

# Smith Family Foundation: Odyssey Award

A program of the Richard and Susan Smith Family Foundation



**Alumni Directory**

**2018 - 2019**

The Richard and Susan Smith Family Foundation is committed to effecting permanent positive change in the lives of the residents of Greater Boston, particularly individuals and families in economically disadvantaged communities. Today, three generations of the Smith family oversee the Foundation, stewarding approximately \$15 million annually in grants aimed at promoting greater health, educational attainment, and economic mobility. In the area of health, the Foundation supports the advancement of biomedical research and the expansion of access to high-quality health care at safety net institutions serving low-income individuals and communities of Greater Boston.

The Smith Family Foundation: Odyssey Award was created in 2017 to fuel creativity and innovation in junior investigators in the basic sciences. The Award supports the pursuit of high impact ideas to generate breakthroughs and drive new directions in biomedical research. The Award funds high-risk, high-reward pilot projects solicited from the brightest junior faculty in the region. The Awards are currently in the amount of \$300,000 over two years.

Over the past 2 years, the Smith Family Foundation: Odyssey Award has helped launch the careers of 10 outstanding scientists with support totaling \$3 million.

The following is a listing of all Award Recipients in alphabetical order with current contact information as well as the title of the funded research project. The Smith Family is extraordinarily proud of the accomplishments of its Awardees and is honored to provide the critical support for their newly established research programs.

**Lydia Bourouiba, Ph.D.**  
(2018 Award Recipient)  
*Respiratory Disease Transmission:  
Mechanistic Understanding for Control and  
Prevention of Epidemics*  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
[lbouro@mit.edu](mailto:lbouro@mit.edu)

**Benjamin Lovegren de Bivort, Ph.D.** (2018  
Award Recipient)  
*Mapping Loci of Individuality for  
Spontaneous and Stimulus-Evoked  
Behaviors*  
Harvard University  
[debivort@oeb.harvard.edu](mailto:debivort@oeb.harvard.edu)

**Elena Gracheva, Ph.D.**  
(2018 Award Recipient)  
*Regulation of Fluid and Ionic Balance Under  
Extreme Physiological States in a  
Mammalian Hibernator*  
Yale University  
[elena.gracheva@yale.edu](mailto:elena.gracheva@yale.edu)

**Ya-Chieh Hsu, Ph.D.**  
(2018 Award Recipient)  
*Cellular and Molecular Mechanisms of Fetal  
Skin Regeneration*  
Harvard University  
[yachieh\\_hsu@harvard.edu](mailto:yachieh_hsu@harvard.edu)

**Shantanu Jadhav, Ph.D.**  
(2019 Award Recipient)  
*Neural Coordination Mechanisms for  
Memory Function and Dysfunction*  
Brandeis University  
[shantanu@brandeis.edu](mailto:shantanu@brandeis.edu)

**Maofu Liao, Ph.D.**  
(2019 Award Recipient)  
*Elucidating the Molecular Mechanism of  
ABCA7, a Membrane Transporter associated  
with Alzheimer's Disease*  
Harvard Medical School  
[maofu\\_liao@hms.harvard.edu](mailto:maofu_liao@hms.harvard.edu)

**Sarah Slavoff, Ph.D.**  
(2019 Award Recipient)  
*Non-Canonical Translation of Small Open  
Reading Frames in the Human Genome*  
Yale Cancer Center  
[sarah.slavoff@yale.edu](mailto:sarah.slavoff@yale.edu)

**Jing-Ke Weng, M.D., Ph.D.**  
(2018 Award Recipient)  
*Novel Psychiatric Therapeutics Inspired by  
Bioactive Plant Polyketides*  
Whitehead Institute for Biomedical  
Research  
[wengi@wi.mit.edu](mailto:wengi@wi.mit.edu)

**Jessica Whited, Ph.D.**  
(2019 Award Recipient)  
*Transmission of Amputation Information  
Throughout the Body in Axolotl*  
Brigham and Women's Hospital  
[jessica\\_whited@harvard.edu](mailto:jessica_whited@harvard.edu)

**Wesley Philip Wong, Ph.D.**  
(2019 Award Recipient)  
*Single-Molecule Protein Identification with  
Mechanical Nanocalipers*  
Boston Children's Hospital  
[wong@idi.harvard.edu](mailto:wong@idi.harvard.edu)