



BULLETIN



CANADIAN GENETIC DISEASES NETWORK

CANADIAN GENETICS RESEARCH COMMUNITY LAUNCHES NEW \$1 MILLION NATIONAL STUDENTSHIP PROGRAM

March 5, 2002: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: The Canadian Gene Cure Foundation (CGCF), the CIHR Institute of Genetics (IG) and the Canadian Genetic Diseases Network (CGDN) today issued a national request for applications for The Jessie Boyd and Charles Scriver MD/PhD Studentship Awards. The studentships program is a new \$1 million six-year initiative jointly sponsored by the three organizations in support of building Canadian capacity of clinician scientists in genetics and genetic-related diseases.

The award is named for two leading Canadian physicians. Jessie Boyd graduated from McGill in Medicine in 1922 in the first class to accept women students. She was an active practitioner, academic and author, well into her 9th decade. Charles, her son, is a clinician scientist who is a pioneer in the transition from 'traditional' medicine to gene-based medicine.

The new fund will provide a minimum of eight scholarships for outstanding students enrolled in the MD/PhD training program at Canadian universities. The successful candidates will be accepted into research training in medical genetics, bioinformatics, bioethics of medical genetics, population genetics, translational genetics or fundamental biochemical research in healthy and disease states.

Each scholarship will be valued at \$20,500 and will be awarded for a maximum of six years. MD/PhD students studying in Canada will be eligible for the award at any stage of their MD/PhD training. The first awards are expected to be made in September 2002 by a review panel.

Dr. Rod McInnes, Scientific Director of the CIHR Institute of Genetics, said "We anticipate that the The Jessie Boyd and Charles Scriver MD/PhD Studentship Awards will increase the number of students focusing on genetics and genetic-related diseases in MD/PhD programs, and will stimulate interest in careers as a clinician scientist."

Dr. Ron Woznow, CEO of the Canadian Genetic Diseases Network and Chair of the Canadian Gene Cure Foundation said "Both CGDN and CGCF are delighted to support this unique Canadian partnership which honors the dedication of the

Scrivers to understanding and treating genetic disease.” He said that the long term outcome will be the discovery of cures for rare and common diseases.

The Canadian Gene Cure Foundation was established to find cures for genetic diseases and disorders by raising funds in support of collaborative research. The Foundation organizes Jeans for Genes Day¹, a national fund raising campaign in support of the The Jessie Boyd and Charles Scriver MD/PhD Studentship Awards. In 2001, Jeans for Genes Day¹ raised \$60,400. The 2002 campaign will be held September 26 (www.genecure.ca).

The Institute of Genetics is one of thirteen new institutes within the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR). It is Canada's premier federal agency for health research. Its objective is to excel, according to internationally accepted standards of scientific excellence, in the creation of new knowledge and its translation into improved health for Canadians, more effective health services and products and a strengthened Canadian health care system.

The Canadian Genetic Diseases Network is a not-for-profit corporation and a member of the federal Networks of Centres of Excellence program. Its mission is to be the primary catalyst in advancing Canada's scientific competitiveness in genetic research and the application of genetic discoveries to the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of human disease.

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