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CIRM Awards \$8.165 Million in Basic Biology Awards to UC San Diego

Eight stem cell scientists at the University of California, San Diego have been awarded a total of \$8.165 million to fund research tackling significant, unresolved issues in human stem cell biology.

The California Institute for Regenerative Medicine's Independent Citizens Oversight Committee (ICOC) voted yesterday to award the following Basic Biology Awards to:

- **Maïke Sander, MD**, School of Medicine, Department of Pediatrics, was awarded \$1.161 million
- **Christian Metallo, PhD**, Bioengineering, Jacobs School of Engineering, awarded \$1,124,834
- **Cornelis Murré, PhD**, Biological Sciences, awarded \$1.161 million
- **Wei Wang, PhD**, Chemistry and Biochemistry, awarded \$1.161 million
- **David Cheresch, PhD**, School of Medicine, Department of Pathology, UC San Diego Moores Cancer Center, awarded \$1.161 million
- **Miles Wilkinson, PhD**, School of Medicine, Department of Reproductive Medicine, awarded \$619,200
- **Lawrence Goldstein, PhD**, School of Medicine, Departments of Cellular and Molecular Medicine and Neurosciences, and director of the UC San Diego Stem Cell Program, \$1,161 million
- **Dianne McKay, MD**, School of Medicine, Department of Medicine, \$615,639

The CIRM Basic Biology Awards V, Track 2: "Exploratory Concepts Awards" were designed to target projects testing highly novel hypotheses which, if proven, have the potential to dramatically and rapidly advance the field. Studies supported through both tracks of the Basic Biology Awards V will form the foundation for future translational and clinical advances, enabling the realization of the full potential of human stem cells and reprogrammed cells for therapies and as tools for biomedical innovation.

UC San Diego is also part of a new Center of Excellence in Stem Cell Genomics, awarded \$40 million in funding to bring together experts and investigators from seven different major California institutions. Stanford University and the Salk Institute are joint principal investigators; other collaborators include The Scripps Research Institute, the J. Craig Venter Institute and Illumina, Inc. – all in San Diego. UC Santa Cruz will run the data coordination and management component, enabling the research to be shared with investigators around the world.

The Center of Excellence will focus on bridging the fields of genomics – studying the complete genetic make-up of a cell or organism – with stem cell research. The goal is to use these tools to gain a deeper understanding of the disease processes in cancer, diabetes, heart disease and mental health, and ultimately to try and find safer and more effective ways of using stem cells in medical research and therapy.

The new \$8.165 million in Basic Biology grant funding brings the total funding to UC San Diego to \$139,976,498 since CIRM's inception in 2006.

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