

## UCP awards \$60,000 in grants to support research projects nationwide

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, September 17, 2024 / EINPresswire.com/ -- United Cerebral Palsy has announced it will award grants totaling \$60,000 to fund four new innovative studies into cerebral palsy.

"United Cerebral Palsy is proud to announce the third year of our annual research grant program," said UCP President and CEO Armando Contreras. "Our commitment to support promising advances in this field reflects our mission and the wide breadth of expertise of the UCP Research Council whose members include the top cerebral palsy scholars, researchers and practitioners in the country."



UCP President and CEO Armando Contreras

The UCP Research Committee (URC) awards grants of up to \$20,000 each to advance translational research designed to transform the lives of children with cerebral palsy (CP) and related neurodevelopmental disabilities by bridging the gap between scientific investigation and real-world care.

This year, the council awards include two affiliate planning grants to promote research within the UCP affiliate network. These grants are designed to support the process of formulating an idea to later apply for the pilot or extension grants. This opportunity is only available for affiliates of the UCP affiliate network.

The UCP Research Council is co-chaired by Dr. Michael Kruer, director of the Pediatric Movement Disorders Program at Barrow Neurological Institute at Phoenix Children's, and Valerie Pieraccini, Vice President of Clinical Operations and Innovation at United Cerebral Palsy of Central Arizona.

Cerebral palsy is an umbrella term that refers to a group of neurodevelopmental disorders that impair a person's body movement, muscle control, muscle coordination, muscle tone, reflex, posture, and balance, according to <a href="UCP affiliate">UCP affiliate</a>, Gillette Children's. In most cases, CP is caused by disturbances to the developing brain during pregnancy or soon after birth. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that approximately 1 in 345 children in the U.S. are diagnosed with cerebral palsy.

Grant applications are accepted between March and June annually from

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Dr. Michael Kruer is a pediatric movement disorders neurologist and director of the Pediatric Movement Disorders Program at Phoenix Children's. He's also an associate professor at University of Arizona College of Medicine - Phoenix

researchers and clinicians across the U.S. and Canada. Proposed research can concentrate on any facet of cerebral palsy and related neurodevelopmental disabilities, but preference goes to studies that focus on early diagnosis and early treatment of cerebral palsy. Biomedical and

therapy-focused studies are accepted under the grant program.

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The following proposals were selected to receive 2024 UCP research grants:

Seattle Children's Research Institute, California State University, University of Washington, was awarded a \$20,000 Pilot/Extension grant award for Walking Attainment: Precision Rehab in Cerebral Palsy (WALKCP).

Phoenix Children's Hospital and UCP of Central Arizona, were awarded a \$20,000 Pilot/Extension grant award for Custom antisense oligonucleotide (ASO) treatment of a genetic form of cerebral palsy - first-in-kind proof of principle study.

Gillette Children's were awarded a \$10,000 Affiliate Planning grant for Partners in Progress: Integrating Lived Experience into CP Research at Gillette Children's.

UCP of Greater Cleveland, was awarded a \$10,000 Affiliate Planning grant award for Does community outreach and education increase referrals to a non-profit outpatient therapy center

for 0-3 year population specializing in early detection?

The UCP Research Council has also awarded \$10,000 to support the 2024 Alabama Early Intervention and Preschool Conference. The funds will provide travel stipends for attendees and funds toward the cost of an expert speaker for the conference.

## **About United Cerebral Palsy**

United Cerebral Palsy was founded in 1949, and today our network of affiliate organizations in the United States and Canada provide a wide range of services annually to more than 150,000 children and adults with cerebral palsy and other disabilities. These services include information, resource referral, advocacy, research, educational instruction, early intervention, therapies, job coaching, integrated employment, home and community-based services, recreational



Valerie Pieraccini Vice President of Clinical Operations and Innovation at United Cerebral Palsy of Central Arizona.

opportunities and housing assistance. We are committed to the mission that all people with disabilities should be treated as equal members of an inclusive society.

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