

Innovative UC San Diego Physician-Scientists Receive \$1.4 Million in Burroughs-Wellcome Award Funding

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Two of this year's five awardees chosen to receive the Burroughs Wellcome Fund Career Awards for Medical Scientists (CAMS) are UC San Diego School of Medicine physician-scientists.

Pradipta Ghosh, MD, was recognized for research into the changes in the activity of a protein that helps transmit molecular signals into cells, called the G protein, during cancerous tumor formation and growth. Quyen T. Nguyen, MD, PhD, was honored for testing the use of molecular fluorescence imaging to guide surgery.

"The Burroughs-Wellcome Fund is founded upon the 'importance of curiosity-driven research,'" said Kenneth Kaushansky, MD, Chair of the UC San Diego Department of Medicine. "Drs. Ghosh and Nguyen share that dedication and will use this award to further that curiosity."

"Drs. Ghosh and Nguyen represent the best of UC San Diego School of Medicine" said Joseph M. Vinetz, MD, professor of medicine in UC San Diego's Division of Infectious Diseases, who chaired the committee that nominated UC San Diego scientists for this award. "The commitment of these young scientists—to academic and scientific excellence—will no doubt provide much needed advances in medicine."

The Career Award for Medical Scientists is a five-year, \$700,000 bridging award, supporting the last years of a mentored position as well as the beginning years of an independent position. The award is designed to facilitate the physician-scientist's transition to a career in research.

Since its inception in 2007, CAMS has given a total of 43 awards totaling more than \$30 million to support the careers of physician-scientists. Half of these awardees were subsequently appointed to faculty positions.

"The physician-scientist is a critical player within the research enterprise," BWF President Dr. John Burris said. "By supporting them early in their careers we hope to increase their continued participation within the physician-scientist work force."

Other awardees include former UC San Diego Department of Medicine member Chester Drum, MD, PhD, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Matthew Van Der Heiden, MD, PhD, Harvard Medical School; and Ann Zovein, MD, UCLA.

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Media Contact: Kim Edwards, 619-543-6163, kedwards@ucsd.edu

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