

## News Release

Department of Marketing and  
Communications  
11100 Euclid Avenue  
Cleveland, OH 44106

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Harrington Discovery Institute Announces New Scholars** *Promising drug discovery projects selected based on their innovation and potential for impact*

**August 8, 2018, Cleveland, Ohio** – [The Harrington Discovery Institute](#) at University Hospitals in Cleveland, Ohio—part of The Harrington Project for Discovery & Development—has announced three new scholars in collaboration with its partners [Foundation Fighting Blindness](#) (FFB) and [Alzheimer’s Drug Discovery Foundation](#) (ADDF). Harrington Discovery Institute collaborates with FFB on the Gund-Harrington Award to accelerate therapies for retinal degenerative diseases and ADDF to advance the development of drugs to prevent and treat Alzheimer’s disease.

Scholars are selected through a competitive review process for the potential of their research to advance towards clinical trials and ultimately into patients, regardless of their institution affiliation. In addition to financial support provided to the grant award recipients, Harrington Discovery Institute commits drug development and project management support through its Innovation Support Center.

The 2018 Gund-Harrington Scholars are:

- **Zheng-Rong Lu, PhD**, Case Western Reserve University, for his work in nonviral gene therapy for Stargardt disease, which is the most common form of inherited juvenile macular degeneration.
- **Krishanu Saha, PhD**, University of Wisconsin – Madison, for his work in gene editing nanomedicines to correct pathogenic mutations in the retina.

The 2017 ADDF-Harrington Scholar is:

- **Dianne Perez, PhD**, Cleveland Clinic Lerner Research Institute, for her work in developing a first-in-class drug to improve memory function.

“Collaborating with leading organizations like FFB and ADDF help us address underserved areas of medicine where treatments remain elusive,” said Jonathan Stampler, MD, President of the Harrington Discovery Institute. “Through the work of these outstanding scientists we are moving closer to developing much-needed therapies that improve human health.”

“The Gund-Harrington awards provide critical funding and guidance for researchers to advance promising sight-saving treatments toward human studies,” says Benjamin Yerxa, PhD, FFB’s chief executive officer. “We are pleased to be a part of this program, because it plays such a critical role in getting therapies out to the people with retinal diseases who need them.”

“Partnering with Harrington on the Scholar program ensures our ability to attract the best and brightest scientists to the important work of drug discovery,” said Howard Fillit, MD, Founding Executive Director and Chief Science Officer at the Alzheimer’s Drug Discovery Foundation. “It is

an honor to be part of a program encouraging the next generation of scientists to pursue novel ideas that may lead to significant breakthroughs in Alzheimer's and related dementias.”

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### **Harrington Discovery Institute**

The Harrington Discovery Institute at University Hospitals in Cleveland, OH – part of The Harrington Project for Discovery & Development – aims to advance medicine and society by enabling our nation's most inventive scientists to turn their discoveries into medicines that improve human health. The institute was created in 2012 with a \$50 million founding gift from the Harrington family and instantiates the commitment they share with University Hospitals to a Vision for a 'Better World'.

### **The Harrington Project for Discovery & Development**

The Harrington Project for Discovery & Development (The Harrington Project), founded in late February 2012 by the Harrington Family and University Hospitals of Cleveland, is a \$300 million national initiative built to bridge the translational valley of death. It includes the Harrington Discovery Institute and BioMotiv, a for-profit, mission-aligned drug development company that accelerates early discovery into pharma pipelines.

For more information about The Harrington Project and the Harrington Discovery Institute, visit: [HarringtonDiscovery.org](http://HarringtonDiscovery.org).

### **University Hospitals**

Founded in 1866, University Hospitals serves the needs of over 1 million patients per year through an integrated network of 18 hospitals, more than 40 outpatient health centers and 200 physician offices in 15 counties throughout northern Ohio. The system's flagship academic medical center, University Hospitals Cleveland Medical Center, located on a 35-acre campus in Cleveland's University Circle, is affiliated with Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine. The main campus also includes University Hospitals Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital, ranked among the top children's hospitals in the nation; University Hospitals MacDonald Women's Hospital, Ohio's only hospital for women; and University Hospitals Seidman Cancer Center, part of the NCI-designated Case Comprehensive Cancer Center. UH is home to some of the most prestigious clinical and research programs in the nation, including cancer, pediatrics, women's health, orthopedics, radiology, neuroscience, cardiology and cardiovascular surgery, digestive health, dermatology, transplantation and urology. UH Cleveland Medical Center is perennially among the highest performers in national ranking surveys, including "America's Best Hospitals" from U.S. News & World Report. UH is also home to Harrington Discovery Institute at University Hospitals – part of The Harrington Project for Discovery & Development. UH is the second largest employer in northern Ohio with 26,000 employees. For more information, go to [UHhospitals.org](http://UHhospitals.org).

### **Foundation Fighting Blindness**

Foundation Fighting Blindness has a broad network and deep domain expertise in inherited retinal diseases, a set of programs for funding discoveries and advancing them toward clinical studies, and a robust pipeline of funded projects that represent new therapeutic opportunities. The foundation is funding startup companies and for-profit initiatives through its establishment of the Clinical Research Institute (the CRI), a not-for-profit subsidiary, which can partner to provide substantial later-stage funding for high-potential projects. The Foundation Fighting Blindness is supporting several clinical trials, and many additional gene and stem cell-based human studies could begin in the next several years. For more information, please visit [fightblindness.org](http://fightblindness.org).

### **Alzheimer's Drug Discovery Foundation**

Founded in 1998 by Leonard A. and Ronald S. Lauder, the Alzheimer's Drug Discovery Foundation is dedicated to rapidly accelerating the discovery of drugs to prevent, treat and cure Alzheimer's disease. The ADDF is the only public charity solely focused on funding the development of drugs for

Alzheimer's, employing a venture philanthropy model to support research in academia and the biotech industry. Through the generosity of its donors, the ADDF has awarded over \$100 million to fund more than 500 Alzheimer's drug discovery programs and clinical trials in 18 countries. To learn more, please visit: <http://www.alzdiscovery.org/>.