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PAUL TESAR RECEIVES 2017 NEW YORK STEM CELL FOUNDATION – ROBERTSON STEM CELL PRIZE

New York, NY (October 24, 2017) – The New York Stem Cell Foundation (NYSCF) announced today that Paul Tesar, DPhil, is the 2017 recipient of the NYSCF – Robertson Stem Cell Prize for his pioneering discovery of pluripotent epiblast stem cells and technologies to utilize pluripotent stem cells for discovery of new therapeutics for neurological disorders such as multiple sclerosis and pediatric leukodystrophies.

“Paul’s research exemplifies both the importance of basic science investigating the behavior and development of stem cells, and also the exciting translational potential of this work,” explained Susan L. Solomon, CEO and Co-founder of NYSCF. “He has been a key part of our NYSCF Innovator Community for many years, and we are pleased to recognize and continue to support his important research with the 2017 NYSCF – Robertson Stem Cell Prize.”

Dr. Tesar is an Associate Professor in the Department of Genetics & Genome Sciences and the Dr. Donald and Ruth Weber Goodman Professor of Innovative Therapeutics at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine. He is also a member of the National Center for Regenerative Medicine and the Case Comprehensive Cancer Center.

The Tesar laboratory has recently focused on the study of myelination – the insulating coating on nerve cells critical to their function – and the diseases that impact it, developing new techniques of producing myelinating cell types in the laboratory from stem cells. These cells have been used for screening new drug candidates, translating this work into a clinical impact and fundamentally enabling advances in stem cell biology and regenerative medicine.

“This recognition is truly an honor for me and my scientific team,” said Dr. Tesar. “This prize recognizes the importance of stem cell research and will accelerate our efforts to rapidly and safely bring new stem cell-based therapies to patients.”

Previously, Dr. Tesar has received numerous awards and honors, including the Harold M. Weintraub Award of the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, the Beddington Medal of the British Society for Developmental Biology, and the International Society for Stem Cell Research Outstanding Young Investigator Award. He is also a NYSCF – Robertson Stem Cell Investigator Alumnus.

“Innovative stem cell and drug screening technologies from the Tesar laboratory provide the foundation for a new era of regenerative medicine,” stated Dr. Feng Zhang, Core Member of the

Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard, NYSCF – Robertson Stem Cell Investigator and the 2016 NYSCF – Robertson Prize recipient. “The support and recognition of the NYSCF will help fuel his pioneering approach to enhance the regenerative capacity of stem cells already present in the brain to repair and reverse damage caused by neurological disease.”

The NYSCF – Robertson Stem Cell Prize has been awarded annually since 2011 to an outstanding young stem cell scientist in recognition of significant and path breaking translational stem cell research. All NYSCF – Robertson Stem Cell Prize recipients receive \$200,000 to be used for research purposes at their discretion.

Previous recipients of the Robertson Prize include:

- 2016 – **Feng Zhang, PhD**, Associate Professor of Neuroscience and Biological Engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Core Member of the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard, for his role pioneering CRISPR-Cas9 gene editing technology.
- 2015 – **Franziska Michor, PhD**, Professor of Computational Biology at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and in the Department of Biostatistics at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, for her research using quantitative approaches to optimize cancer therapies.
- 2014 – **Marius Wernig, PhD**, Associate Professor in the Institute for Stem Cell Biology and Regenerative Medicine and the Department of Pathology at Stanford University School of Medicine, for his research directly converting skin cells into functional neurons.
- 2013 – **Amy Wagers, PhD**, Professor at Harvard University, for her work on blood and muscle stem cells.
- 2012 – **Kazutoshi Takahashi, PhD**, Junior Associate Professor, Center for iPS Cell Research and Application at Kyoto University, for his work founding the field of iPS cell research in the laboratory of Dr. Shinya Yamanaka, 2012 Nobel Prize Laureate in Medicine.
- 2011 – **Peter Coffey, DPhil**, Director to the London Project to Cure Blindness at University College London, for his research on using embryonic stem cells to cure age-related macular degeneration.

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 150 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 is an acknowledged world leader in stem cell research and in developing pioneering stem cell technologies, including the NYSCF Global Stem Cell Array™ and in manufacturing stem cells for scientists around the globe. 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.