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Nishitha Pillai, MD from the Baylor College of Medicine Receives the 2018-2019 Sanofi Genzyme/ACMG Foundation Next Generation Fellowship Award

BETHESDA, MD – April 11, 2018 | Recognized for her work in Medical Biochemical Genetics, Nishitha Pillai, MD, Baylor College of Medicine was honored as the recipient of the **Sanofi Genzyme/ACMG Foundation Next Generation Fellowship Award** presented by the ACMG Foundation for Genetic and Genomic Medicine during the 2018 ACMG Annual Clinical Genetics Meeting in Charlotte, North Carolina.

The mission of the Sanofi Genzyme/ACMG Foundation Award is to support training programs that advance genetics education, research and standards of practice in medical genetics, to develop and expand clinical and laboratory expertise in medical genetics, and to initiate and develop a broad-based infrastructure for industry funding of high quality projects in the fields of medical genetics. The award grants \$75,000 per year to the recipient's institution selected by the ACMG Foundation through a competitive process and will provide for the sponsorship of one year of the trainees' clinical genetics subspecialty in biochemical genetics following residency.

The awardee will have the opportunity to participate in an in-depth clinical and research experience at a premier medical center with expertise and significant clinical volume in the area of biochemical genetics.

Dr. Pillai is a second-year medical genetics resident at Baylor College of Medicine. She earned her M.B.B.S in Medicine from the University of Calicut in India. She finished her pediatric residency at Inova Fairfax Hospital for Children. She has been involved in multiple clinical studies and *in vitro* studies associated with biochemical genetics. In addition, she has also volunteered to teach medical students and pediatric residents about the common inborn errors of metabolism and their management. Dr. Pillai's recent work has covered disorders caused by novel mutations of the *MTR* gene and variants. She hopes to improve the quality of care using metabolic therapy for patients. Dr. Pillai's ultimate career goal is to work as an attending physician in an academic hospital setting, treating patients with metabolic disorders and conducting translational research investigating new therapies for inborn errors of metabolism.

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"I am greatly honored to receive the Sanofi Genzyme/ACMGF 2018 Next Generation Award. I am very much humbled to join the past recipients whom I have always admired and respected. The biochemical genetics training year will help broaden my knowledge in the field of inborn errors of metabolism and achieve my ultimate goal which is to help patients with metabolic disorders. I also plan to conduct translational research, investigating new therapies for inborn errors of metabolism."

"There remains a great need to train specialists in biochemical genetics, an area where there is increasing ability to provide treatment to critically ill patients. The Sanofi/Genzyme ACMG Foundation Clinical Genetics Award in Clinical Biochemical Genetics is an important investment toward building this workforce," said Bruce R. Korf, MD, PhD, FACMG, president of the ACMG Foundation.

The ACMG Foundation is honored to have Sanofi Genzyme as a member of its Corporate Partners Program. For more information about the Corporate Partners Program and other ways to support the work of the ACMG Foundation, please visit www.acmgfoundation.org.

The ACMG Foundation for Genetic and Genomic Medicine (ACMGF) is a community of supporters and contributors who understand the importance of medical genetics and genomics in healthcare. A non-profit organization established in 1992, the Foundation supports the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics (ACMG) mission to "translate genes into health"; to foster charitable giving, promote training opportunities to attract future medical geneticist and genetic counselors, to share information about medical genetics, to sponsor important research and much more.

To learn more and support the ACMGF mission to create "Better Health through Genetics", please contact Nicole O. Bell, ACMG Foundation Manager, at nbell@acmg.net or (301) 718-9604 or visit acmgfoundation.org.

Note to editors: To arrange interviews with experts in medical genetics, contact Kathy Moran, MBA, ACMG Director of Public Relations at kmoran@acmg.net.

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