

The Pablove Foundation Announces 2024 Childhood Cancer Research Grant Recipients

Three Pioneering Pediatric Cancer Researchers Awarded Funding for Exceptional Science



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2024 CHILDHOOD CANCER RESEARCH GRANTEES

Los Angeles, California Jan 16, 2024 ([IssueWire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - [The Pablove Foundation's 2024 Childhood Cancer Research Grant Recipients](#) were announced today, awarding funding to three leading cancer researchers. This year's recipients are: Eunice Lopez Fuentes PhD of the University of California, San Francisco, Inga-Marie Schaefer MD of Brigham and Women's Hospital, Boston, MA and Aasef G. Shaikh MD, PhD of Functional Electrical Stimulation Institute, Cleveland, OH.

The grants were selected by The Pablove Foundation's esteemed Scientific Advisory Committee based on their scientific excellence in addressing pressing issues faced by kids with cancer.

"This year is extra special as these grants were funded in partnership with cancer families as part of Pablove's Fund-Your-Own Research model," says Emily Keith, Executive Director of The Pablove

Foundation.

Pablove's Fund-Your-Own Research Grants program allows advocates to mobilize fundraising around a specific type of cancer research, as directed by Pablove's Scientific Advisory Committee. The Burns, The Horvaths and The Viswanathas, three families directly impacted by childhood cancer, helped provide the funds necessary to support these groundbreaking proposals.

Pablove's seed grants provide initial funding that allows young investigators with bold ideas to collect the data necessary to qualify for large-scale federal grants or other funding sources. Each grantee receives a \$50,000-\$100,000 seed grant to fund their proposal, with the potential to extend funding based on their scientific work.

"Cancer is the leading cause of death by disease in children and teens. The need for innovation in the childhood cancer community is real and urgent. Pablove continues to power the next wave of scientific progress because our kids deserve more. We are proud to connect brilliant researchers with the funding necessary to advance safer treatments and cures. Our grants exist so that every parent of a child diagnosed with cancer has the hope to watch them grow into a healthy, happy adult. All three of these projects have the potential to add to that hope," says Keith.

Dr. Lopez Fuentes' research at the University of California San Francisco seeks to unravel how Osteosarcoma develops and to identify targets for therapeutic intervention. There is an urgent need for novel combination therapies in Osteosarcoma. If successful, Dr. Lopez Fuentes' studies could establish a new paradigm for the design of clinical trials. This grant was funded in partnership with The Burns family of Wilmington, Delaware, whose 9-year old son, Gavin, was diagnosed with Ewing Sarcoma in 2022: undergoing a difficult treatment of chemotherapy, radiation, and a below-knee amputation.

"We're so incredibly proud to be able to take our difficult situation and turn it into something that could potentially change how we treat bone cancer. Our kids deserve better treatment options, and we are incredibly grateful to our community for supporting our goal to make a difference," said Jonelle Burns, Gavin's mom.

The project led by Inga-Marie Schaefer MD of Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston will study uniquely developed sarcoma cell lines to shed light on how the disease develops in kids. The work will leverage the first-ever patient-derived preclinical models of CIC-rearranged sarcoma to identify biologic vulnerabilities. If successful, the results would pave the way for a clinical trial evaluating urgently-needed targeted therapies for patients with this aggressive sarcoma. This grant is funded in partnership with The Horvath family of Lexington, MA, whose 12-year-old son, Colby, is a childhood cancer survivor and passionate advocate.

"We are thrilled to fund our second research grant with the Pablove Foundation. Colby's journey has fueled our collective determination that curing childhood cancer should not be a possibility, but a promise. Every dollar we fundraise contributes to a brighter future for children like Colby. We are looking forward to seeing how Dr. Schafer's research will impact childhood sarcoma treatment," says Courtney Horvath, Colby's mom.

Dr. Aasef G. Shaikh's project at the Functional Electrical Stimulation Institute in Cleveland, OH uses computer simulation models to further our understanding of Opsoclonus and identify potential treatment targets. This will expand our understanding of what causes the brain to 'short circuit' and not be able to 'turn off' the chaotic involuntary shaking of the eyes associated with OMS. This 2-year grant was funded in partnership with The Viswanathas, a Bay-area family whose daughter, Keira, is affected by the rare

autoimmune disorder associated with Neuroblastoma.

This year marks **\$3.8 Million** invested across **56 total seed grants** awarded by The Pablove Foundation. Pablove continues to advance safer, less-toxic treatments and improve the quality of life for kids with cancer. Every grant we fund is a new opportunity to better understand childhood cancer and ways to eradicate it. For a full listing of grants visit: pablove.org/grants.

To learn more about how families, businesses and other organizations can fund-their-own childhood cancer research through Pablove, visit: pablove.org/fund-your-own-grant/

About The Pablove Foundation

[The Pablove Foundation](http://pablove.org) is named after a little boy named Pablo who at age 6 lost his valiant year-long battle with Wilms Tumor. The mission of The Pablove Foundation is to invest in underfunded, cutting-edge pediatric cancer research and improve the lives of kids with cancer through the arts. For more information visit pablove.org.



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