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**US/UK SCIENTIST EXCHANGE HOPES TO ADVANCE ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE  
RESEARCH AND SHARE CUTTING EDGE TECHNIQUES**

*Alzheimer's Association and Alzheimer's Research UK Award \$600K+ to Two Researchers*

CHICAGO, October 25, 2012 -- The Alzheimer's Association and Alzheimer's Research UK today announced a pair of new research grants totaling more than \$600,000 as part of an international scientific exchange program intended to promote the work of promising young scientists and stimulate the sharing of new experimental techniques across borders. Each organization will fund one researcher to work in a laboratory in the other country for up to three years.

"Alzheimer's disease and other dementias are a global problem - a growing epidemic - and international research collaboration is an important component in spurring new knowledge and new discoveries," said Heather Snyder, Ph.D., Alzheimer's Association senior associate director of Medical and Scientific Relations. "We're very pleased to join with Alzheimer's Research UK to provide an opportunity for these two scientists to advance their studies."

"We are delighted to be working with the Alzheimer's Association to fund this work, and we hope this partnership could help us make real progress towards our common goal of defeating dementia," said Dr. Eric Karran, Director of Research at Alzheimer's Research UK. "Collaboration is vital for research to move forward – the more people working on a problem, the faster we can achieve results. We also need to keep researchers talking to each other if they are to make the most of those results. The more we can encourage people to share resources, skills and ideas, the better our chances of developing effective treatments for Alzheimer's and other diseases that cause dementia."

**The Collaboration, the Grants and Their Goals**

The 2012 U.S.–U.K. Young Investigator Exchange Fellowship, jointly sponsored by the Alzheimer's Association and Alzheimer's Research UK, provides a three-year grant to fund high quality scientific research into the causes, diagnosis and treatment of Alzheimer's disease. The partnership aims to address important research questions and to encourage promising scientists as they establish their careers in Alzheimer's research. An important objective is to promote the sharing of new experimental techniques and methodologies across borders.

The Alzheimer's Association grant to the researcher is \$260,000; the Alzheimer's Research UK award is for £220,000 (roughly \$350,000). The awardees must have the support of a supervisor/mentor at their "home" institution and a co-supervisor at the host institution that will commit to enable the researcher to fulfill the exchange component of the fellowship.

"It is hoped that, by supporting meaningful scientific collaboration between scientists in the United Kingdom and the United States, there will be mutual benefit to the research output of both countries," said William Thies, Ph.D., Alzheimer's Association Chief Medical and Scientific Officer.

**The Two Researchers and Their Projects**

Lindsay C. Reese, Ph.D., of the University of Vermont, will work with Dr. Karen Horsburgh at the University of Edinburgh as part of a three-year project to investigate changes in the blood-brain barrier (BBB) and their relationship to Alzheimer's. The BBB is a "shield" of tightly connected cells that regulates what can pass into and out of the brain.

Previous research has shown that people with Alzheimer's have accumulations of an abnormal protein called beta amyloid in the brain and its extensive blood vessels, which impacts the blood flow to the brain and may be involved in the progression of Alzheimer's. Reese and colleagues will investigate the role of impaired blood flow and amyloid deposition in blood-brain barrier damage. By studying human brains and several different models of Alzheimer's, Reese hopes to understand how these disease features are linked.

"I'm genuinely grateful for and inspired by this grant, and I look forward to the intellectual exchange and advancement that can occur as a result," Reese said. "My vision is that more clearly understanding the linkage between Alzheimer's, amyloid and the blood-brain barrier will lead to new ideas about possible treatment strategies."

Dr. Rita Guerreiro, of University College London (UCL), will collaborate with research groups in the U.S., Canada and Spain to investigate the genetics of young-onset Alzheimer's disease, which strikes people before age 65. Three gene mutations that cause Alzheimer's in younger individuals have been identified, yet there are some families affected by young-onset Alzheimer's who do not appear to have any of these known mutations. Guerreiro plans to identify a number of these families, collect DNA samples from volunteers with and without the disease, and analyze their genetic make-up in detail.

As part of her three-year project, Guerreiro will work with Andrew Singleton, Ph.D., at the Laboratory of Neurogenetics, NIA, NIH, looking for additional genetic variations in these families that are linked to young-onset Alzheimer's.

"I'm delighted to receive this funding, which will enable me to work with a unique set of samples with a wealth of potential information to be unlocked," Dr. Guerreiro said. "By identifying additional genes that are involved in young-onset Alzheimer's, we may gain a clearer picture of some of the causes of the disease – which is the first step towards developing effective treatments. I'm looking forward to this exciting collaboration."

#### **About the Alzheimer's Association**

The Alzheimer's Association is the world's leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support and research. Our mission is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research, to provide and enhance care and support for all affected, and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer's. For more information, visit [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org) or call 800-272-3900.

#### **About Alzheimer's Research UK**

Alzheimer's Research UK is the UK's leading charity specializing in finding preventions, treatments and a cure for dementia. They currently support dementia research projects worth more than £20 million in leading universities across the UK. To help Alzheimer's Research UK defeat dementia, visit [www.alzheimersresearchuk.org](http://www.alzheimersresearchuk.org) or call 01223 843899.

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