

Seventeen trainees join FARE winners' circle

By Eddy Ball

When the results of the 2015 Fellows Award for Research Excellence (FARE) (<https://www.training.nih.gov/felcom/fare>) were announced in June, 17 NIEHS trainees joined the elite group of young scientists so honored by NIH.

In his June 13 announcement of the winners, NIEHS Deputy Scientific Director and Training Director Bill Schrader, Ph.D., wrote, "Congratulations to all these FARE awardees, for their ability to carry out exciting science, and to describe it succinctly in abstract form."

The FARE award program is sponsored by the NIH Fellows Committee, scientific directors, and Office of Intramural Training and Education, and is funded by the scientific directors. Earlier this year, fellows submitted their research abstracts, which were then placed in study sections for review by postdoctoral fellows and senior scientists. Abstracts in the top 25 percent of each study section were selected for FARE awards, based on scientific merit, originality, experimental design, and overall quality and presentation.

Distinction that comes with a cash award

Winners of FARE awards receive a \$1,000 stipend to attend a scientific meeting of their choice, where they present their research. They are also invited to present a poster at the annual NIH Research Festival; attend the FARE awards ceremony held on the NIH Bethesda, Maryland, campus in October; and participate in judging the following year's FARE competition. Recipients will also be recognized at the NIEHS Director's Awards ceremony in 2015.

Winning, in its own right, recognizes the exceptional scientific research of trainees and the quality mentorship of the lead researchers involved. In addition, however, there are other notable facts about the winners and their mentors.

Four fellows were repeat winners - Percy Tumbale, Ph.D., and Senthilkumar Cinghu, Ph.D., also won in 2013; Erica Ungewitter, Ph.D., was a 2014 winner; and Qingshan Wang, M.D., won in 2013 and 2014.

One of the winners, Deirdre Robinson, is a doctoral candidate in the NTP Laboratory. No more than one or two predoctoral fellows achieve a FARE in any given year.

Lead researchers with more than one FARE winner from their group included Raja Jothi, Ph.D., with three winners, and John Cidlowski, Ph.D., and Humphrey Yao, Ph.D., with two each.



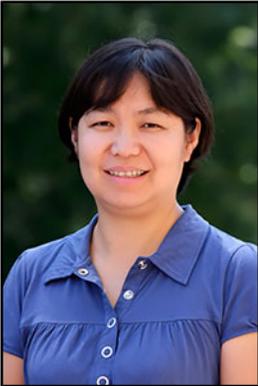
1/17

Margaret Adgent, Ph.D., is a member of the Pediatric Epidemiology Group, headed by Walter Rogan, M.D., and author of "Urinary triclosan and enterolactone: a cross sectional study of environmental influence on gut microbiome function." (Photo courtesy of Steve McCaw)



2/17

Georgia Alexander, Ph.D., authored "Neuronal activity in hippocampal area CA2 during spatial processing." She is a member of the Synaptic and Developmental Plasticity Group, headed by Serena Dudek, Ph.D. (Photo courtesy of Steve McCaw)



3/17

A member of the Ion Channel Physiology Group, headed by Jerrel Yakel, Ph.D., *Qing Cheng, Ph.D.*, was recognized for "Activation of $\alpha 7$ nicotinic acetylcholine receptors increased intracellular cAMP levels in cultured hippocampal neurons." (Photo courtesy of Steve McCaw)



4/17

Cinghu was honored for "Nucleolin regulates the homeostatic balance between self-renewal and differentiation in embryonic stem cells." He is a member of the Systems Biology Group headed by Jothi. (Photo courtesy of Steve McCaw)



5/17

Recognized for "Risk of fetal death with preeclampsia," Quaker Harmon, M.D., Ph.D., is a member of the [Reproductive Epidemiology Group](#), headed by Allen Wilcox, M.D., Ph.D. (Photo courtesy of Steve McCaw)



6/17

[Mallikarjuna Metukuri, Ph.D.](#), is a member of the Metabolism, Genes, and Environment Group, headed by Xiaoling Li, Ph.D. He is the author of "Deletion of intestinal SIRT1 activates Paneth cells, enhances intestinal inflammation, and alters gut microbiota." (Photo courtesy of Steve McCaw)



7/17

A member of the Chromosome Stability Group, headed by Michael Resnick, Ph.D., [Thuy-Ai Nguyen, Ph.D.](#), was recognized for her study, "The p53 protein interactome is also a p53-regulated cistrome." (Photo courtesy of Steve McCaw)



8/17

[Barbara Nicol, Ph.D.](#), is a member of the Reproductive Developmental Biology Group, headed by Yao. She authored "Uncovering new paradigm in testis differentiation using mouse genetic models." (Photo courtesy of Steve McCaw)



9/17

Andrew Oldfield, Ph.D., was recognized for "NF-Y specifies cell identity by promoting chromatin accessibility for master transcription factors at active enhancers." He is also a member of Jothi's Systems Biology Group. (Photo courtesy of Steve McCaw)



10/17

Matthew Quinn, Ph.D., is part of the Molecular Endocrinology Group, headed by Cidlowski. He authored "Imbalance of endogenous glucocorticoids and estrogen leads to the development of autoimmune hepatitis-like symptoms in mice." (Photo courtesy of Steve McCaw)



11/17

Sivapriya Ramamoorthy, Ph.D., was recognized for her gene expression study, "Glucocorticoid receptor isoform knock-in mice have unique responses to glucocorticoids." She is also a member of the Molecular Endocrinology Group headed by Cidlowski. (Photo courtesy of Steve McCaw)



12/17

Robinson authored "Assessing early developmental and pubertal effects in CD-1 mice following in utero exposure to bisphenol (BP) analogs." She is a member of the NTP Laboratory Reproductive Endocrinology Group, headed by Suzanne Fenton, Ph.D. (Photo courtesy of Steve McCaw)



13/17

[Natacha Steinckwich-Besancon, Ph.D.](#), is a member of the Calcium Regulation Group, headed by James Putney, Ph.D. She was recognized for "Role of the calcium sensor protein, STIM1, in neutrophil chemotaxis and infiltration into psoriatic inflamed skin." (Photo courtesy of Steve McCaw)



14/17

[Tumbale](#) is author of "Molecular mechanism of the aprataxin-linked neurodegenerative disorder - ataxia with oculomotor apraxia type 1 (AOA1)." She is a member of the Genome Stability Structural Biology Group, headed by Scott Williams, Ph.D. (Photo courtesy of Steve McCaw)



15/17

Recognized for her study, "Gli-similar 3 is a master regulator of retrotransposon silencing in male fetal germ cells," [Ungewitter](#) is also a member of the Reproductive Developmental Biology Group headed by Yao. (Photo courtesy of Steve McCaw)



16/17

A member of the Neuropharmacology Group headed by Jau-Shyong Hong, Ph.D., [Wang](#) is author of "Ultra-low dose of diphenylethylidone attenuates progressive dopaminergic neurodegeneration and motor deficits in multiple rodent Parkinson's disease models." (Photo courtesy of Steve McCaw)



17/17

Pengyi Yang, Ph.D., is also part of Systems Biology Group headed by Jothi. He was recognized for "Master transcription factors establish cell type-specific transcription attenuators for rheostat control of gene expression." (Photo courtesy of Steve McCaw)

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