FAU Brain Institute Postdoc Granted Young Investigator Award

Boca Raton, Fla. (Oct. 19, 2016) – The scientific work of a postdoctoral fellow at FAU's Brain Institute just got a boost with a two-year $70,000 NARSAD Young Investigator award from the Brain and Behavior Research Foundation.

Matthew Robson, Ph.D., will use this prestigious award to investigate the actions of inflammatory cytokines – a non-antibody protein released by cells on contact with an antigen – and their actions to modulate central nervous system serotonin signaling related to mental illness.

"Receiving this award means a great deal to me," Robson said. "Many notable scientists have received these awards. Being among them is a tremendous honor. Receiving this award will hopefully allow me to make scientific discoveries that eventually lead to new treatments for neuropsychiatric disorders."

"I am very pleased to have recruited Matt to the lab, and to FAU, and this award brings luster to both," said Randy D. Blakely, Ph.D., co-mentor for the award, and founding executive director of the Institute.

"Based on the highly competitive review process, including peer-review by international leaders in neuropsychiatric research, NARSAD Young Investigator awardees commonly become highly successful NIH grantees", said John W. Newcomer, M.D., the other co-mentor for the award, and Vice Dean for Research and Innovation for the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine.

Recent scientific advances have pointed to inflammation and changes in the way the immune system functions and their association with several neuropsychiatric disorders, including depression. The molecular mechanisms that are responsible for these effects are not well characterized. Understanding exactly how these changes in inflammation or immune system function alter the way the brain works may give researchers new avenues for developing treatments for neuropsychiatric disorders, Robson said.

To view a listing of the Young Investigator grantees and their projects, click here.

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