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Canadian Gene Cure Foundation
Foundation Canadienne Géne Cure

GENETIC DISEASE RESEARCH FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE TO CANADIAN SCIENTISTS

Vancouver, BC – September 15, 2008: The Canadian Gene Cure Foundation (CGCF) is pleased to announce a new request for applications for grants available that support novel treatment and therapeutic approaches for genetic diseases, especially rare or ultra-rare diseases affecting children.

The Foundation will award one grant to a maximum of $70,000. The application deadline is November 15, 2008 and application details can be found by visiting the Foundation's web site ***www.genecure.ca***.

In 2007, the Canadian Gene Cure Foundation awarded $75,000 each to the teams of Dr. Brian Robinson and Dr. Paul Goodyer.

Dr. Robinson and his team at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto were awarded $75,000 to do testing on a series of compounds to identify possible drug treatment for mitochondrial diseases. Approximately one child every week is born with a genetic abnormality which seriously decreases the ability of their cells to produce energy. Their organs are not able to function normally, and without treatment these children suffer progressive nerve and organ failure. With the help of this grant, Dr. Robinson's approach should lead to new uses for existing FDA approved drugs and also add new naturally occurring compounds to the potential list for mitochondrial disease therapy.

Dr. Goodyer is the Director of Pediatric Nephorology at Montreal Children's Hospital where he and his team are investigating possible new treatments for cystinosis. This rare genetic condition is ten times more prevalent in Quebec, where it is responsible for nearly one third of childhood kidney transplants. These children lack the ability to recycle the amino acid cystine, which then accumulates to toxic levels causing progressive tissue damage. Patients can be treated with cysteamine, but results are far from optimal. Dr. Goodyer says, "Our research program offers a multi-faceted approach to the development of new therapeutic strategies for this rare but devastating disease."

" The Canadian Gene Cure Foundation is excited to support such promising research, and is looking forward to receiving applications for this year's grant," said Sandra MacPherson, chair of the Canadian Gene Cure Foundation. "People with rare genetic diseases often have no options for treatment. The Canadian Gene Cure Foundation is here to help the scientists working in this field to bring new treatments to these patients.

Background: Canadian Gene Cure Foundation*:*
The Canadian Gene Cure Foundation (CGCF) is a registered Canadian charitable organization, formed in 1999 to raise much-needed funds for medical genetics research in Canada.

The Foundation's primary goal is to raise funds to enable Canadian scientists to discover cures and treatments for genetic disorders. In addition to the annual research grants awarded, the Foundation recognizes the importance of mentoring Canada's future scientists and hosts the annual Gene Researcher for a Week program aimed at providing unique educational opportunities for high school students across the country. The Foundation also supports networking opportunities in which scientists can exchange ideas and work cooperatively, linking advances in different disease areas. Specifically, the CGCF supports the annual Canadian Human Genetics Conference in partnership with the CIHR Institute of Genetics.

Canadian scientists are world-leaders in gene discovery and genetic research and have discovered genes relating to hundreds of disorders, including cystic fibrosis, juvenile diabetes, muscular dystrophy, dyslexia, Huntington disease, Alzheimer's disease, breast cancer, colon cancer, cardiovascular disease and epilepsy, to name only a few. Through active fundraising, the Canadian Gene Cure Foundation can continue to support Canadian Scientists and their contributions to human genetics research.

Contact:
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