

## **Rutgers University Neuro Engineering Group (RUNEG) Awards First Faculty Seed Grants**

RUNEG, whose aim is to jumpstart research collaborations between faculty and industry to advance translation has awarded its first ever seed fund grants to Rutgers faculty and their industrial sponsors.

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Dr. Kibum Lee (Rutgers University), Dr. Hilton Kaplan (Rutgers University) and their industrial sponsor received the very first seed fund grant from the Rutgers University Neuro-Engineering Group in late July. The grant will provide financial support allowing the researchers to develop a nano-particle based synthetic transcription factor, to stimulate the expression of neuronal switch genes in stem cells, which can ultimately generate neurons. The technology described will potentially be used to regenerate nerves, a huge unmet clinical need.

Dr. Melitta Schachner (Rutgers University) and her industrial sponsor received the second Seed Grant Fund from RUNEG in early October. The goal of her research is to launch pilot animal model studies, using transgenic mice, to ultimately find a treatment for genetic neurodegenerative disorders such as Alzheimer's, Huntington's and ALS.

The seed funds help foster collaborative and interdisciplinary research, to facilitate translational science in the development of devices that enhance central and peripheral nerve regeneration, restoration of motor and sensory function, and transmission of neural signals by brain-computer interfaces. With the help of industrial partners, RUNEG seeks to accelerate the transfer and commercialization of inventions and technologies into clinically useful products and therapies.

Media Contact:

Kristen Ryan

[kohnoffice@dls.rutgers.edu](mailto:kohnoffice@dls.rutgers.edu)

New Jersey Center for Biomaterials  
145 Bevier Rd, Piscataway NJ 08854