

# Life Sciences

## DISCOVERY FUND

### NEWS RELEASE

#### For Immediate Release

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### **LIFE SCIENCES DISCOVERY FUND ANNOUNCES COMMERCIALIZATION GRANTS, WASHINGTON ENTREPRENEUR MENTORING PROGRAM AWARD**

SEATTLE, Washington, April 21, 2014 — Five for-profit and non-profit organizations in Washington will receive a total of \$1.25 million in Proof of Concept grants to accelerate maturation of promising health-related technologies from ideas into commercial products, the Life Sciences Discovery Fund (LSDF) announced today. Also announced was a \$300,000 Entrepreneur Mentoring Program grant to the Washington Biotechnology & Biomedical Association (WBBA) to launch a statewide advisory network to train the next generation of entrepreneurs and help early-stage companies achieve commercialization success. (See Backgrounder Information.)

The LSDF Board of Trustees made the Proof of Concept award selections following review of proposals for scientific and technical merit, commercial potential, and health and economic benefits to Washington.

The new Proof of Concept grants aim to improve the treatment of age-related macular degeneration, leukemia, and Parkinson's disease; help people quit smoking permanently; and develop a new tool to increase biomedical research productivity.

"LSDF created the Proof of Concept granting program to nurture the vitality and competitiveness of Washington's life sciences innovation community and help convert its 'intellectual capital' into tangible products that enhance the economic and physical health of our communities," stated John DesRosier, LSDF executive director. "By helping grantees advance their innovations from the lab into the commercial marketplace, these new awards are anticipated to improve both quality and quantity of life for individuals living with debilitating medical conditions and tobacco addiction."

"LSDF further recognizes that, although support of research and development (R&D) through Proof of Concept grants is essential, guidance from seasoned entrepreneurs can also accelerate

commercialization success. To be most effective, this assistance must go beyond one-time consultation and be provided over an extended period of time. The WBBA's Entrepreneur Mentoring Program grant is an essential complement to our R&D funding programs," explained Carol Dahl, LSDF board chair.

Mentoring program grant proposals were evaluated by a panel of experienced entrepreneurs and mentors based on their potential to significantly enhance the commercialization activities of aspiring entrepreneurs statewide, prior experience in mentoring, and ability to sustain the program beyond the LSDF grant period. The board made the award selection.

Up to \$1.5 million in awards in the final cycle of the 2013-2014 Proof of Concept granting program will be announced in August. LSDF expects to announce its 2014-2015 granting programs in May. 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 grants 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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### BACKGROUNDER INFORMATION

#### LIFE SCIENCES DISCOVERY FUND AWARDS – APRIL 2014

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

#### 2013-2014 Proof of Concept Grants

**Karol Bomsztyk, University of Washington, \$250,000**

Project Title: *PIXUL-ChIP: Platform for High Throughput Epigenetic Chromatin Immunoprecipitation (ChIP) Assays*

Objective: To develop a tool for rapid sample preparation for ChIP assays, which are used to elucidate the biology of major diseases and inform development of drugs to treat those diseases

**Jeffrey Chamberlain, Zwitter Technology, \$250,000**

Project Title: *Preclinical Evaluation of a Long-circulating and Non-immunogenic Drug for the Treatment of Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL)*

Objective: To conduct preclinical testing of a new leukemia treatment anticipated to have greater efficacy than current drugs

**Leen Kawas, M3 Biotechnology, Inc., \$250,000**

Project Title: *Assessment of a Small Molecule Hepatocyte Growth Factor Mimetic for the Treatment of Parkinson's Disease*

Objective: To validate the effectiveness and safety of a novel treatment for Parkinson's disease in preparation for clinical testing

**Jo Masterson, 2Morrow, Inc., \$250,000**

Project Title: *Convert Acceptance & Commitment Therapy (ACT) Study App into a Full Mobile Delivered Smoking Cessation Program*

Objective: To refine and optimize a smartphone-based program to help individuals quit smoking

**Clark Tedford, LumiThera, Inc., \$250,000**

Project Title: *The Use of LLLT to Treat Dry Age-Related Macular Degeneration*

Objective: To build and test a device that may delay progression of the dry form of age-related macular degeneration

## Entrepreneur Mentoring Program Grant

**Christiana DelloRusso, Washington Biotechnology & Biomedical Association, \$300,000**

Program Title: *Washington Innovation Network (WIN) for Life Sciences*

Objective: To establish a program that matches life sciences entrepreneurs with a trusted group of experienced mentors for guidance and skill development

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