



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Groundbreaking research on schizophrenia and addictive drug cravings illustrate the breadth and reach of the Brain Research Foundation alumni community

CHICAGO – (January 14, 2014) -- One neuroscientist is part of a research team in North Chicago that is working to unlock ways to suppress drug-seeking behaviors triggered by cocaine and other drugs, and the other runs a genetics research company in Reykjavik, Iceland. Both scientists participated in noteworthy brain discoveries announced late last year. And, both share a common lineage as they are former recipients of the Brain Research Foundation Fay/Frank Seed Grant program.

Kuei Tseng, PhD., recipient of a 2012 seed grant, co-leads a team that has done work on cocaine addiction described by other scientists as “groundbreaking”. According to a paper published in *Nature Neuroscience*, Tseng’s team is able to positively modulate the function of a type of glutamate receptor in the brain to decrease cocaine cravings.

Kari Stefansson, M.D., Dr. Med., CEO of deCODE genetics, recipient of nine separate BRF Seed Grants, reported in the journal *Nature* in late December his company’s discovery that mutations associated with an increased risk of schizophrenia and autism also affect cognition in a subset of individuals who don’t meet the criteria for those illnesses. This discovery potentially opens new scientific avenues to understanding what leads to these life changing illnesses.

“The Brain Research Foundation community congratulates Drs. Tseng and Stefansson for their impressive scientific accomplishments and these latest contributions to the field of

neuroscience,” stated Terre A. Constantine, Ph.D., Executive Director of the Brain Research Foundation. “Their most recent work represents the tremendous diversity of our field, and the vast community of researchers whose work and careers have been helped along by our Seed Grants. The pool of funding for neuroscience has contracted and so it’s critically important that funding institutions like ours continue to support the most deserving projects.”

The Brain Research Foundation Fay/Frank Seed Grant program gives early stage grants to scientists for promising concepts that are deemed to have high potential in the field of neuroscience. With this modest funding recipients are able to gather the data that make their research eligible for major funding grants. A recent survey of BRF Seed Grant recipients found they generate, on average, a ratio of 20:1 in additional funding beyond the original grant.

#### **About the Brain Research Foundation**

The Brain Research Foundation ([theBRF.org](http://theBRF.org)) supports cutting-edge neuroscience research that will lead to novel treatments and prevention of all neurological diseases in children and adults. We deliver this commitment through research grants, which provide initial funding for innovative projects, as well as educational programs for researchers and the general public.