Dravet Syndrome Foundation (DSF) Announces their 2025 Research Grant Awards at the 16th annual DSF Research Roundtable

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CHERRY HILL, NJ, UNITED STATES, December 16, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Dravet Syndrome Foundation (DSF) announced the recipients of their 2025 research grants at the 16th annual Research Roundtable held on December 4th in Atlanta, Georgia. DSF is proud to fund eight new research grants totaling $1.725 million this year. Funding for these grants is made possible through the support of Marlins for Mason (Prather Family), Dance for Dravet (Brennan and Odlaug Families), JAM for Dravet (Chang Family) and The Cael Hill Foundation (Hill Family). With this funding, DSF has now contributed over $14.1 million to research since its inception in 2009.

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> *Mary Anne Meskis, CEO, Dravet Syndrome Foundation*

DSF Executive Director Mary Anne Meskis said, “This has been an exceptional year for grants, with unprecedented interest and a remarkable caliber of submissions. We are proud to introduce and support these eight new awards, which represent innovative and meaningful advances in Dravet syndrome research. The number of applications we received this year exceeded those of previous years, underscoring the growing momentum, collaboration, and enthusiasm within the research community to accelerate progress in the field of Dravet syndrome.”

A DSF Transformational Science Grant was funded for $500,000 over three years to a collaborative, multi-institutional effort led by Danielle Andrade, MD, MSC, FRCPC, CSCN at the University of Toronto for the project titled “Prospective Study of Accelerated Aging in Adults with Dravet Syndrome.” The grant will allow them to follow adults with Dravet syndrome over time to better understand how their health changes with age.

A Research Grant for $250,000 was awarded to the project “Neuromodulation for Dravet Syndrome: Preclinical Validation of a Novel Therapeutic Mechanism” from Ethan M. Goldberg, MD, PhD at The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia. The project will explore the efficacy and mechanisms of electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) to treat seizures and other symptoms using a

mouse model of Dravet syndrome.

A second Research Grant for $249,960 was awarded to the project “Cell-type resolved molecular and functional pathology in Scn1a mutant mouse cerebellum” from Alex Nord, PhD and Diasynou Fioravante, PhD at the University of California Davis. The project will investigate the contribution of specific cell-types and molecular changes in the cerebellum to the symptoms associated with Dravet syndrome.

A third Research Grant for $248,901 was awarded to the project “Mapping Early Postnatal Brain Development in Dravet Syndrome Using Multimodal Approaches” from Ulrike Hedrich-Klimosch, PhD at the University of Tuebingen. The project will investigate when and how early brain development is impacted in Dravet syndrome prior to the start of seizures and symptoms.

A Clinical Research grant for $249,989 was awarded to a research project “Predicting Dravet syndrome outcomes: harnessing natural history data and biomarker discovery to inform early diagnosis and targeted intervention” led by Andreas Brunklaus, MD, MRCPCH at Royal Hospital for Children Glasgow in collaboration with Charlotte Tye, PhD (King’s College London); Elaine Wirrell, MD (Mayo Clinic); Ingrid Scheffer AO, MBBS, PhD, FAA, FAHMS, FRS (University of Melbourne, Austin Health and Royal Children’s Hospital, Florey and Murdoch Children’s Research Institutes); and Dennis Lal, PhD (UT Health Houston). The project focuses on improving the ability to predict the course of symptoms earlier and the identification of biomarkers that can accurately measure changes in the clinical status and quality of life of patients with Dravet syndrome.

DSF invested in early-career scientists with the announcement of funding for three Postdoctoral Fellowships each in the amount of $75,000 for 1 year:

Amanda Catalfio, PhD at the University of Michigan for her project “Investigating effects of the pathogenic developmental and epileptic encephalopathy patient variant, SCN1B-p.R98C, on cognition and hippocampal function,” which will characterize symptoms and alterations in brain function in a novel mouse model of Dravet syndrome caused by variations in the gene, SCN1B.

Mahima Dewani, PhD at Brigham and Women’s Hospital, Harvard Medical School for her project “Rewriting the Brain’s Code: Nose-to-Brain Gene Therapy for SCN1A Haploinsufficiency” which focuses on a novel and non-invasive delivery for a gene-based therapeutic that will be tested in a mouse model of Dravet syndrome.

Megumi Mori, PhD at Gladstone Institutes and University of California San Francisco for her project “Mechanisms of Seizure Prevention by Tau Reduction in Scn1aRX/+ Mice” which will investigate molecules that may be tied to the therapeutic efficacy of Tau-reduction in a mouse model of Dravet syndrome. Dr. Mori also received the Elliot Meskis Award which provides a $2,500 supplement to be used for professional development to an outstanding DSF postdoctoral fellow.

Grants are awarded through a competitive application and review process. Said DSF Scientific Director, Dr. Veronica Hood, “The 2025 DSF grant awards are addressing a broad spectrum of topics, filling important gaps in knowledge that can impact therapeutic development and clinical care.”
You can read abstracts for each of the 2025 grant awards, as well as see past projects at https://dravetfoundation.org/dsf-funded-research/.

DSF has funded 84 research projects, totaling over $14.1M since 2009, making them the largest non-governmental funder of Dravet syndrome research, worldwide. Of those projects, over 80% have resulted in scientific publications upon completion, with DSF contributing to over 90 scientific publications either through direct involvement and/or financial support. DSF-funded researchers have subsequently received over $35M in NIH-level funding for projects related to Dravet syndrome.

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