



September 2015 Newsletter

Congratulations to our International Fellowships in Neuroscience 2015 awardees.

Four exemplary senior graduate students from the University of Toronto have been awarded and will be travelling abroad to conduct research on neurodegenerative diseases of aging.



Jelena Borovac will be travelling to the National Institute of Physiological Sciences in Japan for 8 months starting April 2016. Her study will involve delivering a therapeutic to the brain of an Alzheimer's disease mouse model in order to reduce learning and memory loss, using light-activated proteins. Jelena hopes to bring back her knowledge of this technique to Canada.



Zainab Fatima started her 12 month fellowship at Northwestern University in the United States in August 2015. Her project involves using non-invasive brain stimulation, in order to enhance brain function in healthy older adults and patients with mild cognitive impairment to improve memory.



Sarah Gagliano will be travelling to King's College in the United Kingdom for 6 months starting November 2015. Her project involves identifying genetic risk factors for Parkinson's disease from post-mortem brain tissue. She hopes to identify several genetic risk variants for Parkinson's disease which could one day aid in early patient diagnosis.



Joelle Zimmermann will be travelling to the University of California Irvine in the United States for 9 months starting May 2016. The focus of her project involves using "The Virtual Brain," a computer model of the brain's structure and activity in order to elucidate how healthy brains differ from Alzheimer's brains in their structural and functional connections.

International Fellowships 2016 - Program Information

Program Information

Transformational Research 2016 - Coming Soon

- Funding for translational research that will accelerate the development of therapeutics for neurodegenerative diseases of aging
- Projects with excellent preliminary data and where a positive outcome would lead to a significant advance in the field
- Projects can request up to \$ 1,500,000 over up to 3 years
- Updates on this program will be posted on the Weston Brain Institute website

Rapid Response 2015 - Program Results

- Applicants will be notified about decisions in November 2015

Transformational Research 2015 - Program Results

- Applicants will be notified about decisions in the coming weeks

Early Phase Clinical Trials 2015 - Application Closed

- Early Phase Clinical Trials Program 2015 provides funding to support Phase I and IIa clinical trials of therapeutics for neurodegenerative diseases of aging
- The application is now closed and all applicants will receive further details on the status of their submission in the coming weeks

[Open and Upcoming Programs](#)

Research in Focus

Dr. John Breitner

Numerous clinical trials have failed to identify effective drugs in the treatment of Alzheimer's disease (AD) dementia. Newer trials are seeking to identify new ways to postpone or prevent the onset of AD symptoms. While some groups are testing drugs that attack pathological AD amyloid for this purpose, Weston Brain Institute funded researcher Dr. John Breitner and his team have

developed a different approach. A gene called APOE has several normal variants that predict a person's development of sporadic AD dementia at different ages. Dr. Breitner's team is examining the effects of the drug probucol that mimics the effects of APOE by increasing the availability of its gene product apolipoprotein E (apoE). This drug is a prescription cholesterol-lowering agent that is still used in Asia but is no longer available in North America. The APOE gene is a powerful determinant of the age at which people develop AD dementia. Drugs that mimic the effects of low-risk variants of APOE should therefore deter dementia onset, eliminating much of the population burden of AD. Dr. Breitner's innovative work could potentially have significant therapeutic and clinical applications in the future and alter the way AD dementia is treated.

Dr. Breitner's Profile



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