



Intermountain Precision Genomics Awards \$400,000+ to Fund Research To Advance Precision Medicine Research and Care

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, USA, March 7, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Intermountain Precision Genomics has awarded more than \$400,000 to four translational research projects to accelerate clinical and translational research, advance molecular knowledge in precision medicine, and help people live the healthiest lives possible.

Recipients include leading researchers from Stanford University, Huntsman Cancer Institute (HCI), University of Utah School of Medicine and Vivid Genomics. They will use funds to study familial hypercholesterolemia (FH), breast and ovarian cancers, and Alzheimer's disease.

Awarded institutions will utilize NGS ONE Genomic Services, a next-generation sequencing service offered by Intermountain Precision Genomics, to complete their research. These projects were selected in response to the call for proposals in 2018.

"We are pleased to announce these awards," said Helaman Escobar, director of the Intermountain Precision Genomics Translation Science Center. "Award recipients have put forward innovative proposals and have demonstrated high competency in leveraging next-generation sequencing approaches for precision medicine across various medical disciplines. We look forward to assisting and collaborating with the award winners to accelerate their research."

Awardees included Carlos Bustamante, PhD, and colleagues at Stanford University who will use the award to study a method for predicting undiagnosed cases of familial hypercholesterolemia. The study aims to apply an algorithm to patient electronic medical records provided by Intermountain Healthcare to predict an individual's risk for FH.

Nicola Camp, PhD, cancer researcher at HCI and professor of medicine at the University of Utah School of Medicine, will conduct a project on the discovery of novel germline breast cancer susceptibility variants.

"Our breast cancer project highlights a unique Huntsman Cancer Institute and Intermountain Healthcare collaborative research project that includes the study of hundreds of Intermountain Healthcare breast cancer samples to identify regions of the genome we believe harbor new breast cancer susceptibility genes," Dr. Camp said. "This funding will help us interrogate those

regions to discover the specific genes and risk variants involved. This project simply couldn't be done elsewhere, and we are very excited to move it forward together."

Another HCI investigator, associate professor of population health sciences at the University of Utah School of Medicine, Jennifer Doherty, MS, PhD, along with her postdoctoral fellow, Mollie Barnard, MS, ScD, have been awarded funds to explore the genetic epidemiology of ovarian cancers in high-risk pedigrees.

"Major changes in the understanding of ovarian cancer classifications based on molecular features have occurred recently, and our project is leveraging this new knowledge to identify novel ovarian cancer susceptibility variants that could inform ovarian cancer prevention and treatment strategies," Dr. Doherty said. "This funding will stimulate a collaborative approach to our work that brings together cutting-edge skills and resources from the Huntsman Cancer Institute, University of Utah and Intermountain Precision Genomics. We are eager to see what we can achieve together."

Vivid Genomics received funds for a pilot project to study genetic predictors of Alzheimer's and other neurodegenerative diseases by sequencing the genomes of individuals both with and without a diagnosis of dementia. This study aims to use genetics to improve disease prediction and ultimately lead to approved drugs by identifying novel variants and regions of the genome associated with the manifestation of and the brain pathology related to neurodegenerative diseases.

Intermountain Precision Genomics is now open for spring 2019 research proposals to be submitted. Intermountain will provide up to \$200,000 in funding and access to high-throughput genomic sequencing efforts utilizing NGS ONE Genomic Services. Funds are designated to cover costs of procuring, preparing and sequencing samples at IPG and exclude indirect costs and investigator salaries. The spring submission deadline is April 30. Selected projects will be announced by May 31.

Request an application through genomics@imail.org and submit proposals via email with attention to the Research Review Committee. Proposals are not limited to one specific medical discipline. Submitted proposals will be held confidential. For more information, visit <http://intermountain.com/ipgresearchfunding>, contact Intermountain Precision Genomics at genomics@imail.org or call (435)-251-5780.

NGS ONE Genomic Services is a next generation sequencing service offered by Intermountain Precision Genomics. Through state-of-the-art equipment and facilities, researchers gain access to high-quality, whole genome, whole exome or RNA-Seq data. Visit <https://NGSONE.com> or contact ngsone@imail.org for more information.

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