

3 cancer researchers get \$15,000 grants

The Cancer Association of Greater New Orleans, a United Way community impact partner, awarded \$15,000 each to three innovative cancer research projects proposed by local scientists in the New Orleans medical community: **Jong Kim**, assistant professor of pathology at LSU Health Science Center; **Xiaochang Peng**, assistant research scientist at Ochsner Clinic Foundation; and **Nitsa Rosenzweig**, assistant professor for research at the University of New Orleans. The grants provide "seed money" to scientists to help them initiate pilot programs.

"By agreeing to be the initial investor for uninvestigated projects, CAGNO is breaking down a major obstacle that many scientists face when trying to conduct research on a project or topic that has never been done before," CAGNO Executive Director Phyllis Embrey said. "All three research grants emphasized the development and testing of new approaches and ideas that will generate data needed for larger-scale projects, studies and national funding."

Kim's research project is designed to shed light on the relationship between prostate cancer cell growth and steroid hormones.

Peng's research project aims



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to provide insight into in-depth molecular mechanisms of lymphoma in humans. Lymphoma is a broad term encompassing a variety of cancers of the lymphatic system, a subsystem of the circulatory system.

Rosenzweig's research project, underwritten by the Louisiana Breast Cancer Task Force, focuses on drug-containing collagen nanoparticles, a new strategy for cancer chemotherapy. That project aims to enable scientists to summarize anti-cancer drugs in nanoparticles for the long term. Nanoparticles are targeted to cancer cells for use in the molecular imaging of malignant cancer areas. That lets doctors and researchers view cells and molecules that otherwise could not be detected through conventional imaging. By targeting the drugs specifically to the cancer tissues, the side effects from chemotherapy treatment are minimized.

The association, one of 61 United Way community impact partners, has been leading the local fight against cancer since 1959. It is committed to financing only local cancer researchers to stimulate interest in the local medical community to promote economic growth in the New Orleans area. For information on CAGNO, visit its Web site at www.cagno.org.