

Four 'Emerging Investigator Grantees' Named by FightSMA and Gwendolyn Strong Foundation

Cumulative Total Tops \$500,000 for Awards for Cutting-Edge Spinal Muscular Atrophy Research

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, April 10, 2015 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Gwendolyn Strong Foundation and FightSMA, two organizations dedicated to defeating the childhood neuromuscular disorder spinal muscular atrophy (SMA), announced today four winners of the "FightSMA and Gwendolyn Strong Foundation Emerging Investigator Awards."

The awards, created by the two research-funding organizations, were conceived to draw innovative, next-generation talent into SMA research, according to FightSMA Chair Mike Calise.

"To date, we've granted 15 Emerging Investigator awards to twelve researchers totaling over \$500,000," said Calise.

The four winners were chosen from a field of promising young investigators, ranging from recent PhD graduates engaged in post-doctoral fellowships up to assistant professors within the first two years of their appointment.

"We're very proud to make these awards for a third straight year," said Bill Strong, co-founder of the Gwendolyn Strong Foundation. "Our objective is to provide critical seed funding to ensure that emerging talent and fresh approaches are encouraged and supported."

"We've been gratified by the excitement that these awards generate in the SMA research community each year," he said. "The grantees are extraordinarily talented and deserve our support."

The four winners were announced at the annual FightSMA research conference held April 9-11, 2015 in Washington, D.C. Each of the researchers will receive a \$27,500 award. They are:

- Dr. Melissa Bowerman, University of Oxford
- Dr. Erkan Osman, University of Missouri
- Dr. Anne Rietz, Indiana University
- Dr. Eileen Workman, Columbia University

About FightSMA, Inc.: FightSMA engages leading scientists and policymakers to create treatments

and a cure for spinal muscular atrophy (SMA), still the most common genetic cause of death for young children. FightSMA has been leading advancements in the SMA landscape for over 20 years and is more optimistic than ever before. As a 501c3 tax-exempt nonprofit organization, FightSMA relies solely on charitable contributions to equip its innovative research and advocacy programs. For more information, please visit www.FightSMA.org.

The Gwendolyn Strong Foundation (<http://www.thegsf.org>) is an all-volunteer, nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing global awareness of spinal muscular atrophy (SMA), accelerating research, and supporting families impacted by SMA and other life-altering conditions. The GSF motto is: "NEVER GIVE UP."

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