

# NEWS

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## **AMERICAN COLLEGE OF RHEUMATOLOGY RESEARCH AND EDUCATION FOUNDATION AWARDS NEW RESEARCH GRANTS FOR INNOVATIVE RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS RESEARCH**

### ***Second Round of Research Funding Seeks to Move RA Closer to Cure***

ATLANTA, GA (August 25, 2008) - The American College of Rheumatology Research and Education Foundation has selected 15 experienced researchers from leading institutions to receive an estimated \$6 million from the Foundation's *Within Our Reach: Finding a Cure for Rheumatoid Arthritis* campaign. The awards are the second round of grants funded by the \$30 million national multi-year fundraising effort focused specifically on rheumatoid arthritis.

The American College of Rheumatology Research and Education Foundation launched the *Within Our Reach: Finding a Cure for Rheumatoid Arthritis* campaign in November 2006 to accelerate RA research and expand financial support for this disease which affects an estimated 1.3 million Americans. The program is designed to raise funds for RA research so that, with the guidance of ACR Research and Education Foundation, *Within Our Reach* will continue to pioneer advances in RA research.

"There have been great strides made in the treatment and management of RA and it is crucial that we continue to financially support RA research," said Leslie J. Crofford, MD, president of the REF. "We are confident that the new grantees are among the brightest and most promising researchers in their field and will play a critical role in moving us closer to a cure."

As one of the largest funders of rheumatology research and training programs in the U.S., the ACR Research and Education Foundation received numerous grant applications from the nation's most outstanding and distinguished researchers. The *Within Our Reach* campaign has built a reputation for supporting research not done elsewhere and after an extensive peer review process, the REF is continuing this tradition by selecting the most promising proposals with new and unprecedented approaches to RA research. Grant recipients include:

#### ***Innovative Basic Research***

Paul Ryan Thompson, PhD  
University of South Carolina

*Inhibition of PAD Function as a Novel Treatment Strategy for Rheumatoid Arthritis*

Gregg J. Silverman, MD  
The University of California, San Diego  
*Natural Antibody Treatment of Inflammatory Arthritis*

Ellen M. Gravallese, MD  
University of Massachusetts Medical School  
*Role of sFRP1 and WNT Signaling in Formation and Repair of Erosions in RA*

Michael B. Brenner, MD  
Brigham and Women's Hospital  
*How FLS Mediate Cadherin-11 Dependent Inflammation in RA*

Xu Feng, PhD  
University of Alabama at Birmingham  
*In vivo Validation of Novel Therapeutic Targets for Arthritic Bone Erosion*

Song Guo Zheng, MD  
Keck School of Medicine at the University of Southern California  
*Generation of Collagen-specific CD4<sup>+</sup>Foxp3<sup>+</sup>regulatory T cells Ex-vivo as an Adoptive Immunotherapy for Rheumatoid Arthritis*

Richard M. Pope, MD  
Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine  
*Endogenous Toll-like Receptor Ligands in Rheumatoid Arthritis*

Shiva Shahrara, PhD  
Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine  
*The Role of IL-17 in the Pathogenesis of Rheumatoid Arthritis*

Steven Reyburn Goldring, MD  
Hospital for Special Surgery  
*Bone Matrix-Induced Osteoclast Genes: Identification of Novel Targets for RA*

### ***Translational Research***

Larry W. Moreland, MD  
University of Pittsburgh  
*Multi-cytokine Profiling and Correlates with Outcome Measures and Treatment Responses in Patients with Early Rheumatoid Arthritis*

Peter K. Gregersen, MD  
Feinstein Institute for Medical Research  
*Cross Racial Strategies for Gene Identification in Rheumatoid Arthritis*

William F. C. Rigby, MD  
Dartmouth College  
*CD154 CA Repeat Polymorphisms and RA Pathogenesis*

Carl Grunfeld, MD, PhD  
University of California, San Francisco  
*Novel Cardiovascular Disease Risk Factors in Patients with Rheumatoid Arthritis*

Robert M. Plenge, MD, PhD  
Brigham and Women's Hospital  
*Genome-wide Association Study of Response to Anti-TNF Therapy in Rheumatoid Arthritis*

### ***Clinical Practice***

Kenneth G. Saag, MD, MSc  
University of Alabama at Birmingham  
*Improving Bone Health Among RA Patients on Chronic Glucocorticoids*

### **About *Within Our Reach: Finding a Cure for Rheumatoid Arthritis***

Rheumatoid arthritis affects an estimated 1.3 million Americans, yet funding to find new treatments and ultimately a cure remains significantly low compared to other autoimmune diseases. To address the critical need for additional funding and research support, the REF launched *Within Our Reach* in November 2006.

*Within Our Reach* is the largest private fundraising campaign in the REF's history. It will tap a diverse donor base, and funds raised will support innovative research to learn more about the causes of RA and, ultimately, to find a cure. Since November 2006, the campaign has received tremendous support from the pharmaceutical industry, biotech companies, physicians and patients, raising more than \$18 million.

Specific research areas for *Within Our Reach* include:

- **Innovative Basic Research:** Research in this area will help us understand what causes RA and develop novel treatments.
- **Translational Research:** Translational research is the direct study of patients and patient-derived materials to improve the understanding of RA. Research in this area will study the joint and its cells and tissues to develop methods to repair and replace damaged cartilage and bone.
- **Clinical Practice:** This area explores the issues that directly affect the clinical practice of rheumatology and patient access. This research can possibly lead to the development of methods to identify individuals at risk for RA to facilitate prevention and early treatment.
- **Novel Clinical Trials:** Novel clinical trials will address the unmet needs in the development of new treatments for patients who may be resistant to conventional treatments or biologics.
- **Collaborative Projects:** Collaborative projects are large-scale collaborative research groups where expertise from multiple sites and investigators are joined together to solve one problem with comprehensive and innovative approaches.

"No other organization is better equipped to help meet the demand for better patient care today while advancing the course of research that will yield tomorrow's medical breakthroughs," added Dr. Crofford. "We are confident the research *Within Our Reach* yields will enhance rheumatologists' ability to diagnose and treat patients suffering from this painful and potentially debilitating disease."

To learn more about rheumatoid arthritis and the campaign, please visit [www.WithinOurReach.info](http://www.WithinOurReach.info).

### **About ACR Research and Education Foundation**

The ACR Research and Education Foundation was established in 1985 as a 501(c)(3) with a mission to improve patients' lives through support of research and training that advances the prevention, treatment and cure of rheumatic diseases. Since its founding, the REF has promoted and advanced the field of rheumatology by funding research, training and education opportunities for clinicians, students, health professionals, researchers and academic institutions. On average, 90 cents of every dollar donated to the REF is used to fund its extensive award and grant program.

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