



Contact: David McKeon
212-365-7440
dmckeon@nyscf.org

PIONEERING IPS CELL SCIENTIST KAZUTOSHI TAKAHASHI RECEIVES NYSCF – ROBERTSON PRIZE IN STEM CELL RESEARCH

*Dr. Takahashi's contribution to induced pluripotent stem (iPS) cell research
leads to Nobel Prize win in Medicine*

NEW YORK, NY (October 9, 2012) – Today, The New York Stem Cell Foundation (NYSCF) will award a Japanese scientist with the NYSCF – Robertson Prize for his extraordinary achievements in translational stem cell research.

This award will go to Kazutoshi Takahashi, PhD, Lecturer, Center for iPS Cell Research and Application (CiRA) at Kyoto University, for his vital contribution to induced pluripotent stem (iPS) cell derivation. Dr. Takahashi will be in New York City today and available for interview.

Dr. Takahashi was lead author on a series of landmark papers that described reprogramming adult cells into iPS cells, which were published while he was a postdoctoral researcher in Shinya Yamanaka's, MD, PhD, laboratory at Kyoto University.

Yesterday, judges in Stockholm announced that Dr. Yamanaka and Sir John Gurdon, PhD, the Gurdon Institute, won the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for their stem cell research breakthroughs. Both scientists demonstrated that adult cells can be reprogrammed into pluripotent cells, cells that can become any cell type in the body.

The NYSCF – Robertson prize will be presented at a ceremony in New York City by Susan L. Solomon, CEO of The New York Stem Cell Foundation, and Professor Peter J. Coffey, DPhil, the inaugural recipient of the NYSCF – Robertson Prize in 2011, Executive Director of Translation at UC Santa Barbara's Center for Stem Cell Biology and Engineering, and Director of the London Project to Cure Blindness, University College London.

“Dr. Takahashi's path-breaking work truly has opened up the entire field of stem cell research,” said Ms. Solomon. “In addition to his derivation of induced pluripotent stem cells, he focuses on improving this technique and other critical translational studies.”

Dr. Takahashi's research group at Kyoto University was established in 2010 to focus on two areas of cellular reprogramming. Their first area of investigation is in the process of cellular reprogramming. They are specifically interested in the intermediate stage when a cell changes from an adult state to a pluripotent state, and they are identifying molecules to enhance the

reprogramming process. Their second research area is to evaluate iPS cell quality and differentiation potential.

“I congratulate Dr. Takahashi for his groundbreaking work, opening new avenues in the search for cures,” said Julian H. Robertson, Jr. “The NYSCF – Robertson Stem Cell Prize was created to recognize and support the work of young scientists like Dr. Takahashi, whose research offers enormous potential.”

Dr. Takahashi will give a special talk at NYSCF’s Seventh Annual Translational Stem Cell Research Conference on Wednesday, October 10 from 6:40-7:05 PM.

The jury that selected Dr. Takahashi in September consisted of Christine Mummery, PhD, Chair of the Department of Anatomy and Embryology at Leiden University Medical Center in the Netherlands; Lorenz Studer, MD, Director of the Sloan-Kettering Center for Stem Cell Biology; Irving Weissman, MD, Director of the Institute for Stem Cell Biology and Regenerative Medicine at the Stanford School of Medicine; and, Peter J. Coffey, PhD.

The NYSCF – Robertson prize is awarded annually to a young scientist in recognition of innovative and groundbreaking achievement, or body of work, that has significantly advanced human stem cell research toward clinical application. The terms of the prize require that the \$200,000 stipend be used, at the recipients’ discretion, to further support their research.

Dr. Takahashi, in addition to the monetary award, will receive an award sculpture designed by celebrated architect Frank Gehry. In 2009, NYSCF honored Gehry with its Humanitarian Award, given to a non-scientist stem cell research advocate.

The New York Stem Cell Foundation (NYSCF) conducts cutting-edge translational stem cell research in its laboratory in New York City and supports research by stem cell scientists at other leading institutions around the world. More information is available at www.nyscf.org.