



From: The New York Stem Cell Foundation

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## THE NEW YORK STEM CELL FOUNDATION (NYSCF) AWARDS FELLOWSHIPS TO SEVEN INNOVATIVE STEM CELL SCIENTISTS

NEW YORK CITY (June 6, 2011) – [The New York Stem Cell Foundation](#) (NYSCF) today announced the appointment of seven new [NYSCF-Druckenmiller Fellows](#), who are conducting groundbreaking research in the stem cell field. The postdoctoral scientists join 25 accomplished stem cell researchers from leading institutions who have been supported by the program since 2006. To date, NYSCF has awarded 32 fellowships in what has become one of the most competitive postdoctoral fellowships for stem cell researchers.

The announcement was made by **Susan L. Solomon**, NYSCF CEO, who said the Fellowship Program was created to train and support young scientists in the pursuit of innovative stem cell research. The Program has committed over \$10 million to postdoctoral fellowships for stem cell researchers since it began in 2006.

“These scientists are doing work that will help us understand and cure the most intractable diseases of our time and accelerate the path from bench to bedside,” she said. “We believe that stem cell research will revolutionize medicine, and these gifted scientists are at the forefront.”

Each of the NYSCF-Druckenmiller Fellows will receive funding over a one-to three-year period to support their research initiatives. They will have access to NYSCF’s specialized stem cell laboratory in Manhattan, where they will be able to conduct research and receive training in advanced stem cell research techniques. The Fellows will also present their work at NYSCF’s Annual Translational [Stem Cell Research Conference](#), October 11-12, 2011 at Rockefeller University in New York.

“At a time when funding for stem cell research is in flux, NYSCF’s Fellowship Program ensures that the best and brightest researchers are well positioned to lead and innovate the field as it grows,” says **Dr. Shahin Rafii** of Weill Medical College of Cornell University, who chairs NYSCF’s Fellowship Committee. “The quality of this year’s candidates was outstanding, and I feel confident that this generation of stem cell researchers will help transform the field.”

### **The 2011 Fellows:**

**Dilek Colak, PhD**, working with **Dr. Samie R. Jaffrey** at Weill Medical College of Cornell University, is using stem cell models of Fragile X, the most frequently inherited form of mental retardation, to look for ways to “turn off” the gene that causes the disease.

**Bi-Sen Ding, PhD**, working with **Dr. Shahin Rafii** at Weill Medical College of Cornell University, is developing strategies to expand functional transplantable liver cells that could significantly increase the success of liver regeneration.

**Tamar Hermesh, PhD**, working with **Dr. Jean-Laurent Casanova** at The Rockefeller University, is trying to understand the mechanisms through which the central nervous system develops immunity against diseases that infect the brain, such as herpes simplex encephalitis.

**Ya-Chieh Hsu, PhD**, working with **Dr. Elaine Fuchs** at The Rockefeller University, is investigating signaling pathways and other factors that control stem cell cycles, which are clinically significant in cancer and regenerative medicine.

**Sara Huang, PhD**, working with **Dr. Hans Snoeck** at Mount Sinai School of Medicine, is using human stem cells to generate cells that can develop into functional lung tissue, which could eventually be used in lung regeneration.

**Evangelos Kiskinis, PhD**, working with **Dr. Kevin Eggan** at Harvard University, is using human stem cells that carry ALS-causing genes to develop models of the disease, which could lead to new therapies and treatments.

**Giovanni Zito, PhD**, working with **Dr. Valentina Greco** at Yale University, is investigating how stem cells regulate cancer, specifically skin cancer, and the signals and paths involved in regulation.

NYSCF's Fellowship Program is significantly supported by a generous gift from **Stanley and Fiona Druckenmiller**, and by an anonymous donor. For more information, visit [www.nyscf.org](http://www.nyscf.org).

**About The New York Stem Cell Foundation:**

Since 2005, The New York Stem Cell Foundation has used private funds to support stem cell scientists around the world, educate the public, and advance the most cutting-edge stem cell research in the NYSCF Laboratory, all to bring us closer to the cures we need.