



For Immediate Release

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The Neurosurgery Research & Education Foundation Announces the Recipients of the 2017-2018 Research Grant-Young Clinician Investigator Awards

(April 24, 2017 - Rolling Meadows, IL) – The Neurosurgery Research & Education Foundation (NREF) is pleased to announce this year’s recipients of the Foundation’s Research Grant-Young Clinician Investigator Awards.

“The NREF is grateful to the donors, sponsors and partner organizations who make it possible for us to continue funding groundbreaking neurosurgical research and providing extraordinary educational opportunities for neurosurgeons at all stages of their careers,” stated Ennio A. Chiocca, MD, PhD, FAANS, NREF Education Advisory Committee Chair.

As the premier funder of neurosurgical studies, the Neurosurgery Research & Education Foundation provides funding for studies in basic, translational and patient-oriented clinical research for investigators in North America through two neurosurgical research grant programs annually.

Open to residents only, the **NREF Research 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.

The 2017-2018 Research Grant and Young Clinician Investigator Award recipients are:

Kunal Gupta, MD, Oregon Health & Science University

Award: NREF & Bagan Family Foundation Research Fellowship Grant

Title: Investigating the role of Wnts in seizure-induced aberrant hippocampal neurogenesis

Sponsor: Eric Schnell, MD, PhD

Megan Jack, MD, PhD, University of Kansas

Award: NREF & AANS/CNS Section on Pain Research Fellowship Grant

Title: Neuroinflammation and Exercise in Regeneration and Recovery of the Injured Peripheral Nervous System

Sponsor: Doug Wright, PhD

Darryl Lau, MD, University of California-San Francisco

Award: Andrew T. Parsa Research Fellowship sponsored by the NREF and the AANS/CNS Joint Section on Tumors Research Fellowship Grant
Title: The Role of c-Met/ β 1-integrin Complex Formation in the Establishment of Brain Metastases
Sponsor: Manish Aghi, MD, PhD

Brian Lee, MD, PhD, California Institute of Technology

Award: NREF & American Academy of Neurological Surgery Young Clinician Investigator Award
Title: Generating artificial sensation by electrical stimulation of the hand area of the primary somatosensory (S1) cortex for a closed-loop brain-machine interface (BMI)
Sponsor: Richard Andersen, PhD

Sarah T. Menacho, MD, University of Utah

Award: NREF & AANS/CNS Section on Neurotrauma & Critical Care Young Clinician Investigator Award
Title: A Tool to Improve Treatment Threshold Compliance in the Neurocritical Care Unit
Sponsor: Gregory Hawryluk, MD, PhD

Arjun Vivek Pendharkar, MD, Stanford University

Award: NREF & American Academy of Neurological Surgery Research Fellowship Grant
Title: Role of Contralesional (Uninjured) Hemisphere Activation in Functional Recovery after Stroke
Sponsor: Gary K. Steinberg, MD, PhD

Pablo Valdes Quevedo, MD, PhD, Harvard/Brigham and Women's Hospital

Award: B*CURED & NREF Research Fellowship Grant
Title: Expansion Microscopy for Interrogation of Cancer Mechanisms and Phenotypes in Gliomas
Sponsor: Ennio A. Chiocca, MD, PhD

Robert Starke, MD, University of Miami

Award: L. Nelson "Nick" Hopkins NREF Young Clinician Investigator Award jointly sponsored by Arvind Ahuja, MD, FAANS, and the AANS/CNS Cerebrovascular Section
Title: The Role of Endothelial Cell Dysfunction & Differentiation in Aneurysms Progression & Healing
Sponsor: Joshua M. Hare, MD

Krishanthan Vigneswaran, MD, Emory University

Award: NREF & AANS/CNS Section on Pediatric Neurological Surgery Research Fellowship Grant
Title: Identification of small molecule inhibitors of novel receptor tyrosine kinase pathways in adult and pediatric glioblastoma
Sponsor: Jeffrey J. Olson, MD

Jefferson Wilson, MD, University of Toronto/St. Michael's Hospital

Award: NREF & Medtronic Young Clinician Investigator Award

Title: The Aging Face of Spinal Trauma: Exploring the Epidemiology and Impact of Spinal Cord Injury in the Elderly

Sponsor: Michael Fehlings, MD, PhD

Jacky Yeung, MD, Yale University

Award: NREF & AANS/CNS Section on Tumors Research Fellowship Grant

Title: Immunogenetic profiling and targeting novel immune check point regulators in meningiomas

Sponsor: Lieping Chen, MD, PhD

The NREF is responsible for review and approval of grant applications and awards grants based upon established fellowship program criteria and the needs of the requesting hospital and/or academic institution. The NREF Education Advisory Committee was established to review and approve fellowship grant applications in an independent, unbiased manner. The committee is comprised of neurosurgeons who do not receive financial or other support from the medical device industry. Individuals serving on the committee are volunteers and do not receive compensation from the NREF for their efforts.

For more information about the Research Grant-Young Clinician Investigator Awards and all other NREF Grants and Awards, please contact Cathy Powers at (847) 378-0540 or cmp@aans.org.

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About the NREF

The Neurosurgery Research & Education Foundation (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, in order 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 NREF, please visit www.nref.org.