

# SNM 2006 Awards Include New Initiatives and Innovative Support for Research and Education

A series of research awards and competitive grant recipients were announced by the SNM at its Mid-Winter Educational Symposium in Tempe, AZ, on February 11. Several of these funding mechanisms are new in 2006 and represent a renewed effort by the SNM and the Education and Research Foundation (ERF) for the SNM to support a broad range of investigative and training activities at the forefront of molecular and nuclear medicine discovery.

## SNM/GE Healthcare Grants

Three institutional recipients of the new \$10,000 SNM/GE Healthcare Visiting Physician/Scientist Program grants were announced. These grants will allow nuclear/molecular imaging physicians and scientists from North America to lecture, consult, and train at 1 or more institutions or organizations in China and India. "International collaboration such as this benefits the entire molecular and nuclear imaging community as we work together to advance patient care around the globe," said SNM President Peter S. Conti, MD, PhD, a professor of radiology, clinical pharmacy, and biomedical engineering at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles, and director of the PET Imaging Science Center at the Keck School of Medicine. "Together, we can broaden our knowledge, gain a better understanding of disease and collaborate on developing life-saving treatments." Grant recipients are the Peking Union Medical College Hospital/Beijing Chapter of the Chinese Society of Nuclear Medicine, a premier health care facility with an 8-year program in clinical medicine; the Second Hospital of Zhejiang University, a center of health care, medical education, and scientific research in the Zhejiang Province in China; and the Society of Nuclear Medicine, India, a membership association that encourages research in and provides a forum for the exchange of ideas and experience among scientists.

The SNM/GE Healthcare Visiting Physician/Scientist Program Grant for China and India will cover travel and per diem costs. During a 1- or 2-week period, a visiting physician/scientist will spend time lecturing, training, and consulting on molecular and nuclear imaging. Eligible applicants included clinical centers, hospitals, academic institutions, and consortia of institutions with active molecular and nuclear imaging programs in China and India. International societies of nuclear medicine based in these countries could also apply. Program visits will take place during the 2006 calendar year.

## Student Fellows; Bradley-Alavi Fellows

The recipients of 5 fellowships for students involved in full-time clinical and basic research activities in molecular and nuclear imaging were also announced at the Mid-Winter meeting. These fellowships are funded by the ERF for SNM and provide \$3,000 for each recipient. Eligible students are enrolled in medical, pharmacy, or graduate schools or are undergraduates who demonstrate outstanding competence in molecular and nuclear imaging research.

The top 3 recipients of these awards are also designated as Bradley-Alavi Fellows, in honor of the late Stanley E. Bradley, a professor of medicine at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons and a prominent researcher in the fields of renal physiology and liver disease, and Abass Alavi, MD, professor of radiology and chief of the division of nuclear medicine at the University of Pennsylvania Medical Center. This year's Bradley-Alavi Fellows include: Mai Lin, BA, MS, University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas; Guillem Pratx, School of Medicine, Stanford University (CA); and Shu-An Lin, School of Medicine, Stanford University (CA).

Student fellowships were awarded to: David Yerushalmi, BS, MS, Stanford University (CA); and Gang Ren, MD, University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas.

## SNM/Mallinckrodt Seed Grant

Meixiang Yu, PhD, associate professor and chief PET radiochemist at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis, was named the first recipient of the SNM/Mallinckrodt Seed Grant in Molecular Imaging/Nuclear Medicine Research. This competitive grant is designed to assist researchers in conducting new and innovative pilot projects that have potential for future support from foundations, corporations, or government agencies. The grant for Yu's research project, "Molecular Imaging and Biological Evaluation of  $^{124}\text{I}$  Avastin Anti-VEGF Antibody: Implications for Cancer Diagnosis and Treatment Response," was made possible by a \$25,000 donation from Tyco Healthcare/Mallinckrodt. "This research project will extend our knowledge of how an existing radiotracer may be eventually used to fight colorectal and lung cancer in humans," added ERF Vice President Robert F. Carretta, MD.

Yu earned a doctorate in radiological chemistry in 1996 from Peking University and completed postdoctoral work at Kuopio University in Finland. She received her bachelor's degree in chemistry in 1990 from Peking University in

China and a master's degree in analytical chemistry in 1993 from the China Institute of Atomic Energy. Yu has been involved with PET tracer development for more than 10 years and has experience in PET data processing, including modeling calculation.

#### **Ashburn Pilot Research Grant**

The ERF also funded the William L. Ashburn, MD, Pilot Research Grant, which is supported by Digirad Corporation in memory of the cofounder of the company, a physician researcher whose career in molecular and nuclear imaging spanned almost 40 years. Steven Burrell, MD, assistant professor at the Queen Elizabeth II Health Sciences Center (Halifax, Nova Scotia), received \$10,000. His research project is "Cardiac  $^{123}\text{I}$ -Metaiodobenzylguanidine Imaging as a Means of Predicting Automatic Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator Events."

#### **Blahd Pilot Research Grant**

In addition, the ERF funded the Mitzi and William Blahd, MD, Pilot Research Grant, which honors the couple's dedication to philanthropic support for education and research in nuclear medicine. Jun Zhao, PhD, a research scientist at the Research Foundation of Mental Hygiene Inc., New York State Psychiatric Institute, at Columbia University (New York City), received \$8,000 for his project, "Development of NMDA/Glycine Site PET Radioligands."

#### **Pilot Research Grants**

Recipients of 2006 pilot research grants have also been named. These grants, each totaling \$8,000, support clinical and basic research by young investigators who are interested in testing innovative ideas while other major grant support is being sought. Recipients include: Datta E. Ponde, PhD, research assistant professor, University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia), for "Comparison of Radiolabeled Choline and Ethanolamine as a Probe for Cancer Detection and for Measuring Cell Proliferation"; Jinsong Ouyang, PhD, physicist at Brigham & Women's Hospital and instructor at Harvard Medical School (Boston, MA), for "Fast and Accurate Iterative Reconstruction for Simultaneous Dual-Isotope SPECT Using Parallel Computing"; Feng Quing, MD, PhD, PET fellow, University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, PET Center (Iowa City), for "Perfusion and Oxygenation in Mouse Tumors Using  $^{133}\text{Xe}$  Gamma Imaging and Oxygen Electrodes"; and Mike F. Georgiou, PhD, research assistant professor, University of Miami Hospital and Clinics/Sylvester Cancer Comprehensive Center (FL), for "A PET Gating System for Respiratory Motion Compensation of Lung Lesions."

The ERF has supported the molecular imaging/nuclear medicine community for more than 35 years. The foundation's mission is to advance excellence in health care through education and research in molecular imaging/nuclear medicine by provision of grants and awards. For more information about these awards or the ERF, contact Kathy Bates, SNM director of development, at 703-708-9000, ext. 1028, or kbates@snm.org. Information is also posted on the SNM Web site at [www.snm.org/grants](http://www.snm.org/grants). ✧

## **SNMTS Announces 2006 Scholarship and Grant Recipients**

**A**t the SNM Mid-Winter Educational Symposium in Tempe, AZ, on February 11, the SNMTS released the names of 37 molecular and nuclear medicine technologist students and researchers who will be awarded a total of \$58,000 in scholarships and grants in 2006. "Through its scholarship and grants program, SNMTS invests in the future of the nuclear medicine technology profession by supporting both the development of future practitioners and research," said SNMTS President Valerie R. Cronin, CNMT, in announcing these awards. "SNMTS remains committed to encouraging individuals to pursue careers in molecular and nuclear imaging."

#### **Professional Development Education Fund Research Grant**

The awards include the Professional Development Education Fund (PDEF) Research Grant, which provides

\$10,000 to encourage technologists to initiate innovative research projects that advance knowledge of the profession in either clinical practice, education, or professional development. Gregory G. Passmore, PhD, CNMT, associate professor of biomedical and radiological technologies with the School of Allied Health Sciences and the School of Graduate Studies at the Medical College of Georgia, Augusta, is the recipient of this award. Passmore's research project, "Testing of DU Collimator for Removal of Tl/Tc Dual-Isotope Cross-Talk," applies basic physics principals to a clinical nuclear medicine technology problem.

#### **Mickey Williams Minority Student Scholarships**

Two Mickey Williams Minority Student scholarships, which each provide \$5,000 to a minority student entering or enrolled in a 2- or 4-year molecular imaging/nuclear medicine technologist program, were awarded. One recipient is