

Alzheimer Society

C A N A D A

Alzheimer Society Research Program awards \$2.9 million to Canadian researchers Annual competition advances critical and needed research

Toronto, ON, June 19, 2018 – The Alzheimer Society Research Program (ASRP) is pleased to announce it has awarded \$2.9 million to 29 researchers across the country to advance research related to all forms of dementia and find more effective means to diagnose, treat and eventually stop the disease, as well as improve day-to-day life and care.

“Dementia is one of the most complex diseases of our times and only through research will we be able to find the breakthroughs we need,” says Nalini Sen, Director of the Research Program at the Alzheimer Society of Canada. “Fortunately, Canada has some of the best and brightest minds working in this field who are already making significant contributions, so we’re proud to support them.”

Projects receiving funding this year include:

Selena Maxwell, Dalhousie University, Halifax

More than any other part of the brain, the prefrontal cortex makes us who we are as individuals, managing our ability to reason and think as well as our memory. It’s also one of the most understudied parts of the brain. Through her work, Selena is probing deeper into the cortex’s function to understand how it leads to memory loss, a hallmark of Alzheimer’s disease.

Dr. Nahum Sonenberg, McGill University, Montreal

Internationally regarded for his seminal work in cancer research, Dr. Sonenberg is now setting his sights on the brain, more specifically on how its proteins are manufactured and how this process contributes to Alzheimer’s disease. His overall goal is to develop a drug that could alter the course of the disease.

Dr. Michael Jackson, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg

Microglia or brain immune cells act as the “health police” of the brain, defending against amyloid plaques which are associated with Alzheimer’s disease. By identifying ways to harness the positive functions of these cells while preventing their detrimental actions, Dr. Jackson hopes to find new therapies that will halt or prevent the disease from progressing.

Dr. Teresa Liu-Ambrose, University of British Columbia, Vancouver

A good night’s sleep is important for overall health and may play a contributing role in preventing cognitive decline as we age. That’s the focus of Dr. Liu-Ambrose’s study: to find ways of improving the quality of sleep in older adults living with Mild Cognitive Impairment, which can often lead to full-blown Alzheimer’s disease.

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Today, over half a million Canadians are living with some form of dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, the most common type. For every person with dementia, one or more family members provide care.

The Alzheimer Society Research Program funds both bio-medical and quality-of-life research. Funding applications are reviewed by peer-review panels of leading scientists and investigators in dementia research, including people impacted by dementia. Another unique feature of the Program is its support of promising young investigators, transitioning from working in established laboratories to becoming independent researchers. The Program also fosters collaborative opportunities among researchers and research institutions to improve sharing and translation of their findings to advance discoveries.

To date, the Alzheimer Society Research Program has contributed over \$53 million to Canadian research and is a collaborative initiative of the Alzheimer Society of Canada and its Federation of Alzheimer Societies across the country, key partners and generous individual and corporate donors.

For more information about the Alzheimer Society of Research Program and this year's recipients, visit: www.alzheimer.ca

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