

# SKANRF Announces Funding for Groundbreaking Anorexia Nervosa Research

*Teams from TexasTech University, Vanderbilt University Medical Center, and University of North CarolinaChapel Hill, receive inaugural Phase 1 grant award*

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[/EINPresswire.com/](https://EINPresswire.com/) -- The newly established Sarah Kyle Anorexia Nervosa Research Foundation (

[SKANRF.org](https://SKANRF.org)) is proud to underscore its

commitment to early-stage funding of anorexia nervosa (AN) research with the announcement of its inaugural Phase 1 Grant to a consortium of leading Research institutions comprising Texas Tech University, Vanderbilt University Medical Center, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

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*Dr. David Kyle*

Dr. [David Kyle](#) and Nancy Andrew-Kyle, founders of SKANRF, expressed their enthusiasm: “We are thrilled by the high caliber of proposals we received from world-class academic institutions and the smooth selection process conducted by our Advisory Board.” This cements our belief that the SKANRF is the right conduit to meet the urgent need for significantly expanded funding for anorexia nervosa research. SKANRF is dedicated to addressing this need through a competitive, phased funding approach.

This innovative funding strategy draws inspiration from the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF) and aims to pave new pathways for the primary prevention of this devastating mental illness, which significantly impacts the lives of so many young people and their families.

The Phase 1 project is led by Associate Professor Melissa Munn-Chernoff, a behavioral geneticist and psychiatric epidemiologist at Texas Tech University. It will focus on identifying methylated DNA sites linked to anorexia nervosa. This research seeks to uncover biological mechanisms underlying AN by exploring the importance of epigenetic modifications, which can influence



gene expression without altering the DNA sequence itself. Given the limited understanding of the interplay between genetic and environmental factors in the development of AN, this research holds significant promise.

Dr. Munn-Chernoff stated, "Other than opioid use disorder, anorexia nervosa has the highest mortality rate among all mental health conditions", highlighting the urgent need to clarify the underlying mechanisms that could serve as novel targets for treatment and prevention, "I am grateful for the support of SKANRF, and my colleagues at Vanderbilt and UNC in this critical endeavor." The VUMC team will be led by Dr. Jennifer Below, Professor of Medicine with a focus on Genetic Medicine, while Dr. Kari North,



Sarah Kyle 1988 -2016

Professor of Epidemiology and Associate Dean of Research at the Gillings School of Global Public Health, will lead the group from UNC.

Chair of the SKANRF Scientific Advisory Board, Dr. Cynthia Bulik adds, "We were pleased that the selection process was so challenging since it means that there are a lot of creative scientists out there applying novel methods to unlock the biological underpinnings of anorexia nervosa. All they need is the funding and institutional support to do so."

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About SKANRF: The Sarah Kyle Anorexia Nervosa Research Foundation (SKANRF) is a California-based 501(c)(3) private foundation focused on funding innovative research on anorexia nervosa (AN). Its mission is to identify the root causes of AN and develop effective prevention and intervention strategies. We provide funding for proof-of-principle studies through targeted Requests for Proposals and expert evaluations. The Foundation's vision is a world where no more young people are suffering and dying from the impacts of AN. For more information on SKANRF and how to contribute to our research fund visit [SKANRF.org](http://SKANRF.org)

About Texas Tech University: The College of Health & Human Sciences at Texas Tech University provides multidisciplinary education, research, and service focused on individuals, families, and their environments to improve and enhance the human condition. Faculty, staff, and students advance research concerning individual, social, and economic development in a multidisciplinary environment to benefit families and individuals in a diverse global community. Outreach is

provided to individuals, organizations, and communities to help improve the society in which we live. We are a destination for health and human wellness. For more information and the latest news follow Texas Tech on X, Instagram, YouTube, and Texas Tech Now.”

About Vanderbilt University Medical Center: Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC) is the largest comprehensive research, teaching, and patient care health system in the Mid-South region. Based in Nashville, Tennessee, VUMC sees over 3.3 million patient visits per year in over 180 ambulatory locations, performs 81,000 surgical operations, discharges 80,000 inpatients and has 213,000 emergency department visits from its main-campus adult, children’s, psychiatric and rehabilitation hospitals and 3 regional community hospitals. The Medical Center has more than 43,000 staff, including more than 3,000 physicians, advanced practice nurses, and scientists. For more information and the latest news follow VUMC on Facebook, LinkedIn, X, and at VUMC News.

About the University of North Carolina: The UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health, is the Number 1 public school of public health in the nation. Our mission is to improve public health, promote individual well-being, and eliminate health inequities in North Carolina and around the world. Our work is done in basic science laboratories; clinical and public health settings; communities, including worksites; and community-based and other non-governmental organizations. With our special focus on the science of implementation and delivery, our faculty, staff, and students bridge the gap between academic research and practical, public health to make a world of difference — and a different, healthier world. Contact the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health communications team at sphcomm@unc.edu.

Dr. David John Kyle

Sarah Kyle Anorexia Nervosa Research Foundation

+1 410-960-1062

dkyle@skanrf.com

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