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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

University of Pittsburgh, UPMC Announce First Awards Made from Research Fund

PITTSBURGH, Oct. 5, 2012 - Three investigators leading projects in cancer and one in HIV/AIDS are the first to receive awards from a fund established by the [University of Pittsburgh](#), [UPMC](#) and [Johnson & Johnson Corporate Office of Science and Technology](#) (COSAT) to support promising translational research.

The projects all arose from research and intellectual property developed at Pitt; involve new therapeutics such as small molecules, biologics or vaccines, or new platform technologies that can form the foundation for supporting the ongoing development of such therapeutics; and have high scientific merit and potential for great impact.

Awards have been granted to:

- Edward Prochownik, M.D., Paul C. Gaffney Professor of Pediatrics and professor of microbiology and molecular genetics for therapeutic targeting of the c-Myc oncoprotein to find new cancer drugs
- Thomas E. Smithgall, Ph.D., professor and chair of microbiology and molecular genetics, to evaluate HIV-1 Nef antagonists in a mouse model of AIDS
- Flordeliza S. Villanueva, M.D., professor of medicine; director, Non-Invasive Cardiac Imaging; and director, Center for Ultrasound Molecular Imaging and Therapeutics, to develop targeted molecular therapeutics for head and neck cancer using microbubble vectors and ultrasound
- Zhou Wang, Ph.D., professor and director of urological research, Department of Urology, to develop small molecules targeting androgen receptor nuclear localization and function in castration-resistant prostate cancer

The University of Pittsburgh scientific community responded to this funding opportunity by submitting nearly 60 letters of intent. A project selection committee composed of members of the University of Pittsburgh, UPMC and Johnson & Johnson COSAT invited 11 of the 60 applicants to submit full applications.

A pharmaceutical collaboration committee led by D. Lansing Taylor, Ph.D., director of the University of Pittsburgh Drug Discovery Institute and Allegheny Foundation Professor of Computational and Systems Biology, and composed of faculty from the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences and the schools of Medicine and Pharmacy, as well as staff from the university's Office of Technology Management and UPMC, has been established to guide Pitt and UPMC's efforts to work more closely with large pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies.

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About the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine

As one of the nation's leading academic centers for biomedical research, the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine integrates advanced technology with basic science across a broad range of disciplines in a continuous quest to harness the power of new knowledge and improve the human condition. Driven mainly by the School of

Medicine and its affiliates, Pitt has ranked among the top 10 recipients of funding from the National Institutes of Health since 1997.

Likewise, the School of Medicine is equally committed to advancing the quality and strength of its medical and graduate education programs, for which it is recognized as an innovative leader, and to training highly skilled, compassionate clinicians and creative scientists well-equipped to engage in world-class research. The School of Medicine is the academic partner of [UPMC](#), which has collaborated with the University to raise the standard of medical excellence in Pittsburgh and to position health care as a driving force behind the region's economy. For more information about the School of Medicine, see www.medschool.pitt.edu.

<http://www.upmc.com/media>