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THE NEW YORK STEM CELL FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES $9 MILLION IN GRANT AWARDS TO SIX NEW NYSCF – ROBERTSON INVESTIGATORS

NEW YORK, NY (October 25, 2016) – The New York Stem Cell Foundation (NYSCF) announced the 2016 class of NYSCF – Robertson Investigators, welcoming six of the most talented stem cell researchers and neuroscientists from around the world into the NYSCF Investigator Program.

The NYSCF Investigator Program fosters and encourages promising early career scientists whose cutting-edge research holds the potential to accelerate treatments and cures, and provides support for the NYSCF – Robertson Stem Cell Investigator Awards and the NYSCF – Robertson Neuroscience Investigator Awards.

The awards provide critical seed funding – $1.5 million over five years – to outstanding young scientists as they move beyond their postdoctoral training to establish their own, independent laboratories. This year, three scientists joined the seventh class of **NYSCF – Robertson Stem Cell Investigators** and three others joined the sixth class of **NYSCF – Robertson Neuroscience Investigators.**

"These six outstanding researchers focus on the most promising, translational research and we are pleased to welcome them into our global NYSCF Innovator community," said Susan L. Solomon, CEO and Co-founder of NYSCF. "Enabling their important research as they move into the next phase of their careers is a key priority of our mission, and their work will unquestionably accelerate progress towards cures for the entire field."

These awards enable Investigators to pursue high-risk/high-reward research that traditional funding does not support. To date, the NYSCF global community includes 41 NYSCF – Robertson Investigators and Alumni at 32 institutions throughout the world.

"The NYSCF Investigator Programs are a critical part of encouraging promising young scientists to pursue innovative stem cell and neuroscience research as a career," stated Leslie Vosshall, PhD, Investigator at the Howard Hughes Medical Institute and Robin Chemers Neustein Professor in the Laboratory of Neurogenetics and Behavior at The Rockefeller University and NYSCF – Robertson Neuroscience Awards jury member. "The award winners are creative, out-of-the-box thinkers pursuing high-risk/high-reward research that pushes the boundaries of basic research, and in many cases yielding translational results with near-term impact in the clinic."

Catherine Dulac, PhD, Harvard University, chaired the NYSCF – Robertson Neuroscience Investigator Awards selection committee and was joined on the jury by Jonathan Flint, MD, Wellcome Trust Centre for Human Genetics and University of California, Los Angeles; Arnold

Kriegstein, MD, PhD, University of California, San Francisco; and Dr. Vosshall.

The NYSCF – Robertson Stem Cell Investigator Awards selection committee included 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; Owen Witte, MD, University of California, Los Angeles; and Irv Weissman, MD, Stanford University.

The 2016 **NYSCF – Robertson Stem Cell Investigators**:

- **Maria Barna, PhD**, Assistant Professor in the Departments of Developmental Biology and Genetics at Stanford University, studies the importance of ribosomes in cell communication to determine stem cell development and gene expression.

- **Malin Parmar, PhD**, Professor in the Cellular Neuroscience Department at Lund University, Sweden, focuses on bringing new cell therapies for Parkinson's disease to the clinic by replacing lost dopamine neurons with new, healthy cells.

- **Takanori Takebe, MD,** Assistant Professor in the Division of Gastroenterology, Hematology and Nutrition and Division of Developmental Biology at the Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, works on developing and applying mini-organ technologies from human cells with a focus on the liver.

The 2016 **NYSCF – Robertson Neuroscience Investigators**:

- **Maria Lehtinen, PhD,** Assistant Professor in the Department of Pathology at Boston Children's Hospital, focuses on how cerebrospinal fluid regulates the development and health of the brain through cues from stem cells in the brain.

- **Claire Wyart, PhD,** Independent Group Leader at the Brain & Spine Institute (ICM), France, works to understand how the presence of multiple signaling molecules in the cerebrospinal fluid regulate the brain and body reactions to internal state changes like hunger, sleep, and locomotion among others.

- **Michael Yartsev, PhD**, Assistant Professor in the Department of Bioengineering and The Helen Wills Neuroscience Institute at University of California, Berkeley, studies the neurobiological basis of language learning with bats using neurophysiological, optogenetic, imaging and molecular techniques.

About The New York Stem Cell Foundation Research Institute

The New York Stem Cell Foundation (NYSCF) Research Institute is an independent organization accelerating cures and better treatments for patients through stem cell research. The NYSCF global community includes over 140 researchers at leading institutions worldwide, including the NYSCF – Druckenmiller Fellows, the NYSCF – Robertson Investigators, the NYSCF – Robertson Stem Cell Prize Recipients, and NYSCF Research Institute scientists and engineers. The NYSCF Research Institute employs over 45 researchers 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™. NYSCF focuses on translational research in a model designed to overcome the barriers that slow discovery and replace silos with collaboration. For more information, visit www.nyscf.org