

SNM Awards for Molecular Imaging Research, Training, and Achievement

At the 55th Annual Meeting, held in June in New Orleans, LA, SNM awarded more than \$470,000 to physicians, scientists, and students committed to advancing molecular imaging and therapy. These grants and awards are supported by the SNM Education and Research Foundation. “SNM’s awards and fellowships are integral to supporting promising young researchers working in the field of molecular imaging,” said Henry VanBrocklin, PhD, president of the SNM Molecular Imaging Center of Excellence (MICoE). “As a society, we have a tradition of creating opportunities for researchers to excel in the field. These new awards will create further opportunities for young scientists to pursue cutting-edge research in the emerging field of molecular imaging.”

“As government agencies continue to struggle with flat research budgets, foundation support is more critical than ever,” said SNM President Robert W. Atcher, PhD, MBA. “We must invest in and support the work of promising young researchers in order to realize new advances to patient care. These grants will also position these researchers to effectively compete for funding from federal agencies by providing seed funding to generate preliminary data on cutting-edge molecular imaging work.”

Molecular Imaging Awards

This was the first year that the SNM and the MICoE presented the molecular imaging awards. Jonas Hannestad, MD, PhD, from Yale University (New Haven, CT) was named the recipient of the \$100,000 SNM Molecular Imaging Research Grant for Junior Medical Faculty for a research project using SPECT to study neuroinflammation and depression during treatment for hepatitis C. This grant provides a junior faculty member who has clinical responsibilities with salary support to fund research.

Peter Dimetri Olcott from Stanford University (CA) and Hyo-eun Carrie Bhang from the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine (Baltimore, MD) were named as SNM Postdoctoral Molecular Imaging Scholars for their work in whole-body clinical PET/MR systems and therapeutic systems for cancer, respectively. These individual \$40,000 grants will support research endeavors for the development and integration of molecular imaging approaches into the investigation of fundamental causes of disease.

Sepideh Shokouhi, PhD, from Vanderbilt University Medical Center (Nashville, TN), and Vania E. Kenanova, PhD, from the University of California, Los Angeles, were recipients of the SNM Postdoctoral Molecular Imaging Scholar Program awards, which provide \$60,000 for 2 y of

research at institutions with established molecular imaging programs. Their respective research projects will focus on Alzheimer’s disease and the targeted delivery of imaging or therapeutic agents.

Additional Research Grants and Recognition Awards

Brienne Bottenus of the University of Missouri–Columbia was named the Bradley–Alavi Fellow. Researchers who received the SNM Student Fellowship Award were Marc Normandin, Indiana University School of Medicine (Indianapolis); Andrew Hsu, Stanford University; Thomas Ng, California Institute of Technology (Pasadena); Freddie Daver, University of California, Los Angeles; Neil Saigal, University of California, Irvine; Ethan Balkin, University of Missouri–Columbia; Nicholas Salem, University Hospitals Case Medical Center (Cleveland, OH); Robert Doot, University of Washington (Seattle); and Julie Smith, University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center (Dallas). The SNM Student Fellowship Awards support promising students’ full-time participation in clinical and basic research activities in molecular imaging and nuclear medicine.

This year’s recipient of the prestigious Mitzi and William Blahd, MD, Pilot Research Grant was Zongjin Li, PhD, from Stanford University. This \$25,000 honor, which will enable Li to explore the use of molecular imaging to differentiate stem cell functions, honors the Blahds’ dedication to philanthropic support for education and research in nuclear medicine.

SNM Pilot Research Grants help support clinical and basic research by young investigators interested in testing innovative concepts. Recipients of the \$25,000 SNM Pilot Research Grants were Zhen Cheng, PhD, Stanford University, for work in the use of imaging and engineered small proteins; Wendol Williams, MD, Yale University, to examine serotonin levels in posttraumatic stress disorder; and Akhilesh Sista, MD, University of California, San Francisco, to evaluate ¹⁸F-fluoromisonidazole as an imaging biomarker for tuberculosis.

The recipient of this year’s \$25,000 SNM Covidien Seed Grant in Nuclear Medicine Research was Victor Cheng, MD, from Cedars–Sinai Medical Center, Los Angeles, for a study of the potential of a fatty diet to reduce myocardial uptake during ¹⁸F-FDG PET imaging.

Several authors shared the honor of the Siemens Award for Excellence in Practice-Based Research, totaling \$15,000 in prize money. The researchers recognized were: Michael K. O’Connor, PhD, Mayo Clinic (Rochester, MN); Daniel

(Continued on page 32N)

currently limited to about 50 tours annually. Beginning in March 2009, individuals and families will be able to tour at least 3 d/wk through October 2009 by presenting identification at the Hanford Site. The DOE plan sets a timetable for more permanent decisions about the future preservation of B Reactor. Five of Hanford's 9 plutonium production reactors have been dismantled and "cocooned" as part of a closure contract covering cleanup of Hanford's Columbia River Corridor, and the B Reactor could have undergone this process as early as 2009. In March 2008, DOE announced a policy directive to support preservation of the B Reactor that required the reactor to be maintained in a state that preserves its historical significance.

*U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Department of Energy*

Tatum Named Associate Director of CIP

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) announced on August 1 that James L. Tatum, MD, has been selected for the position of associate director of its Cancer Imaging Program (CIP). He

joined CIP in 1998 as a special assistant to the associate director and since that time has assumed increasing responsibilities. In 2006, he became the head of CIP's Molecular Imaging Branch. Since July 2007, he has used his expertise in the areas of molecular imaging and imaging drug development to guide CIP as its acting associate director.

Tatum serves as chair of the imaging drug group of the Joint Development Committee, where he plays a vital role in overseeing imaging agents in the NCI drug pipeline. He represents imaging from the NCI viewpoint on the steering committee for the Nanotechnology Characterization Laboratory (NCL), a joint effort of NCI, the Food and Drug Administration, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology. He is also a member of the NCL review panel and serves on the steering committee of the Small Animal Imaging Program at NCI-Frederick.

Early in his research career, Tatum focused on imaging alterations in the pulmonary capillary membrane associated with acute respiratory distress syndrome and the application of imag-

ing techniques to evaluate drug interventions. Later, his research shifted to studies of myocardial ischemia, including acute coronary syndrome, with a focus that continues in his research today on the use of imaging in medical decision making.

Tatum received his undergraduate degree in biology from the College of William and Mary (Williamsburg, VA) and his MD from the Medical College of Virginia (MCV; Richmond). He completed his residency in medicine and radiology at MCV Hospitals, followed by a nuclear medicine fellowship at Duke University (Durham, NC). He is board certified in diagnostic radiology, nuclear medicine, and nuclear cardiology. In 1978, he joined the faculty of Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), where he was later appointed professor of both radiology and medicine. During his tenure at VCU, he served as chair of the division of nuclear medicine, director of nuclear cardiology, chair of the department of radiology, associate vice president for health sciences, and director of the Molecular Imaging Center.

National Cancer Institute

(Continued from page 23N)

Mollura, MD, Johns Hopkins University; Karen Gulenchyn, MD, McMaster University (Ottawa, Canada); Wim Oyen, MD, PhD, Radboud University (Nijmegen Medical Center, The Netherlands); Matthias Benz, MD, University of California, Los Angeles; Andreas Buck, MD, The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (PA); and Wengen Chen, MD, PhD, also from The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

"We are truly thrilled to offer these awards and deeply appreciative of the support of the donors who make this ground-breaking research a reality," said VanBrocklin.

Application deadlines for the 2009 SNM Research Grants will be in late winter 2009. More information about the awards, along with application forms, is available at www.snm.org/grants. ✎

(Continued from page 27N)

curtail the use of highly enriched uranium in radioisotope production as a nonproliferation strategy and to deter terrorism, now poses a significant threat to ⁹⁹Mo availability within the United States. The subsequent cancellation in May 2008 of the MAPLE reactors at the Chalk River Laboratories has made the need for an alternative domestic source for ⁹⁹Mo production more acute. We will keep SNM members apprised of this developing situation.

There has been a tremendous amount of activity during the first 3 mo of my presidency. In addition to developments in the issues reviewed above, we will report on a major new

thrust for SNM in the coming months. As I have noted to many audiences, many of SNM's activities are now multiyear projects that require teamwork and commitment to common goals. We are fortunate that Alexander McEwan, MD, immediate past president of SNM, established a solid framework and that Michael Graham, PhD, MD, president-elect, and Dominique Delbeke, MD, PhD, vice president-elect, have agreed to sustain many of these longer range activities.

*Robert W. Atcher, PhD, MBA
SNM President*