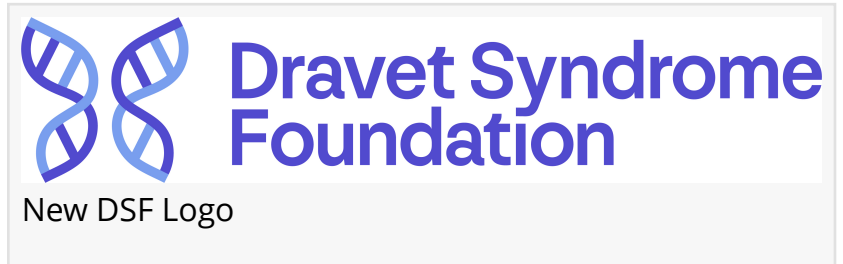


Dravet Syndrome Foundation announces 2022 Research Grant Awardees

Dravet Syndrome Foundation (DSF) is pleased to be funding five new research grants, including two that have been co-funded with JAM for Dravet.



CHERRY HILL, NJ, December 12, 2022
/EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Dravet Syndrome Foundation](#)

(DSF) announced their 2022 grant awardees at their 13th annual DSF Research Roundtable on December 1st. DSF is pleased to be funding five new research grants totaling \$690,000 this year, including two that have been co-funded with [JAM for Dravet](#). That bring the total amount of research funded by DSF since 2009 to over \$6.3M. Said Executive

“

DSF is proud to be the largest non-governmental funder of Dravet syndrome research worldwide, and is pleased to work with JAM for Dravet to extend our reach.”

Mary Anne Meskis, Executive Director, DSF

Director, Mary Anne Meskis, “DSF is proud to be the largest non-governmental funder of Dravet syndrome research worldwide, and is pleased to work with JAM for Dravet to increase our impact.”

The first grant, co-funded with JAM for Dravet, is entitled “Genetic Substrates and Physiological Triggers for Autonomic and Cardiac Abnormalities in Dravet Syndrome” and focuses on a multi-system approach to studying electrical diseases of both the brain and heart. Researcher David Auerbach, PhD, is an Assistant Professor of Pharmacology at SUNY Upstate Medical University and he

is actively investigating the prevalence, risk factors, and mechanisms for the multi-system cascade of events that lead to Sudden Unexpected Death in Epilepsy Patients (SUDEP).

The second grant, cofounded with JAM for Dravet, is entitled “Effect of odorant on mortality and extended amygdala activation in Dravet syndrome.” It is led by researcher William Nobis, MD, PhD, an Assistant Professor at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, whose research focuses on sudden unexpected death in epilepsy (SUDEP), in particular electrophysiological and targeted functional anatomical evaluation of extended amygdalar circuits and its relation to seizures and respiratory control in genetic epilepsies such as Dravet syndrome.

The third grant award went to Gaia Colasante, PhD, of the Universita Vita-Salute San Raffaele for

her project “Reactivating Scn1a gene in different interneuron subtypes to dissect their contribution to Dravet syndrome phenotype.” She is a project leader at San Raffaele Hospital and she manages a small team committed to the development of gene therapy for the treatment of Dravet syndrome and other neurodevelopmental disorders.

The fourth grant award on “Cerebellar deficits as mechanisms for motor, cognitive, and social dysfunction in Dravet syndrome” went to Mackenzie Howard, PhD, of The University of Texas at Austin. His primary interest is in how changes in neural information processing at the cellular level cause the ongoing cognitive, affective, and motor comorbidities that persist between seizures in Dravet syndrome.

The fifth and final award went to Ashwini Sri Hari, PhD of the University of Utah as a postdoctoral fellowship, “Evaluating the effects of sub-chronic exposure to sub-clinical levels of CO on Dravet etiology and associated SUDEP risk.” She works on screening drug compounds in a mouse model of DS that harbors a clinically relevant missense, loss of function mutation in the SCN1A voltage-gated sodium channel gene. Additionally, her research focuses on delineating the molecular mechanisms that cause Sudden Unexpected Death in Epilepsy (SUDEP) and how environmental factors may impact risk.

The Dravet Syndrome Foundation awards annual grants through a competitive application and review process. Said DSF Scientific Director, Dr. Veronica Hood, “DSF is proud to be funding strong scientists with projects that are aligned with community priorities that include a focus on genetic therapies, alternative treatment approaches, comorbidities, and SUDEP.” You can read abstracts for each of the 2022 grant awards, as well as see past projects at <https://dravetfoundation.org/dsf-funded-research/>.

About Dravet syndrome

Dravet Syndrome is a catastrophic form of epilepsy that begins in infancy. It is a debilitating, life-long condition. Patients experience frequent seizures, poor seizure control, developmental delays and other associated health issues.

About Dravet Syndrome Foundation

Dravet Syndrome Foundation is a 501(3) c nonprofit organization whose mission is to aggressively raise funds for Dravet syndrome and related epilepsies; to support and fund research; increase awareness; and to provide support to affected individuals and families. Since its inception in 2009, DSF has awarded over \$6.3M in research grant awards and over \$200K in patient assistance grants

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