



The Association for
Frontotemporal Degeneration
Opening the gateway to help and a cure

Media Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Association for Frontotemporal Degeneration Awards 2011 Pilot Grant *Dr. Fenghua Hu will research signaling mechanisms of progranulin*

Philadelphia, PA—The Association for Frontotemporal Degeneration (AFTD) recently awarded its 2011 pilot grant for research to Dr. Fenghua Hu, research assistant professor at Cornell University. Dr. Hu will receive \$60,000 for a one-year research term beginning on October 1, 2011 to fund her study of signaling mechanisms of progranulin.

AFTD is a nonprofit organization that provides support for people diagnosed with frontotemporal degeneration (FTD), a form of dementia that strikes people in their 50s-60s and affects behavior, language and/or movement. Because there is no treatment or cure for FTD at this time, AFTD provides support for basic and clinical research in frontotemporal degeneration.

While the cause of FTD is unknown, there are certain genetic mutations that are present in some forms of FTD. In some FTD patients the gene that codes for the protein progranulin becomes mutated, thereby decreasing the level of progranulin in FTD patients. Dr. Hu's research will focus on gaining a better understanding of the normal mechanisms in the cell that control progranulin function, with a goal of identifying potential steps in the process that could be targets for therapeutic intervention.

“We are very happy to be able to support a promising young investigator who is doing important work in revealing the disease process at work,” said Virginia M-Y Lee, Ph.D., who led AFTD's Medical Advisory Council in reviewing the grant applications.

Dr. Hu is also looking forward to starting her research. “I'm very grateful for AFTD's support. This grant will go a long way in helping my research,” said Hu.

For more information on the AFTD 2011 pilot grant award, please contact Angie Maher at amaher@theaftd.org or 267.514.7221.

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The Association for Frontotemporal Degeneration (AFTD) is a not-for-profit organization created in 2002, originally named The Association for Frontotemporal Dementias, to advocate for more funding into the causes and treatments for frontotemporal degeneration (FTD), as well as to provide caregivers and patients with a central place to find information and support. Mounting evidence that these debilitating disorders are more prevalent than was originally thought and the limited information and support available for caregivers and families, along with the lack of funding for research, inspired a group of dedicated caregivers, clinicians, and researchers to create an organization to address these unmet needs.