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For Immediate Release.

The Conrad Prebys Foundation funds the Human BioMolecular Research Institute to research a drug candidate to fight drug-resistant pancreatic cancer.

San Diego, Calif., March 23, 2021 – A collaborative team at the Human BioMolecular Research Institute (HBRI) will utilize The Conrad Prebys Foundation award to develop a drug candidate that potently inhibits drug resistant human pancreatic cancer stem cells and inhibits metastasis and relapse via a novel mechanism. HBRI has already identified a drug candidate that shows efficacy to eradicate pancreatic cancer stem cells and HBRI scientists are eager to develop the candidate in partnership with The Conrad Prebys Foundation.

The work is important because drug-resistant pancreatic cancer is one of the most lethal diagnoses that an oncology patient faces and is increasing in prevalence. Pancreatic cancer soon will be the second leading cause of cancer-related death in the United States. Pancreatic cancer mortality is increasing because many therapeutics are ineffective or prone to drug resistance, and surgical intervention only addresses a small percentage of patients. As a result, new medications for drug-resistant pancreatic cancer and other cancers is urgently needed.

Honoring its namesake’s legacy and passion for philanthropic giving, The Conrad Prebys Foundation announced the selection of 121 grant projects for a total of nearly \$78 million during its inaugural grant cycle. The Human BioMolecular Research Institute is one of the recipients.

“The Conrad Prebys Foundation staff and board are honored to serve as stewards for The Conrad Prebys Foundation, and with that role comes the responsibility to empower nonprofits creating meaningful change across San Diego,” said Erin Decker, director of grant making for The Conrad Prebys Foundation. “The grantees have exhibited an extraordinary level of resilience, innovation and compassion during this very challenging time, and it is these organizations that will heal our community in the months and years to come. The foundation is proud to be a part of their story.”

“The past year has highlighted the imperative behind-the-scenes work that researchers are

conducting to ensure we have the insights, treatments and medicine we need to keep communities healthy,” said Erin Decker, director of grant making at The Conrad Prebys Foundation. “The foundation is honored to have a role in ensuring these meaningful research projects have the resources needed to fuel future solutions in medical care.”

“We need to develop effective new medications for drug resistant pancreatic cancer,” said John Cashman, Ph.D., President of the Human BioMolecular Research Institute. “Using a non-toxic small molecule drug candidate to kill pancreatic cancer stem cells either by itself or in combination with standard of care chemotherapy is very appealing.” A recent paper (*Scientific Reports*, **10**:9162, 2020) to support this claim can be found at: (<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-020-65804-5>).

Media contacts: To arrange on-site, phone, or video interviews with the researchers involved in this study, please contact John Cashman at (858) 458-9305 / JCashman@hbri.org.

About Human BioMolecular Research Institute

The Human BioMolecular Research Institute is a non-profit research institute conducting basic research focused on unlocking biological and chemical principles related to diseases of the human brain, cardiovascular disease and cancer. The Institute conducts fundamental studies of central nervous system disorders, heart disease and cancer including stem cell approaches and translates findings into new drug development to address human illness. In addition, the Institute promotes scientific learning through community service and public access by disseminating information and sharing research with collaborators, colleagues and the public. For more information, visit us at www.HBRI.org.

About The Conrad Prebys Foundation

The Conrad Prebys Foundation was established by real estate entrepreneur Conrad Prebys to perpetuate his commitment to philanthropic endeavors. The Conrad Prebys Foundation inspires transformational change by funding projects in alignment with Conrad Prebys’ legacy interests and continuing his efforts that spark meaningful advancement in our communities. For more information, visit www.ConradPrebysFoundation.org.

For more information on The Conrad Prebys Foundation or 2021 grantees, visit www.ConradPrebysFoundation.org.

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