Pilot Project Award Winners

Dr. Shitao Li, PhD, Phase II project leader, received a $1.7 million National Institutes of Health R01 (totaling over $2.1 million) entitled “Role of FIP200 in RIG-I DNA Sensing Pathway.” This project will provide the insights needed to design therapies for influenza and other infectious and autoimmune diseases.

Dr. Haobo Jiang, PhD, OCRID investigator, received a NIH R01 (~1.8 million) entitled “Serine Proteases in Insect Immunity.” It aims to elucidate the molecular mechanisms in insect immunity that could lead to the development of novel vaccines and therapies for viral and bacterial infections.

Dr. Valentin Rybenkov, PhD, OCRID pilot project leader, received $388K from the National Eye Institute entitled “Bacterial Condensins: A Novel Target for Infection.” This project seeks to develop new antibacterial compounds to combat bacterial infections that arise frequently following corrective surgery or contact lens use.

OCRID Investigator, Dr. Jiang Received NIH R01 Grant for Key Research Project

Dr. Haobo Jiang, PhD, OCRID investigator, received a NIH R01 (~1.8 million) entitled “Serine Proteases in Insect Immunity.” It aims to elucidate the molecular mechanisms in insect immunity that could lead to the development of novel vaccines and therapies for viral and bacterial infections.

OCRID Pilot Project Leader, Dr. Rybenkov Received NIH R21 Grant for Innovative Research on Bacterial Infections

Dr. Valentin Rybenkov, PhD, OCRID pilot project leader, received $388K from the National Eye Institute entitled “Bacterial Condensins: A Novel Target for Infection.” This project seeks to develop new antibacterial compounds to combat bacterial infections that arise frequently following corrective surgery or contact lens use.

A Message from the Director

We are introducing our OCRID Newsletter to keep you up to date with our annual funding opportunities and other important news. This is a 4-year funding cycle with over $2.1 million in total funding awarded to 6 investigators. This year, OCRID selected 12 investigators for Pilot Project grants totaling over $2.1 million. Dr. Fahlenkamp was Assistant Professor when OCRID started in 2013 and is now an Associate Professor at Oklahoma State University. Dr. Susan Kovats is a Professor and Endowed Chair at the College of Engineering, Architecture, and Technology, and Dr. Andy Vail is the Associate Director of the Center for Environmental Health.

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Upcoming Meeting:

We had wonderful Pilot Project submissions this year and we are pleased to announce the 5th Annual OCRID Retreat. This event is designed to bring together OCRID investigators and their mentors to share research updates, network, and discuss future opportunities.

New Faces:

We are excited to introduce our new OCRID investigators: Dr. Feng, Dr. Yu, and Dr. Li. These investigators will be joining the OCRID community and we look forward to seeing their contributions to research.

OCRID Phase II Project Leader and Investigator

Dr. Li received NIH R01 and R21 grants, totaling over $1.8 million. These grants focus on developing new antibacterial compounds to combat bacterial infections that frequently arise following corrective surgery or contact lens use.

OCRID Pilot Project Leader, Dr. Rybenkov Received NIH R21 Grant for Innovative Research on Bacterial Infections

Dr. Valentin Rybenkov, PhD, OCRID pilot project leader, received $388K from the National Eye Institute entitled “Bacterial Condensins: A Novel Target for Infection.” This project seeks to develop new antibacterial compounds to combat bacterial infections that arise frequently following corrective surgery or contact lens use.

OCRID Investigator, Dr. Lin Liu, Ph.D.

Dr. Lin Liu, Ph.D. is a Professor and Endowed Chair at the College of Engineering, Architecture, and Technology. She received a NIH R01 grant totalling over $1.5 million entitled “Viral RNA Structures, Function, and Energetics.” This project focuses on understanding the molecular mechanisms of viral RNA replication and translation, which could lead to the development of novel antiviral therapies.

OCRID Investigator, Dr. Heike Fahlenkamp, Ph.D.

Dr. Heike Fahlenkamp, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor at Oklahoma State University. She received a NIH R01 grant totalling over $1.5 million entitled “Role of FIP200 in RIG-I DNA Sensing Pathway.” This project focuses on understanding the molecular mechanisms of DNA sensing, which could lead to the development of novel therapies for infectious and autoimmune diseases.

OCRID Investigator, Dr. Susan Kovats, Ph.D.

Dr. Susan Kovats, Ph.D. is a Professor and Endowed Chair at the College of Engineering, Architecture, and Technology. She received a NIH R01 grant totalling over $1.5 million entitled “Role of FIP200 in RIG-I DNA Sensing Pathway.” This project focuses on understanding the molecular mechanisms of DNA sensing, which could lead to the development of novel therapies for infectious and autoimmune diseases.

OCRID Investigator, Dr. Andy Vail, Ph.D.

Dr. Andy Vail, Ph.D. is the Associate Director of the Center for Environmental Health. He received a NIH R01 grant totalling over $1.5 million entitled “Role of FIP200 in RIG-I DNA Sensing Pathway.” This project focuses on understanding the molecular mechanisms of DNA sensing, which could lead to the development of novel therapies for infectious and autoimmune diseases.

OCRID Investigator, Dr. Jason Wang, Ph.D.

Dr. Jason Wang, Ph.D. is a Professor at the University of Oklahoma Health Science Center. He received a NIH R01 grant totalling over $1.5 million entitled “Role of FIP200 in RIG-I DNA Sensing Pathway.” This project focuses on understanding the molecular mechanisms of DNA sensing, which could lead to the development of novel therapies for infectious and autoimmune diseases.