

September 2018

The Woodruff Health Sciences Center has selected 10 proposals out of 54 submitted for funding in the fifth round of Synergy Awards, which support collaborative projects among faculty across the health sciences.

Proposals for these awards are required to include faculty members with primary appointments in at least two different schools/units as co-principal investigators. The awards are intended to support new, highly innovative projects that are not yet funded or published and that have potential to generate scientific achievements of the highest quality and impact. The research also must have a high likelihood of external funding and advance the goals of the Woodruff Health Sciences Center Strategic Plan.

The projects in this round of awards are an excellent fit with two of the [WHSC's strategic plan goals](#): (1) interprofessional education and collaborative practice and (2) innovative discovery.

Funded from the office of the Executive VP for Health Affairs, with support from the Robert W. Woodruff Health Sciences Center Fund, Inc., these awards offer up to \$100,000 in support for an award term of one year, with potential carryover to a second year under special circumstances.

Since the Synergy Awards were initiated in 2016, more than \$3.2 million in funds have been awarded to more than 90 researchers throughout the health sciences, supporting 34 proposals.

The 10 selected proposals and their investigators in the fifth round of awards are as follows:

Clinical and ocular fluid analysis in the Child Health and Mortality Prevention Surveillance (CHAMPS) Network (Sierra Leone)

Steven Yeh, MD (Medicine)

Jessica G. Shantha, MD (Medicine)

Robert F. Breiman, MD (Public Health, Global Health Institute)

Developing cell-free DNA-based net-generation biomarkers for neurodegenerative disorders

Peng Jin, PhD (Medicine)

Hao Wu, PhD (Public Health)

Evaluating the impact of decision aid timing on mandatory shared decision making for defibrillator implantation

Faisal M. Merchant, MD (Medicine)

Neal Dickert, Jr., MD, PhD (Medicine)

David H. Howard, PhD (Public Health)

Fast diffusion Kurtosis imaging of acute stroke patients

Ranliang Hu, MD (Medicine)

Phillip Z. Sun, PhD (Yerkes)

Gut microbiome, cancer immunotherapy, and kidney cancer outcomes

Veronika Fedirko, MPH, PhD (Public Health)

Mehmet A. Bilen, MD (Medicine)

Viraj Master, MD, PhD, FACS (Medicine)

Haydn T. Kissick, PhD (Medicine)

Yijuan Hu, PhD (Public Health)

Timothy D. Read, PhD (Medicine)

Multilevel determinants of sleep and 24-hour blood pressure among African Americans

Dayna A. Johnson, PhD, MPH (Public Health)

Donald Bliwise, PhD (Medicine)

Tene T. Lewis, PhD (Public Health)

Nutritional immunoregulation protection against pneumococcal pneumonia

Christopher N. LaRock, PhD (Medicine)

Jorge E. Vidal, PhD (Public Health)

Shiftwork, functional bowel symptoms, and the microbiome

Ann E. Rogers (Nursing)

Timothy D. Read, PhD (Medicine)

Jennifer Christie, MD (Medicine)

Transplant rejection diagnosis and classification using machine learning on whole-slide imaging in pediatric and adult kidney transplant recipients

Julien Hogan, MD, PhD (Medicine)

David Benkeser, PhD, MPH (Public Health)

Lee Cooper, PhD (Medicine)

Unravelling the electrophysiologic effects of diabetes with novel risk prediction tools: A global collaborative study in South Asians

Amit Shah, MD, MSCR (Public Health)

K. M. Venkat Narayan, MD, MSc, MBA (Public Health)

Gari D. Clifford, DPhil (Medicine)