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Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation and the Brian Morden Foundation Team Up to Fund Childhood Cancer Research

ALTOONA, PA (February 15, 2016) – Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation (ALSF) has partnered with the Brian Morden Foundation (BMF) to fund an ALSF Innovation Grant awarded to John Bushweller, PhD, for his pediatric leukemia and sarcoma research. Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation and The Brian Morden Foundation share a vision of funding childhood cancer research to ultimately find cures for all childhood cancer. This is the first time the two foundations have collaborated to fund a research grant.

John Bushweller, PhD, of the University of Virginia School of Medicine, was awarded ALSF's Innovation Grant in 2015. The BMF has partnered with ALSF to help fund this grant. ALSF's Innovation Grant is designed to provide critical funding for experienced investigators with a promising approach to finding causes and cures for childhood cancers. The Innovation Grant awards Bushweller \$250,000 over the course of two years.

Bushweller's project is based on current research of the protein, ERG, and its relationship to Ewing's sarcoma, T-ALL and acute myeloid leukemia (AML). ERG is altered or produced at abnormally high levels in these three diseases. His project proposes developing inhibitors of ERG as a new approach to treating childhood AML, T-ALL and Ewing's sarcoma.

"I'm thrilled that we are going to be a charity partner with Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation," said Dawn Morden, co-founder and president of the Brian Morden Foundation. "We're both Pennsylvania foundations who are fighting back against childhood cancer because of our children Alex and Brian and also because of so many other children we know who struggle with the same battle. The BMF is especially excited about co-funding the promising research study by Dr. Bushweller from the University of Virginia School of Medicine since many of our local 'BMF kids' have had leukemia and Brian had Ewing's sarcoma."

For more information on Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation's grant programs, visit ALSFgrants.org.

Innovation Grant Summary

John Bushweller, PhD, University of Virginia School of Medicine, Charlottesville, VA
Small Molecule Inhibitors of ERG for Pediatric Leukemia and Sarcoma

Background

Current treatment for childhood acute myeloid leukemia (AML), T-ALL, and Ewing's sarcoma is limited in efficacy and has profound long-term side effects due to the use of traditional cytotoxic agents rather than targeted drugs

inhibiting specific drivers of the diseases. ERG is a protein which reads the DNA and regulates how much of many other proteins is made. ERG is altered or produced at an abnormally high level in Ewing's sarcoma, T-ALL, and AML. Studies in several labs show this alteration of ERG function is important for these diseases.

Project Goal

Therefore, a targeted agent which inhibits ERG, clearly a driver of these diseases, has the potential to improve both survival and quality of life for children with AML, T-ALL, and Ewing's sarcoma. We are proposing to develop inhibitors of ERG as a novel approach to treatment for childhood AML, T-ALL, and Ewing's sarcoma.

About Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation

Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation (ALSF) emerged from the front yard lemonade stand of cancer patient Alexandra "Alex" Scott (1996-2004). In 2000, 4-year-old Alex announced that she wanted to hold a lemonade stand to raise money to help find a cure for all children with cancer. Since Alex held that first stand, the Foundation bearing her name has evolved into a national fundraising movement, complete with thousands of supporters across the country carrying on her legacy of hope. To date, Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation, a registered 501(c)3 charity, has raised more than \$120 million toward fulfilling Alex's dream of finding a cure, funding over 550 pediatric cancer research projects nationally. For more information on Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation, visit AlexsLemonade.org.

About Brian Morden Foundation

Based in Altoona, PA, The Brian Morden Foundation was created to honor Brian, a courageous 19 year-old who battled Ewing's sarcoma for more than two years. He lost the battle on February 15, 2003, but his family, friends, and many others who only knew Brian by reputation have vowed to continue the fight against this horrible disease. The foundation has three goals:

- Fund Ewing's Sarcoma and childhood cancer research
- Support patients, family, and staff of pediatric oncology units
- Provide funding for "Brian Morden Memorial" higher education scholarships

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