joan & Sanford I. Weill Medical College of Cornell University, NY, NY
* Alice Cronin – Golomb, PhD & Joseph DeGutis, PhD, Boston University, Boston, MA
* Andreas H. Kottmann, PhD, The Research Foundation for CUNY, NY, NY
* Jeane Latourelle, DSc, Boston University, Boston University, Boston, MA
* Oren Levy, PhD, Columbia University Health Science Center, NY, NY
* Vivek K. Unni, MD, PhD, Oregon Health & Science University, Portland, OR
* Stephen N. Witt, PhD, Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center, Shreveport, LA

**Three Summer Student Fellowships** wereawarded to medical students to perform supervised laboratory or clinical research designed to clarify our understanding of Parkinson's disease, its nature, manifestations, etiology or treatment**.**

* Amal Al-Loz, Washington University, St. Louis, MO
* Dennis London, New York University Langone Medical Center, NY, NY
* Michael Pennock, The Pennsylvania State University College of Medicine, Hershey, PA

**APDA Centers for Advanced Research** serve more than 26,000 patients annually and support the following: research trainees, fellowship programs, published peer review manuscripts and have provided pilot data for NIH grants. The Centers facilitate research at the forefront of investigation into the cause, treatment and ultimately cure for Parkinson’s.

* Boston University School of Medicine
* Emory University School of Medicine, Atlanta, GA
* Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson School of Medicine, New Brunswick, NJ
* University of Alabama at Birmingham
* UCLA School of Medicine, Los Angeles
* University of Pittsburgh
* University of Virginia Medical Center, Charlottesville
* Washington University, St. Louis

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| About the American Parkinson Disease AssociationThe American Parkinson Disease Association (APDA) was founded in 1961 with the dual purpose to *Ease the Burden - Find the Cure* for Parkinson’s disease. In that time, APDA has raised and invested more than $87 million to fund research, patient services and education, and elevate public awareness. As the country’s largest Parkinson’s grassroots organization, APDA aims to *Ease the Burden* for the more than one million Americans with Parkinson’s disease and their families through a nationwide network of Chapters, Information and Referral (I&R) Centers, and support groups. APDA pursues its efforts to *Find the Cure* by funding Centers for Advanced Research and awarding grants to fund the most promising research toward discovering the cause(s) and finding the cure for Parkinson’s disease.  |