



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Greg Walsh, Walsh Public Relations
T: 203-292-6280; E-Mail: Greg@walshpr.com

Emerging Scientists Awarded Grants to Fund Critical Pancreatic and Pediatric Brain Cancer Research

Greenwich, CT – (November 1, 2025) – The [Hopper-Belmont Foundation](#) (HBF) is honoring four of the nation's most innovative early-career cancer researchers with **the HBF Inspiration Award**. Since the Foundation's inception in 2019, 25 grantees have received crucial support via recognition and funding to advance their research. This year's awards focused on two of the most challenging cancers to treat: pancreatic and pediatric brain cancer.

The 2025 awardees are:

- *Kristin Huntoon, DO, PhD*, University of Arizona College of Medicine, Pediatric Brain Cancer
- *Matthew Gallitto, PhD, MD*, Columbia University Irving Medical Center, Pediatric Brain Cancer
- *Lu Han, PhD*, Medical University of South Carolina, Pancreatic Cancer
- *Agata Patritos, PhD*, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Pancreatic Cancer

"The HBF Inspiration Award has consistently recognized world-class early-career cancer researchers from across the globe," said Ally Hopper, HBF Board Director.

"Each year, we are inspired by the breadth of talent, innovation, and determination shown by our applicants and awardees."

"In today's increasingly competitive funding environment, recognizing and supporting early-career researchers is more important than ever," added Dr. Jason Pitarresi, a Director of HBF's Medical/Scientific Advisory Board and Assistant Professor at UMass Medical School. **"The Inspiration Award provides a critical cornerstone—both in funding and in recognition—that helps young scientists attract additional support and stay motivated in their pursuit of breakthroughs in cancer research."**

Past award recipients have gone on to secure major research funding, publish in highly respected journals, earn professorial roles, and establish their own labs at major oncology centers.

The next grant cycle will open in Spring 2026. For more information or to join the HBF mailing list, visit hopperbelmont.org.

The HBF Inspiration Award is designed to be a launch pad for bright, innovative researchers to gain early-stage financial support for concepts that can change the paradigm of cancer research.

About the Hopper-Belmont Foundation:

Hopper-Belmont Foundation (HBF) is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization focused on identifying, motivating, and supporting exceptional early-career research talent who are pursuing innovative approaches in solving health and wellness challenges. Founded in 2019, by non-profit research and patient advocacy foundation leaders, the HBF created the Inspiration Award as a core initiative of the Foundation. The award, which is peer reviewed, targets senior post-doctoral or clinical fellows (MD, PhD, MD/PhD), or primary investigators in the first three years of their initial faculty appointment, or clinical fellows in the first three years, or post-doctoral faculty in the first three years of tenure. HBF welcomes individuals and families to join their mission and help annually recognize amazing talent that can accelerate the road to cures. Tax-deductible donations can be made directly at www.hopperbelmont.org/donate-now. 100% of donations go directly to support research.