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**Catherine A. Ziats, MD Receives 2021 ACMG Foundation/  
David L. Rimoin Inspiring Excellence Award**

**BETHESDA, MD – April 14, 2021** | The ACMG Foundation for Genetic and Genomic Medicine is proud to present the **ACMG Foundation/David L. Rimoin Inspiring Excellence Award** to Catherine A. Ziats, MD for her platform presentation, “Alterations in respiratory epithelial gene *SPDEF* segregate with severe disease in a family with variable response to COVID-19 infection.”

Dr. Ziats is in her second year of Medical Genetics training at the Greenwood Genetic Center in Greenwood, SC. She completed her medical school training at the University of Florida and her internship at the University of Michigan. She has had a longtime interest in adult and pediatric neurological disorders and her research has focused on neurodevelopmental disorders.

“We are pleased to recognize Dr. Ziats as this year’s David L. Rimoin Inspiring Excellence Award winner. Training and mentorship were key cornerstones of Dr. Rimoin’s career and we are proud to honor his legacy in making this award to an accomplished genetics trainee,” said Bruce R. Korf, MD, PhD, FACMG, president of the ACMG Foundation for Genetic and Genomic Medicine.

The David L. Rimoin Inspiring Excellence Award was created in memory of the late Dr. David L. Rimoin, one of the founders of the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics (ACMG) who died in 2012. Dr. Rimoin touched the lives of generations of patients as well as trainees and colleagues. The award is a cash award given to a selected student, trainee or junior faculty ACMG member whose abstract submission was chosen for a platform presentation to be given at the ACMG Annual Clinical Genetics Meeting.

Upon receiving the award, Dr. Ziats said, “I am very honored and grateful to have received the prestigious David L. Rimoin Inspiring Excellence Award and for the recognition by the ACMG. Importantly, I am extremely grateful to the family members who agreed to participate in this study, who despite their difficult time found it important to attempt to advance our knowledge on host genetic factors associated with severe COVID-19 infection. I am also very grateful for the support and training I have received at the Greenwood Genetic Center, and for the help and collaboration of other GGC researchers who helped with this project. To help promote further similar endeavors and ongoing work, I intend to donate the award money to the Greenwood Genetic Center Foundation.”

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Dr. Ann Garber-Rimoin, Dr. Rimoin's widow, said, "Dr. Ziats has combined her medical and scientific research interests with COVID-19, the most critical public health care concern in recent history. Her decision to donate the award money to the Greenwood Genetic Center Foundation further demonstrates her generous character, which will go far with her future collaborative efforts. The Rimoin family is happy to acknowledge her accomplishments and pleased to congratulate her as the recipient of the David L. Rimoin Inspiring Excellence Award."

### **About the ACMG Foundation for Genetic and Genomic Medicine**

The ACMG Foundation for Genetic and Genomic Medicine, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, is a community of supporters and contributors who understand the importance of medical genetics and genomics in healthcare. Established in 1992, the ACMG Foundation supports the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics (ACMG) mission to "translate genes into health." Through its work, the ACMG Foundation fosters charitable giving, promotes training opportunities to attract future medical geneticists and genetic counselors to the field, shares information about medical genetics and genomics, and sponsors important research. To learn more and support the ACMG Foundation mission to create "Better Health through Genetics" visit [acmgfoundation.org](http://acmgfoundation.org).

**Note to editors:** To arrange interviews with experts in medical genetics, contact ACMG Senior Director of Communications and Public Relations Kathy Moran, MBA at [kmoran@acmg.net](mailto:kmoran@acmg.net).

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