

Leukemia Society Awards Top Grant To Moores UCSD Cancer Center Researcher

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The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society has awarded Thomas Kipps, MD, PhD, Deputy Director of Research at the [UC San Diego Moores Cancer Center](#), [↗](#) a \$6.25 million, 5-year grant to develop new blood-cancer therapies. Kipps, an international authority on chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL), is one of only four new Specialized Center of Research (SCOR) grant recipients named this year.

SCOR grants are the largest grants the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society makes. There are only 15 active SCOR sites in the world.



Thomas Kipps, MD, PhD

“I feel very fortunate to have been named an awardee,” said Kipps, professor of medicine at the UC San Diego School of Medicine and director of a national CLL research consortium based at the Cancer Center. “We have some exciting leads to develop treatments that may benefit patients who have failed standard treatment, and that may even lead to a cure. The lessons learned from this work may apply to other leukemias and perhaps some solid tumors as well.”

The SCOR program encourages scientists from different disciplines to collaborate in the hope of developing novel treatments. Awards go to those groups that best demonstrate outstanding scientific promise and the synergy that will occur from their combined efforts.

Led by extraordinary scientific innovators, SCOR teams include some of the brightest medical researchers in the field of blood cancers – specialists in genetics, cell biology, virology, immunology and other areas.

The team that Kipps has assembled will focus on identifying new targeted therapies for CLL. His team, which includes scientists from UC San Diego and the Burnham Institute, will work on four avenues of attack: development of drugs targeting a protein called ZAP-70 that is found in aggressive CLL; development of therapies that eliminate the resistance of leukemia cell death;

evaluating the role of a pro-inflammatory protein, called NF-kB, in CLL progression; and testing the ability of the newly developed drugs to trigger leukemia cell death.

In addition to Kipps, project leaders on the SCOR grant from UC San Diego are Dennis Carson, MD, Paul Insel, MD, and Michael Karin, PhD; and from the Burnham Institute, John Reed, MD, PhD

[The Rebecca and John Moores UC San Diego Cancer Center](#) is one of just 39 centers in the United States to hold a National Cancer Institute (NCI) designation as a Comprehensive Cancer Center. As such, it ranks among the top centers in the nation conducting basic and clinical cancer research, providing advanced patient care and serving the community through outreach and education programs.

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Note to broadcast and cable producers: UC San Diego provides an on-campus satellite uplink facility for live or pre-recorded television interviews. Please phone, or e-mail, the media contact listed above to arrange an interview.

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