

**CIRM Invests \$42 Million to Train Next Generation of Stem Cell Scientists**

Posted: January 19, 2016

**January 19, 2016**

**San Francisco, CA** – Science is a never-ending process of discovery and to ensure that California remains in the forefront of those discoveries the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM), California's stem cell institute, today invested more than \$42 million to cultivate the next generation of young scientists.

The CIRM Board voted to approve \$40.13 million for its Bridges to Stem Cell Research and Therapy Awards Program and \$2.31 million for its Summer Program to Accelerate Regenerative Medicine Knowledge (SPARK).

For years national leaders, including President Obama, have warned that without skilled, experienced researchers the U.S. is in danger of losing its global competitiveness in science. But cuts in federal funding for research mean this is a particularly challenging time to begin a scientific career. The Bridges program addresses both issues, supporting young scientists as they get the experience they need to launch their career.

"The goal of the Bridges program is to prepare undergraduate and Master's level students in California for a successful career in stem cell research," says C. Randal Mills, Ph.D., the President and CEO of CIRM. "That's not just a matter of giving them money, but also of giving them good mentors who can help train and guide them, of giving them meaningful engagement with patients and patient advocates, so they have a clear vision of the impact the work they are doing can have on people's lives."

The Bridges program includes:

- Hands on paid research internships
- Training and education in all aspects of stem cell research
- Direct patient engagement and outreach activities engaging California's diverse communities

The program is open to California universities or colleges that don't have a major stem cell research program, and each award supports up to ten trainees a year for up to five years.

The winning Bridges applicants are:

Application #	Institution	ICOC Committed funding
EDUC2-08391	San Francisco State University	\$3,015,479
EDUC2-08397	Humboldt State University	\$3,044,950
EDUC2-08400	City College San Francisco	\$2,163,500
EDUC2-08376	San Diego State University	\$3,045,000
EDUC2-08394	San Jose State University	\$3,045,000
EDUC2-08418	CSU San Bernadino	\$2,698,040

EDUC2-08388	Cal Poly San Luis Obispo	\$2,632,500
EDUC2-08382	CSU Fullerton	\$3,045,000
EDUC2-08398	Pasadena City College	\$3,044,870
EDUC2-08381	CSU Channel Islands	\$3,045,000
EDUC2-08390	CSU Sacramento	\$2,495,000
EDUC2-08383	CSU Long Beach	\$3,045,000
EDUC2-08375	CSU San Marco	\$3,045,000
EDUC2-08411	CSU Northridge	\$2,770,000

"The Bridges program has been incredibly effective in giving young people, often from disadvantaged backgrounds, a shot at a career in science," says Jonathan Thomas, Ph.D., J.D., Chair of the CIRM Board. "Of the 700 students who have completed the program, 95 percent are either working in a lab, enrolled in school or applying to graduate school. Without the Bridges program this kind of career might have been out of reach for many of these students."

The CIRM Board also approved SPARK, an updated version of the Creativity program that provides paid summer research internships for high school students. The new program will include community outreach and direct patient engagement activities, such as helping run a bone marrow or blood donor drive.

"SPARK is all about helping cultivate high school students who are interested in science, and showing them it's possible to have a career doing something they love," says Mills.

The winning SPARK applicants are:

Application #	Institution	ICOC Committed funding
EDUC3-08399	Children's Hospital Oakland Research Institute	\$239,250
EDUC3-08422	UCSF	\$398,750
EDUC3-08407	U.C. Davis	\$398,750
EDUC3-08404	Cedars-Sinai	\$319,000
EDUC3-08387	City of Hope	\$319,000
EDUC3-08431	University of Southern California	\$239,250

EDUC3-08425	Stanford	\$398,750
-------------	----------	-----------

The SPARK award will be funded for up to five years and will support at least five and up to ten students per year.

#### About CIRM

At CIRM, we never forget that we were created by the people of California to accelerate stem cell treatments to patients with unmet medical needs, and act with a sense of urgency to succeed in that mission.

To meet this challenge, our team of highly trained and experienced professionals actively partners with both academia and industry in a hands-on, entrepreneurial environment to fast track the development of today's most promising stem cell technologies.

With \$3 billion in funding and approximately 300 active stem cell programs in our portfolio, CIRM is the world's largest institution dedicated to helping people by bringing the future of cellular medicine closer to reality.

For more information go to [www.cirm.ca.gov](http://www.cirm.ca.gov)

---

**Source URL:** <https://www.cirm.ca.gov/about-cirm/newsroom/press-releases/01192016/cirm-invests-42-million-train-next-generation-stem-cell>