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THE NEW YORK STEM CELL FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES \$7.5 MILLION TO FIVE NEW NYSCF – ROBERTSON INVESTIGATORS

NEW YORK, NY (October 28, 2015) – The New York Stem Cell Foundation (NYSCF) announced the 2015 class of NYSCF – Robertson Investigators, selecting five of the most talented scientists.

Each Investigator will receive a \$1.5 million award, disbursed over the next five years. The award enables these Innovators to expand their scientific capacities: increase their laboratories, train other scientists, and take on riskier projects traditional funding may not cover. Three of the scientists were named **NYSCF – Robertson Stem Cell Investigators**, a program in its sixth year, and two were named **NYSCF – Robertson Neuroscience Investigators**, a program in its fifth year, making a total of 37 total NYSCF Investigators from 23 institutions throughout the world.

“These early career scientists stand out for their determination to pursue the most cutting-edge, pioneering work in their fields. The applicant pool was extremely competitive and we are pleased to support the careers of these visionary researchers,” said Susan L. Solomon, CEO and Co-founder of NYSCF.

The newest Investigators were announced at **The NYSCF Conference: Tenth Annual Translational Stem Cell Research Conference**, at The Rockefeller University in Manhattan.

Designed to support scientists engaged in novel neuroscience and cutting-edge translational stem cell research, NYSCF created the two Investigator Programs to aid talented early career researchers as they transition from the post-doctoral phase of their careers to the autonomy of establishing their own laboratories.

The Investigator awards build on the previous success of NYSCF’s Postdoctoral Fellowship Program, the largest program in the United States supporting postdoctoral fellows in stem cell research. The NYSCF Postdoctoral Fellowship Program has provided funding for 52 post-doctoral researchers to date.

“The individuals selected this year are once again an incredibly talented group of scientists,” said Catherine Dulac, PhD, Harvard University, chair of the NYSCF – Robertson Neuroscience Investigator Program’s selection committee. “The scientists in this program have already made several important breakthroughs and I look forward to the future discoveries by this group of researchers.”

Dulac was joined on the jury by Anders Björklund, MD, PhD, Lund University in Sweden; Gordon Fishell, PhD, Associate Director NYU Neuroscience Institute; and Leslie Vosshall, PhD, The Rockefeller University.

The NYSCF – Robertson Stem Cell Investigator Program’s selection committee consisted of 2015 MacArthur Fellow Lorenz Studer, MD, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center; Fiona Watt, DPhil, King’s College London in the United Kingdom; 2013 NYSCF-Robertson Stem Cell Prize recipient Amy Wagers, PhD, Harvard University; and Irv Weissman, MD, Stanford University.

The 2015 **NYSCF – Robertson Stem Cell Investigators** are:

- **Mitchell Guttman, PhD**, Assistant Professor in the Division of Biology and Biological Engineering at the California Institute of Technology, aims to understand how a class of noncoding genes first described by Dr. Guttman, lncRNAs, perform many jobs in the cell, among them regulating the plasticity of pluripotent stem cells and controlling how stem cells mature into any other kind of cell.
- **Justin Ichida, PhD**, Assistant Professor in the Department of Stem Cell Biology and Regenerative Medicine at the University of Southern California, focuses on using patient-specific disease modeling, next-generation sequencing, and chemical screening to identify disease mechanisms and treatments for Lou Gehrig’s disease and sensorineural hearing loss. Dr. Ichida was also a NYSCF – Druckenmiller Fellow at Harvard University.
- **Kristy Red-Horse, PhD**, Assistant Professor in the Biology Department at Stanford University, studies how cardiovascular stem cells behave in three dimensions and at the single cell level. Her work brings a high-resolution understanding of embryonic development to injury and disease models.

The 2015 **NYSCF – Robertson Neuroscience Investigators** are:

- **Hillel Adesnik, PhD**, Assistant Professor of Neurobiology at University of California, Berkeley, works to reveal the neural basis of sensory perception at the synaptic, systems, and behavioral levels.
- **Dragana Rogilja, PhD**, Assistant Professor in the Department of Neurobiology at Harvard Medical School, researches the genetics of sleep regulation and the molecular regulatory mechanisms and neuronal circuitry of the way brains filter stimuli during the stages of sleep.

About The New York Stem Cell Foundation

The New York Stem Cell Foundation (NYSCF) is an independent organization founded in 2005 to accelerate cures and better treatments for patients through stem cell research. NYSCF employs over 45 researchers at the NYSCF Research Institute, located in New York, and is an acknowledged world leader in stem cell research and in developing pioneering stem cell technologies, including the NYSCF Global Stem Cell Array™. Additionally, NYSCF supports another 75 researchers at other leading institutions worldwide through its Innovator Programs, including the NYSCF – Druckenmiller Fellowships and the NYSCF – Robertson Investigator Awards. NYSCF focuses on translational research in a model designed to overcome the barriers that slow discovery and replaces silos with collaboration. For more information, visit www.nyscf.org.