

**Accredited Media Inquiries Only:**

Kelsey Guy, American Heart Association  
(214) 706-4851; kelsey.guy@heart.org  
Note: Vendor or solicitation inquiries will not receive a response



Tina Larson, The Children's Heart Foundation  
(847) 634-6474; tlarson@childrensheartfoundation.org  
Note: Vendor or solicitation inquiries will not receive a response

## **American Heart Association and The Children's Heart Foundation Fund More than \$1,000,000 in Congenital Heart Defect Research**

Brings total Congenital Heart Defect research funding through this joint effort to  
\$1.87 million since January 2016

**Dallas, December 6, 2016** – The American Heart Association and The Children's Heart Foundation announced today the second round of recipients for the Congenital Heart Defect Research Awards, a research program co-funded by the American Heart Association and The Children's Heart Foundation. A total of 37 applications were reviewed for the second round of the award and seven programs will receive \$1,073,219 to fund congenital heart defect research.

"We are honored and excited to continue our research funding partnership with AHA," said William Foley, Executive Director of The Children's Heart Foundation. "Through this collaboration and our ongoing commitment to research focused on congenital heart defects, we strive to make a lasting impact in the lives of those with congenital heart defects. This \$1,000,000 of new research will help bring innovative solutions to congenital heart defect survival rates and care."

The seven grant recipients are from Indiana, Ohio, South Carolina, Virginia, Washington state and two from Texas. Congenital Heart Defect Research Award recipients are:

- Dr. Craig Rusin with Baylor College of Medicine;
- Dr. Jill Heathcock with The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center;
- Dr. Daniel Seung Kim with the University of Washington School of Medicine;
- Joshua Vincentz with Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis;
- Dr. Andrew Meyer with the University of Texas Health Science Center San Antonio;
- Xiaoying Cai with University of Virginia School of Medicine; and
- Dr. Ethan Kung with Clemson University's College of Engineering, Computing and Applied Sciences.

In 2014, the American Heart Association and The Children's Heart Foundation established the Congenital Heart Defect Research Awards to fund \$2.5 million in congenital heart defect research grants through 2016 and in November 2015, the organizations expanded their collaborative funding project, earmarking an additional \$20 million for congenital heart defect research over five years. Earlier this year, the American Heart Association and The Children's Heart Foundation announced the first round of Congenital Heart Defect Research Awardees, who received \$803,816. Together, the American Heart

Association and The Children's Heart Foundation will fund up to \$22.5 million in congenital heart defect research through the year 2021.

"Funding ground-breaking research that advances the field of cardiovascular medicine is a cornerstone of the American Heart Association's mission," said Dr. Rose Marie Robertson, FAHA, Chief Science and Medical Officer of the American Heart Association. "By working with The Children's Heart Foundation to fund the Congenital Heart Defect Research Awards, the American Heart Association is able to support vital research to develop a greater understanding of congenital heart defects in hopes of providing a better quality of life for those living with a congenital heart defect."

Congenital heart defects are serious and common conditions that have a significant impact on morbidity, mortality and healthcare costs in children and adults. Congenital heart defects are among the most common birth defects and the leading killer of infants with birth defects in the U.S. Roughly 40,000 children are born in the U.S with a heart defect each year. Congenital heart defect-related mortality rates vary by age, with infants having the highest mortality rates. Though the incident rate of congenital heart defects has not decreased over time, more infants with congenital heart defects survive to adulthood thanks to advancements made through research. Collaborations like the one between the American Heart Association and The Children's Heart Foundation are vital to the continuation of these advancements.

Scientists who conduct research on congenital heart defects are encouraged to submit applications for the next round of funding. For more information about the AHA and CHF research grant awards, please visit [www.professional.heart.org/CHDResearchAwards](http://www.professional.heart.org/CHDResearchAwards). Additional information about the AHA and the CHF can be found at [www.heart.org/congenitalheartdefects](http://www.heart.org/congenitalheartdefects) and at [www.childrensheartfoundation.org](http://www.childrensheartfoundation.org).

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#### **About the American Heart Association and American Stroke Association**

The American Heart Association and the American Stroke Association are devoted to saving people from heart disease and stroke – America's No. 1 and No. 5 killers. We team with millions of volunteers to fund innovative research, fight for stronger public health policies, and provide lifesaving tools and information to prevent and treat these diseases. The Dallas-based American Heart Association is the nation's oldest and largest voluntary organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke. The American Stroke Association is a division of the American Heart Association. To learn more or to get involved, call 1-800-AHA-USA1, visit [heart.org](http://heart.org) or call any of our offices around the country. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)

#### **About The Children's Heart Foundation**

Established by Betsy Peterson in 1996, The Children's Heart Foundation (CHF) is the country's leading national organization solely committed to congenital heart research funding. Since 1996, CHF has independently funded 67 research projects with nearly \$8 million. In addition, CHF and the American Heart Association have collaboratively funded 14 research projects with over \$1.3 million through the Congenital Heart Defect Research Awards, bringing CHF's total amount to approximately \$9 million. CHF is a national 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charitable organization, whose mission is to fund the most promising research to advance the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of congenital heart

defects. For more information, please visit: [www.childrensheartfoundation.org](http://www.childrensheartfoundation.org). Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).