



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

**STEM CELL RESEARCHERS CONVENE TUESDAY TO SHARE LATEST DISCOVERIES
AT THE NEW YORK STEM CELL FOUNDATION SEVENTH ANNUAL
TRANSLATIONAL STEM CELL RESEARCH CONFERENCE**

*Panelists Share Stem Cell Research Breakthroughs, Moving Toward Better Treatments
for Major Chronic Diseases, Injuries*

NEW YORK, NY (October 10, 2012) – Leaders in translational stem cell research from across the country and around the world will present findings on how advances in stem cell science lead to better treatments and cures to disease and injury at The New York Stem Cell Foundation's Seventh Annual Translational Stem Cell Research Conference, held at The Rockefeller University in Manhattan on October 10-11.

Today, a series of panels, oriented towards a lay audience, will focus on how stem cells may be implemented for disease modeling and applied in the development of targeted drugs and treatments for major diseases and injuries.

The conference opens with *Road to the Clinic*, moderated by **Lee Rubin**, PhD, NYSCF Scientific Advisor and Director of Translational Medicine at the Harvard Stem Cell Institute. Panelists will discuss how the pharmaceutical industry, academia, biotech firms, health care, and venture capital firms work together to move discoveries made at the lab bench to the patient's bedside.

Panelists include **Peter J. Coffey**, Director of the London Project to Cure Blindness and Professor of Cellular Therapy and Visual Sciences at the Institute of Ophthalmology; **Pratik Multani**, MD, MS, Senior Vice President of clinical development at Fate Therapeutics; **Gil Van Bokkelen**, PhD, CEO and Chairman of Athersys, Inc; and, **Mahendra S. Rao**, MD, PhD, Director of the National Institutes of Health, Center for Regenerative Medicine.

The afternoon panel *Revolutionizing Functional Human Genetics* will be moderated by Michael Manganiello, Partner at HCM Strategists. Scientists, pharmaceutical leaders, and government officials will exchange views on how recent advances in stem cell derivation, like the Human Genome Project before it, provide key insights into understanding the cellular-level mechanisms of disease.

Panelists include **Susan L. Solomon**, CEO of The New York Stem Cell Foundation (NYSCF), **Kevin C. Eggan**, PhD, Chief Scientific Officer of NYSCF and a Professor at Harvard University; **Bernard Munos**, Founder of InnoThink Center for Research in

Biomedical Innovation and previous advisor of Eli Lilly and Company; **Danilo A. Tagle**, PhD, Associate Director for Special Initiatives, National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences at the NIH; and, Alex Meissner, PhD, Assistant Professor at Harvard University and Harvard Department of Stem Cell and Regenerative Biology Senior Associate Member.

The last session of the day, *Programming and Reprogramming*, will address new methods reprogramming adult cells into induced pluripotent stem (iPS) cells as well as how these generated stem cells may be differentiated into diverse cell types. **Ruth Lehmann**, PhD, Laura and Isaac Perlmutter Professor of Cell Biology at the New York University School of Medicine, will chair the session.

Speakers include **Hans Shöler**, PhD, Director of the Max Planck Institute for Molecular Biomedicine; **Kathrin Plath**, PhD, Assistant Professor at the University of California, Los Angeles; and, **Thomas Zwaka**, MD, Associate Professor, Baylor College of Medicine.

At the end of the day, the recipient of the second **NYSCF – Robertson Prize** will be announced. The prize is granted to a young scientist whose extraordinary achievements or body of work move the field of translational stem cell research forward. This year's winner **Kazutoshi Takahashi**, PhD, Lecturer, Center for iPS Cell Research and Application at Kyoto University will deliver a keynote address.

Six new **NYSCF – Robertson Stem Cell and Neuroscience Investigators** will also be introduced. The highly regarded Investigator program awards outstanding early career postdoctoral researchers with \$1.5 million over a five-year period to expand their laboratories, train other scientists, and foster cutting-edge research.

Over 50 researchers composed of NYSCF's scientists and external investigators will present their work in **poster sessions** throughout the conference.

Co-chairs of the conference are: Laurie H. Glimcher, MD, Weill Medical College of Cornell University; Lee Goldman, MD, MPH, Columbia University; Allen M. Spiegel, MD, Albert Einstein College of Medicine; Marc Tessier-Lavigne, PhD, The Rockefeller University; Craig B. Thompson, MD, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center.

Scientific co-chairs are: Moses V. Chao, PhD, Skirball Institute of Biomedicine; Paul S. Frenette, MD, Albert Einstein College of Medicine; Zach W. Hall, PhD, The New York Stem Cell Foundation; Christopher E. Hendersen, PhD, Columbia University; Ihor Lemischka, PhD, Mount Sinai School of Medicine; Shahin Rafi, MD, Weill Medical College of Cornell University.

The Robertson Foundation is the principal sponsor of the conference.

Co-sponsoring institutions are: Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Columbia University Medical Center, Helen and Martin Kimmel Center for Stem Cell Biology at New York University School of Medicine, the Mount Sinai School of Medicine, and the Tri-Institutional Stem Cell Initiative, which consists of Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, The Rockefeller University, and Weill Cornell Medical College.

The **full conference agenda** is available at www.nyscf.org/events/annual-conference.

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.