

World Pancreatic Cancer Day: Top Young Researchers Win Coveted Hopper-Belmont Inspiration Award

Nov. 16 is World Pancreatic Cancer Day, and to recognize this, the Hopper-Belmont Foundation (HBF) honors cancer researchers with its annual Inspiration Award.

COS COB, CT, USA, November 15, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- November 16th is World Pancreatic Cancer Day, and to recognize this, the [Hopper-Belmont Foundation](#) (HBF) is honoring five of the nation's most innovative early-career cancer researchers with The 4th Annual Hopper-Belmont Inspiration Award.

With 16 winners since the HBF launch in 2019, the annual Inspiration Award attracts a competitive field of applicants from across the USA and internationally, most of which have gone on to win major research funding, publish in highly respected journals, earn professorship roles, and launch their own labs at major oncology centers.

This year's Award focused on two of the deadliest cancers - pancreatic and ovarian. Pancreatic cancer is the third leading cause of cancer death with an overall 5-year survival of only 11%. Both Ovarian and Pancreatic cancers share similar challenges with early propensity for metastatic spread, late diagnosis, resistance to therapy and no curative therapies.



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Joan Fowler, HBF Executive Director

“The HBF mission is to identify, encourage and fund brilliant, young researchers who have demonstrated a passion for tackling the toughest challenges in health and wellness with novel and promising approaches” notes Joan Fowler, HBF Executive Director.

The 2023 awardees are:

- Dr. Gamze Bildik-Elcik, MD Anderson
- Dr. Daniel Haldar, John Hopkins
- Dr. Peter Wang, Harvard/Massachusetts General
- Dr. Laura Antonucci, University California San Diego
- Dr. Hiroyuki Kato, Harvard/Massachusetts General

“The award has now become known as a coveted launching pad for bright innovative researchers to gain early stage financial and reputation support for concepts that can change the paradigm of cancer research. Noting the difficulty of gaining early career funding, the award’s goal is to provide seed monies supporting proof of concepts that will hopefully gain interest from larger funding organizations, and accelerate direct patient benefit,” notes [Randall Brand, MD- University of Pittsburgh Professor of Medicine](#) and HBF Medical/Scientific Advisory Board (MSAB) Director.

“An important secondary goal is to encourage high potential award winners to continue making a career in health and wellness research their priority. As young PhD’s and MD’s prepare to launch their own labs, the ability to win awards like the HBF Inspiration Award creates a solid foundation for future success,” adds fellow HBF MSAB director Nabeel Bardeesy, PhD- Harvard/Massachusetts General Hospital Associate Professor of Medicine.

Drs. Brand and Bardeesy are joined by Lyris Schonholz, MD- Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai Assistant Clinical Professor/ Partner Schaffer, Schonholz, and Drossman; Faye Kastrinos, MD Columbia University Irving Medical Center Associate Professor; Will Hwang, MD Harvard/Massachusetts General Assistant Professor; Sri Ragavan, Harvard/Dana Farber Assistant Professor; Taran Gujral, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center, University Washington, PhD, Associate Professor; a very involved patient advocacy board and dedicated past award winners (<https://hopperbelmont.org/award-winners>) in helping attract and award amazing talent each year.

“While we are thrilled to celebrate World Pancreatic Cancer Day, our hope is to continually raise funds to address many important health issues and support exceptional research talent like the 2020-2023 early-career research award winners,” Ms. Fowler explained.

About the Hopper-Belmont Foundation: Hopper-Belmont Foundation (HBF) is a non-profit,

501(c)(3) focused on identifying, motivating, and supporting exceptional early-career research talent, who are pursuing innovative approaches in solving health and wellness challenges. Founded in 2019 by non-profit research and patient advocacy foundation leaders, the HBF created the Inspiration Award as a core initiative of the Foundation. The award targets senior post-doctoral or clinical fellow (MD, PhD, MD/PHD) or primary investigators in the first three years of their initial faculty appointment, or clinical fellows in the first three years, or post-doctoral faculty in the first three years of tenure. HBF welcomes individuals and families to join their mission and help annually recognize amazing talent that can accelerate the road to cures. [Tax deductible donations](https://hopperbelmont.org/donate-now) can be made directly at <https://hopperbelmont.org/donate-now>.

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