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## Life Sciences Fund Awards First Research Grants

SEATTLE—The Life Sciences Discovery Fund (LSDF) announced today that it has selected six Washington research teams to receive more than \$4.5 million in the Fund’s inaugural grant competition. With support from these new grants, awardees will implement projects aimed at achieving improvements in health-care quality and cost effectiveness.

“The life sciences represent a vision for the future. The projects selected to receive grants not only support my goal to increase access to high-quality health care for all Washingtonians, but will also lead to economic opportunities for our communities,” says Governor Chris Gregoire. “In May 2005, I signed into law the legislation that created the Life Sciences Discovery Fund and today I am proud to congratulate the inaugural grantees.”

Life Science Discovery Fund 07-01 Awardees			
Researcher	Organization	Project	Amount
Daniel Chiu	UW	Monitoring Breast Cancer Metastasis and Treatment Efficacy	\$760K
David Flum	UW	Surgical Care and Outcomes assessment Program	\$1.35M
William Hagopian	Pacific Northwest Research Institute	Diabetes Evaluation in Washington	\$980K
Jeffrey Hummel	Qualis Health	Applying Health IT to Improve Medication Management	\$530K
Cornelius Ivory	WSU	Rapid fingerprinting of cardiac biomarkers	\$750K
David Newell	Swedish	Intracranial and Intraventricular Hemorrhage with Ultrasound Enhanced Thrombolysis	\$170K

The winning researchers and their organizations (see box) have all proposed novel applications of technology to health care. They have designed diagnostic and therapeutic innovations in patient care and system transformations to promote improved health outcomes. Each of the award projects is also structured to promote tangible economic gains for Washington.

Seventy-five proposals were submitted for this competition. They were reviewed and ranked by panels of experts from outside of Washington convened by the American Association for the Advancement of Science. The reviewers prepared detailed comments on each proposal. They also made recommendations to the LSDF Board of Trustees for funding. The trustees in turn analyzed the proposals and the reviewer’s recommendations, and today selected the winners.



"This portfolio of outstanding research projects is the gratifying product of a scrupulous process," says Lura Powell, chair of the board of trustees. "The life sciences community of Washington responded to this first funding opportunity with great enthusiasm. The board made excellent use of the expert reviewers' evaluations and recommendations. And we selected a suite of proposals that in our judgment best meets the Fund's legislative mandate."

Powell, appointed by the governor to chair the new LSDF in 2005, has also served as the director of the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory and director of the Advanced Technology Program at the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

LSDF was authorized by the legislature to invest \$350 million of the tobacco settlement bonus payments over 10 years in life sciences research. The first installment of the bonus funds will not be available until April, 2008. As a result, contributions were sought to launch an early, inaugural grant competition, with support provided by a distinguished group of corporate and foundation partners—the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Microsoft, Amgen, Group Health Cooperative, Safeco, and Regence BlueShield.

Private Philanthropy Provides Funds for First Round of LSDF Grants

- the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation
- the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- Microsoft
- Amgen
- Group Health Cooperative
- Safeco
- Regence BlueShield

"We are very encouraged by this first competition," says Lee Huntsman, executive director of LSDF. Huntsman, emeritus president of the University of Washington, was tapped to lead LSDF in 2005. "With help from the legislature, a strong vote of confidence from private philanthropists, and vigorous response from applicants, we were able to ramp up and select research projects for funding nearly a year ahead of schedule." He also points to the accomplishment of LSDF's board of trustees in reviewing and selecting award proposals. "Together, these six proposals make up a very strong portfolio of outstanding research. In choosing them, the trustees show that they were mindful of the legislature's goals in investing in life sciences."

The selected projects will focus on innovative applications of technology to improve the effectiveness of surgical procedures, to improve medication management for all patients, and to better diagnose and treat breast cancer, diabetes, stroke, and cardiac arrest. In keeping with LSDF's core investment goals, all the awardees have designed projects aimed not only at measurable health benefits for citizens but also economic benefits for Washington communities. Most selected projects will run for three years, but their results are expected to be felt in the state for years to come.



Before the researchers and organizations named today begin to receive funding from LSDF, they will complete grant agreements with the Fund. The agreements will specify project outcomes, periodic milestones, and progress reports that are required.

“The trustees’ selection of these projects,” Huntsman says, “is an important step forward. LSDF is in business to help Washington’s life sciences organizations and researchers be more successful. In supporting their work, the Fund is advancing the health and economic competitiveness of the state.”

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*Established in May 2005, the Life Sciences Discovery Fund is a Washington State agency that supports innovative research to enhance life sciences competitiveness and improve health and health care. Information about its history, purposes, organization, current funding opportunities, and review process is available on its website at [www.lsdfa.org](http://www.lsdfa.org). Announced in January as LSDF 07-01, letters of intent were received in March, proposals in May, and selection of awardees was completed today. A second competition—LSDF 07-02—is already underway. Its awards are expected to be announced in April, 2008. It will be supported by the state’s first installment of the tobacco settlement bonus.*

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