



The ARSACS Foundation Announces Collaboration with University of Saskatchewan For Research on Ataxia of Charlevoix-Saguenay

MONTREAL, November 2016 - The Ataxia of Charlevoix-Saguenay Foundation announces a co-funding collaboration and alliance with the University of Saskatchewan, recognizing the determination, dedication and strong support from the Richardson Family Fund, to advance medical research on ataxia of Charlevoix-Saguenay.

The expansive research project entitled "***Analyzing the influence of ARSACS mutations on the function of human neurons derived from induced pluripotent stem cells.***" has multiple objectives but it will primarily focus on using genome editing of hiPSCs to test the hypothesis that point mutations in the SACS gene lead to alterations in mitochondrial function and neurofilament organization in neurons derived from ARSACS patients. This collaboration will basically explore the use of genome editing of hiPSCs to test the hypothesis that point mutations in the SACS gene lead to alterations in mitochondrial function and neurofilament organization in neurons derived from ARSACS patients. Such work will be performed by **Drs. Peter McPherson** Ph.D., FRSC (Montreal Neurological Institute, McGill University) and **Edward Fon** MD, FRCP (Montreal Neurological Institute, McGill University) who's expertise will (I) generate genome-edited neurons from fibroblasts of ARSACS patients and (II) examine the influence of saccin mutations on the cell biological properties of human neurons. "*Sharing the same goals with the Richardson family and joining forces with them was crucial to initiate this promising research project*", states Jean Groleau, cofounder of the ARSACS Foundation.

The alliance with the University of Saskatchewan reinforces the Ataxia of Charlevoix-Saguenay Foundation's commitment towards finding a treatment for ataxia of Charlevoix-Saguenay, a rare neurological disorder prevalent in the province of Quebec but reported in several countries in the world. "*We are very excited to be involved in the funding of this impressive project. Much of the credit for this involvement belongs to the Ataxia Charlevoix-Saguenay Foundation for including Dr. Huntsman and us in their last ARSACS Symposium. We are hopeful and excited about this inter-provincial collaboration with the University of Saskatchewan*" indicates Larry Richardson.