

# Life Sciences

## DISCOVERY FUND

### NEWS RELEASE

#### For Immediate Release

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### LIFE SCIENCES DISCOVERY FUND ANNOUNCES \$3.7M IN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

SEATTLE, Washington, September 13, 2013 — For-profit and non-profit organizations in Washington state will receive \$1.25M in Proof of Concept grant funding to accelerate the translation of promising health-related technologies from concept to commercialization, the Life Sciences Discovery Fund (LSDF) announced today. Also announced was \$2.4M in Opportunity grants for two major research and development initiatives. (See Backgrounder Information.)

The LSDF Board of Trustees made the final award selections following review of proposals for scientific and technical merit, potential impact on health and health care in Washington, and future economic and commercial returns to the state.

The five Proof of Concept grants will advance products to improve the prevention, diagnosis, or treatment of Alzheimer's disease, brain cancer, and tooth decay. Funding will also support technology to increase biomedical research productivity and enable development of safer drugs.

"This latest set of Proof of Concept awards is our final cohort for the 2012-2013 funding cycle, and we are thrilled to close this cycle on such a high note," said John DesRosier, LSDF executive director. "These grants will foster commercialization of novel technologies directed at specific diseases such as Alzheimer's, as well as at cutting-edge tools with the potential to enhance research and drug development for many diseases, in Washington and beyond."

The Opportunity grants to the Seattle Children's Research Institute (SCRI) and the University of Washington (UW) support initiatives that significantly leverage LSDF dollars against funds from other sources. Funding for both grants is contingent upon receipt of the leveraged commitments described in the proposals.

The SCRI award will fund critical studies of a cancer immunotherapy regimen that is in clinical trials in children and adults, in support of principal investigator Michael Jensen's vision to develop a leading immunotherapy program in Seattle. SCRI and partners will match the LSDF dollars through grants and philanthropic donations.

The UW award will support the launch of the Institute for Protein Design and the development and commercialization of medically useful proteins from the laboratory of principal investigator David Baker. LSDF funding will be matched by contributions from UW and private donors.

"These Opportunity grants, to two of our state's top research institutions, will help Washington maintain its leadership position in cancer research and treatment and capitalize upon the outputs of some of our most innovative and productive investigators," noted board chair Carol Dahl.

LSDF is currently accepting Proof of Concept and Entrepreneur Mentoring Program grant applications for 2013-2014. For more details, please visit the LSDF website at <http://www.lsdfa.org/>, email [programs@lsdfa.org](mailto:programs@lsdfa.org), or call 206-456-9577.

Funding for the new awards comes from Washington's allocation of payments under the Master Tobacco Settlement Agreement of 1998, revenues arising from multi-state litigation with tobacco product manufacturers.

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*The Life Sciences Discovery Fund, a Washington state agency established in May 2005, makes grant investments in innovative life sciences research and development to benefit Washington and its citizens.*

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### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

#### LIFE SCIENCES DISCOVERY FUND AWARDS - SEPTEMBER 2013

For information on LSDF and recent awards, see <http://www.lsdfa.org/>.

#### 2012-2013 Proof of Concept Grants

**Eric Horne, Stella Therapeutics, \$250,000**

Project Title: *ST Drugs that Treat Glioblastoma Multiforme through a Novel Mechanism*

Objective: To complete preclinical testing of a novel small-molecule treatment for glioblastoma multiforme, a typically fatal brain cancer

**Deok-Ho Kim, University of Washington, \$250,000**

Project Title: *Integrated Multielectrode-Array Nanodevice for Cardiotoxicity Screening*

Objective: To create an assay for drug developers to use to identify therapies that are potentially harmful to the heart, before those therapies are used in humans

**Mehmet Sarikaya, University of Washington, \$250,000**

Project Title: *Healing Tooth: Engineered Peptides for Transformative Dental Care*

Objective: To further develop a product that can safely and easily treat, and possibly reverse, early tooth decay

**Ilya Shmulevich, Institute for Systems Biology, \$249,924**

Project Title: *Development of Interactive Exploration and Analysis Apps for Cancer Genomics*

Objective: To develop web-based tools for analysis of cancer genetic data to advance understanding of tumor biology, accelerate new discoveries, and, in the long term, facilitate personalized therapy

**Jennifer Smith, Institute for Systems Biology, \$250,000**

Project Title: *Development of an Indicator Cell Assay for Early Detection of Alzheimer's Disease from Blood Samples*

Objective: To develop a blood-based assay for pre-symptomatic Alzheimer's disease to permit earlier intervention for affected individuals, monitor responses to treatment, and support drug trials

## 2012-2013 Opportunity Grants

### **Michael Jensen, Seattle Children's Research Institute, \$1,000,000**

Project Title: *Washington State Cancer Immunotherapy Initiative*

Objective: To conduct studies of a T cell therapy that is in clinical trials for cancer, to identify characteristics of the T cells and the tumors that correlate with treatment effectiveness

### **David Baker, University of Washington, \$1,400,000**

Project Title: *Launch of the Institute for Protein Design for Creating New Therapeutics, Vaccines and Diagnostics*

Objective: To create an institute that will translate protein design discoveries and projects into commercial products

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