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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### AWARDS FOR DRUG DISCOVERY RESEARCH FOR FRONTOTEMPORAL DEMENTIA ANNOUNCED

New York City, NY (April 6, 2010) - The Alzheimer's Drug Discovery Foundation (ADDF) and the Association for Frontotemporal Dementias (AFTD) announced today the recipients of their third annual research award, *Frontotemporal Dementia Drug Discovery Program*. The goal of the program is to accelerate the development of novel therapies for frontotemporal dementia (FTD). The program will provide a total of \$1,200,000 in research grants over four years.

The ADDF/AFTD program awarded \$300,000 to three academic scientists on the cutting edge of research for FTD. The award winners are: Philip Van Damme, MD, PhD, VIB, Leuven University (Belgium); Einar M. Sigurdsson, PhD, New York University School of Medicine; and W. Haung Yu, PhD, The Taub Institute of Columbia University Medical Center. An independent panel of 13 experts from ADDF's Scientific Review Board and AFTD's Medical Advisory Council evaluated 16 applications submitted from around the world.

"There is great potential for results from these projects to have applications to a broad array of neurodegenerative diseases in addition to AD and FTD," said Howard Fillit, MD, ADDF Executive Director. "This underscores the mutual benefit of partnering with AFTD in drug research."

FTD is a devastating form of dementia characterized by profound changes in behavior, personality, language and movement. Indeed, it is the second most common cause of dementia under the age of 60 years, most frequently having its onset between the ages of 40 and 65. As with Alzheimer's disease, there are no drugs to treat, prevent or cure FTD.

"As new information is gathered on the underlying causes of FTD more potential avenues for treatment are revealed," said Phil Lovett, AFTD Board member and Research Liaison. "This year's recipients are all engaged in the type of research that offers both caregivers and patients the optimism they need to face the challenges of living with FTD. We are proud to be partnering with ADDF to support their work and the hope it brings to those suffering from this terrible disease."

#### **About the Alzheimer's Drug Discovery Foundation**

The ADDF ([www.AlzDiscovery.org](http://www.AlzDiscovery.org)) is the only public charity whose sole mission is to accelerate the discovery and development of drugs to prevent, treat and cure Alzheimer's disease, related dementias and cognitive aging. The ADDF uses a venture philanthropy model to bridge the worldwide funding gap between basic research and later-stage development, using any return on investment to support new research. Since 1998, the ADDF has granted more than \$40 million to fund over 295 Alzheimer's drug discovery programs in academic centers and biotechnology companies in 15 countries.

#### **About the Association for Frontotemporal Dementias (AFTD)**

The Association for Frontotemporal Dementias (AFTD) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to: promote and fund **research** into finding the cause, therapies, and cures for the frontotemporal dementias; provide **information, education** and **support** to persons diagnosed with frontotemporal dementias (FTD),

their families and caregivers; **educate** physicians and allied health professionals about the FTDs and how to improve patient care; bring about greater **public awareness** of the nature and prevalence of the frontotemporal dementias and the needs of those who are coping with them; **advocate** with public officials and promote public and private programs that provide appropriate, affordable and high-quality long term health care and social services.

In addition to providing funding for this drug discovery program, AFTD continues to fund basic and clinical research that is essential to improving our understanding of this relatively rare, but significant disease. For more information about AFTD, visit [www.ftd-picks.org](http://www.ftd-picks.org).

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