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For Immediate Release

Contact: Kathryn Dattomo
NREF Chief Development Officer
847.378.0540
kad@nref.org

NREF Announces Recipients of 2020-21 Research Fellowship Grants and Young Clinician Investigator Awards

(June 22, 2020 - Rolling Meadows, Ill.) – The [Neurosurgery Research & Education Foundation](http://www.nref.org) (NREF) is pleased to announce this year’s recipients of the foundation’s Research Fellowship Grants and Young Clinician Investigator Awards.

“Year after year, the NREF receives applications from some of the most promising researchers in the country. The decisions were extraordinarily difficult this year. The exceptional quality of the proposals submitted by the awardees makes us optimistic for the future of neurosurgery. We are grateful for the generosity of our donors, industry partners, sections and affiliated organizations who make these awards possible,” stated NREF Research Committee Chair E. Antonio Chiocca, MD, PhD, FAANS.

As the premier funder of neurosurgical studies, the NREF provides funding for studies in basic, translational and patient-oriented clinical research for investigators in North America through two annual neurosurgical research grant programs.

Open to residents only, the NREF Research Fellowship Grant provides training for neurosurgeons who are preparing for academic careers as clinician investigators. Applicants must be physicians who have been accepted into, or who are currently in, approved residency training programs in neurological surgery in North America.

The NREF Young Clinician Investigator Award supports junior faculty who are pursuing careers as clinical investigators. Applicants must be neurosurgeons, no more than two years from the end of their clinical training, who are full-time faculty in North American teaching institutions.

2020-21 Research Fellowship Grant and Young Clinician Investigator Award Recipients

Ahmad Alhourani, MD, University of Louisville

- **Award:** Academy of Neurological Surgeons 2020-21 Research Fellowship Grant
- **Project Title:** Dissecting the role of the subthalamic nucleus in inhibitory control

Mohammed Alshareef, MD, Medical University of South Carolina

- **Award:** AANS/CNS Section on Pediatric Neurological Surgery & NREF 2020-21 Research Fellowship Grant
- **Project Title:** The Role of Complement in Secondary Injury after Neonatal Germinal Matrix Hemorrhage

Matei A. Banu, MD, Columbia University

- **Award:** AANS/CNS Section on Tumors & NREF 2020-21 Research Fellowship Grant
- **Project Title:** Leveraging metabolic vulnerabilities of cell populations in the glioma microenvironment to trigger ferroptotic cell death and immune response in GBM



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Jacob F. Baranoski, MD, MHS, St. Joseph's Hospital/Barrow

- **Award:** L. Nelson "Nick" Hopkins/NREF 2020-21 Research Fellowship Grant jointly sponsored by Arvind Ahuja, MD, FAANS, and the AANS/CNS Cerebrovascular Section
- **Project Title:** Effects of dietary phytoestrogens on aneurysm wall inflammation and rates of aneurysmal rupture

Stanley Bazarek, MD, PhD, Brigham & Women's Hospital/Massachusetts General Hospital/Harvard University

- **Award:** NREF/Medtronic 2020-2021 Research Fellowship Grant
- **Project Title:** Transplantation of Human Induced Pluripotent Stem Cell-Derived Spinal Motor Neurons to Restore Function following Peripheral Nerve or Spinal Cord Injury

Victoria E. Clark, MD, PhD, Massachusetts General Hospital

- **Award:** Andrew T. Parsa 2020-21 Research Fellowship Grant
- **Project Title:** Characterizing Recurrent RNA Polymerase II Meningioma Driver Mutations

Laureen D. Hachem, MD, Toronto Western Hospital

- **Award:** Academy of Neurological Surgeons/NREF 2020-21 Research Fellowship Grant
- **Project Title:** Elucidating the mechanisms of glutamate-mediated activation of adult spinal cord neural stem/progenitor cells to reveal therapeutic targets for spinal cord injury

Jennifer Hong, MD, Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center

- **Award:** Bagan Family Foundation/NREF 2020-21 Young Clinician Investigator Award
- **Project Title:** Axonal reprogramming to accelerate nerve regeneration

Ramin A. Morshed, MD, University of California, San Francisco

- **Award:** AANS/CNS Section on Tumors & NREF 2020-21 Research Fellowship Grant
- **Project Title:** Identification of genes mediating brain-tropism in a syngeneic model of metastatic breast cancer

Cody Lee Nesvick, MD, Mayo Clinic

- **Award:** Academy of Neurological Surgeons/NREF 2020-21 Research Fellowship Grant
- **Project Title:** Reversal Through Revertance: Targeting Pathogenic Mutations in Pediatric Brain Tumors with Gene Editing

Chad A. Tucek, MD, University of Kansas Medical Center

- **Award:** AANS/CNS Section on Neurotrauma & Critical Care/NREF 2020-21 Research Fellowship Grant
- **Project Title:** Evaluation of Novel Polymeric Substrates for Direct Extradural Application of Therapies Following Traumatic Brain Injury: An Innovative Approach to a Difficult Problem

For more information about the [NREF Research Fellowship Grants and Young Clinician Investigator Awards](#) or other grant and fellowship programs, contact the NREF at 847.378.0500 or info@nref.org.

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About the NREF

The NREF is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization created in 1980 by the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS) to support research and education efforts that enhance and confirm the critical role neurosurgeons play in improving lives.

The NREF is dedicated to providing education to neurosurgeons at all stages of their careers, as well as funding research into new and existing neurosurgical treatments, to identify links between best practices and improved outcomes in patient care. Through voluntary public donations, corporate support and donations from allied groups, the NREF supports endeavors that impact the lives of those suffering from epilepsy, stroke, brain tumors, spinal disorders, sports-related head injuries, lower back pain and Parkinson's disease.

For more information about the NREF, please visit www.nref.org.