



Washington Research

F O U N D A T I O N

Washington Research Foundation Supports 10 More Postdoctoral Fellows to Work on Areas of Critical Need

Fellows will carry out three-year research projects at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center and University of Washington

Seattle, WA—February 28, 2019

10 new Washington Research Foundation (WRF) Postdoctoral Fellows will begin work throughout 2019 on projects that target areas of critical public need including healthcare, food sustainability and renewable energy. The incoming cohort of Fellows expands the [program](#) that began last year.

The Fellows were chosen from a highly competitive pool of candidates by an external [committee](#) from academia and industry to conduct original research, primarily in the life sciences, at Washington state research institutions. WRF will contribute up to \$277,500 per Fellow for salary, benefits and expenses during the three-year projects.

[Profiles](#) of the 2019 Fellows will be added to WRF's website as their projects begin.

- **Jeremy Baker** completed a doctorate in neuroscience at the University of South Florida School of Medicine and will be developing therapeutics targeting the pathologically aggregating protein tau to disrupt Alzheimer's disease progression at the University of Washington (UW).
- **Samuel Bryson** received a doctorate in microbiology from Oregon State University and will be studying the physiology and ecology of nitrogen-removing microbial consortia to develop a more energy-efficient wastewater treatment process at UW.
- **Denise Buenrostro** completed a doctorate in cancer biology at Vanderbilt University and will be generating T cells at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center (Fred Hutch) that identify and eliminate viruses from patients who have received blood stem cell transplants.
- **Joshua Larson** received a doctorate in biophysics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and will be using fluorescence microscopy and optical-trapping methods to study the mechanisms required for accurate chromosome segregation during cell division at the University of Washington.
- **Caleb Stoltzfus** completed a doctorate in physics at Montana State University and will develop analytical tools to study cellular organization and tissue architecture at UW.
- **James Thomas** received a doctorate in medical sciences from the University of Florida and will be developing molecular tools at Fred Hutch that can reveal which of the thousands of genes misregulated in cancer contribute to disease progression and therapeutic resistance.
- **Levi Todd** completed a doctorate in neuroscience at Ohio State University and will focus his work on improving retinal regeneration by modulating the retinal immune system at UW.
- **Jue Wang** received a doctorate in systems biology from Harvard University and will be engineering microbes to produce biofuels using only carbon dioxide and renewable electricity as inputs at UW.
- **Alison Weber** is completing a doctorate in neuroscience at UW and will investigate how insect nervous systems use limited sensory information from the wings to achieve agile flight control, also at UW.
- **Rachel Welicky** received a doctorate in environmental sciences from Arkansas State University and will be assessing change in the trophic position and nutritional value of Puget Sound fishes at UW.

WRF's support enables Fellows to take advantage of the unique strengths and resources of Washington state institutions.

"The WRF fellowship is allowing me to advance innovative ecological research. Museum specimens are an underutilized resource for understanding ecosystems of the past, so I am using UW's vast fish collection to investigate how the food web interactions and human nutritional value of Puget Sound fishes have changed over the last century," said Rachel Welicky, Ph.D.

Selection committee chair, David Galas, Ph.D., said, "We were again very impressed with the quality of the candidates and their proposals. WRF's three-year fellowships will give these creative young researchers the freedom to make significant progress in their projects. We're very much looking forward to working with these exceptional young scientists and seeing the results of their efforts."

Galas, a principal scientist at the Pacific Northwest Research Institute and WRF director, thanked the committee members for their work during the selection process.

"The committee did an outstanding job in screening, interviewing and selecting Fellows who met the challenge of proposing bold solutions to important problems," said Galas. "Fred Hutch and the University of Washington have stellar reputations, and their facilities and faculty will provide great support for the Fellows."

WRF's CEO, Ron Howell, said, "WRF is focused on impact. We want our grant-making to provide maximum benefit for the public, and the WRF Postdoctoral Fellows are selected for their brilliance, capabilities and their drive to have impact. We're pleased to support these ambitious researchers in their efforts to make a difference."

The WRF Postdoctoral Fellowship program funds up to 10 new researchers each year. The application for Fellowships beginning in 2020 will be available on WRF's website starting on April 22, 2019.

About Washington Research Foundation:

Washington Research Foundation (WRF) supports research and scholarship in Washington state, with a focus on life sciences and enabling technologies.

WRF was formed in 1981 to assist universities and other nonprofit research institutions in Washington state with the commercialization and licensing of their technologies. WRF is recognized as one of the foremost technology transfer and grant-making organizations in the nation, having earned more than \$442 million in licensing revenue for the University of Washington and providing over \$93 million in grants to the state's research institutions to date.

For additional information, please visit www.wrfseattle.org.

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