

Our Mission:

Bedford Stem Cell Research Foundation (BSCRF) is a Massachusetts 501(c)(3) public charity and biomedical institute existing to conduct stem cell and related research for diseases and conditions that currently have no cure.

What We Do:

The BSCRF conducts research and development in three principal areas: stem cells, prostate disease and HIV/AIDS.

Stem Cells: Since September 2000, the BSCRF has maintained the country's only human egg donor program established for stem cell research. Recent advances in stem cell biology have put within reach the possibility of cures for conditions such as Parkinson's disease, spinal cord injury, heart disease and diabetes. A principal problem facing scientists is a source of stem cells with the broad range of developmental potential ("pluripotent") needed for critical research. Although controversial, the use of human eggs is currently the most efficient way to generate pluripotent stem cells. BSCRF scientists are vigorously pursuing the possibility of generating pluripotent stem cells from unfertilized human eggs, encouraged by BSCRF Trustee Dr. Jose Cibelli's success with monkey eggs. In parallel, BSCRF scientists are developing efficient methods to differentiate human pluripotent stem cells into essential cell types, such as nerves and immune cells.

Prostate Disease: Current research is expanding diagnostic capabilities of semen specimens to identify cancer and infections of the prostate. BSCRF scientists have developed the first comprehensive library of bacteria types detectable in semen specimens by state-of-the-art molecular biology techniques. This work is funded primarily through The Robert C. Eyre Research Fund. Dr. Eyre, one of the BSCRF's medical researchers, is a leading urologic surgeon studying the etiology, diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the genitourinary tract, including infections and cancers of the prostate, kidney and bladder.

HIV/AIDS: In 1996 the BSCRF began a Special Program of Assisted Reproduction (SPAR) to help men infected with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) father children without transmitting the virus to mothers or babies. The program required BSCRF sponsorship because of federal statutes prohibiting funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for research involving fertilized human eggs. A corollary of SPAR is the BSCRF's Small Grants Program, designed to provide funds for scientists to conduct fundamental research to improve the safety and efficiency of the IVF process for mothers and babies.

- More -

Who We Are:

Ann A. Kiessling, PhD, Associate Professor, Harvard Medical School, directs the BSCRF's research. A world-renowned expert in HIV/AIDS and stem cell biology, Dr. Kiessling has published more than 100 scientific papers and the first textbook on human embryonic stem cells. The work of the BSCRF is guided by its Board of Trustees, made up of medical, legal and other experienced professionals including Professor Jose Cibelli of Michigan State University, a pioneer in stem cell research; and Chairman Alan S. Geismer, Esq., of the law firm Sugarman, Rogers, Barshak & Cohen. The BSCRF consults its Ethics Advisory Board chaired by Arthur Applbaum, Professor of Ethics and Public Policy at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. Carol M. Warner, Matthews Distinguished Professor of Biology at Northeastern University, is chair of the BSCRF's Science Committee.

Brief History:

The BSCRF began its work in 1996. Its initial project, the Special Program of Assisted Reproduction (SPAR), was created to facilitate healthy conception for couples whose male partner was infected with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). The first SPAR baby was born healthy and infection-free in 1999. Since then, more than 40 healthy babies have been born through SPAR with the help of almost two-dozen collaborating clinics nationwide. In addition to breakthroughs in HIV, the BSCRF's SPAR research led to the creation of innovative methods of testing for diseases of the male genital tract, including the prostate. Success and expertise in fertility research and treatment lead to BSCRF scientists implementing the first human egg donor program for stem cell research in September 2000.

Why We Do It:

The BSCRF exists to advance science and improve human lives. A 200-fold growth since its inception, and an active pool of women hoping to donate eggs for stem cell research, are testament to the excitement and importance of program goals. Through continued education and intense research efforts, the BSCRF will change the pace of progress for diseases that currently have no cure. A moratorium on federal funding for crucial areas of biomedical research means public charities like the BSCRF are the only means of bridging the gap between what the government supports and what people need. Now more than ever, the BSCRF's innovative, cost-effective research efforts are essential for the development of life-saving procedures and cures.

How We Do It:

Bedford Stem Cell Research BSCRF is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) Massachusetts public charity. The BSCRF has far lower operating costs than larger institutions, meaning more research results from every donation received. The BSCRF relies on the insightful generosity of corporations, organizations and individuals to continue its vital work.

How You Can Help:

Support the BSCRF by joining a network of hundreds of donors helping to shape the future of science and medicine. Financial contributions can be designated for specific programs such as stem cell or prostate research, or can go toward general research and operating costs. Each egg donor experiment costs \$35,000, and BSCRF scientists hope to conduct 50 experiments in 2005-2006 in order to discover urgently needed treatments. Donations can be given in honor or in memory of a friend, colleague or family member. Volunteers, in-kind and other support are always welcome. If you would like to help, please contact us via phone: 617-623-5670; fax: 617-623-9447; mail: P. O. Box 1028, Bedford, MA, 01730; e-mail: info@bedfordresearch.org; or visit www.bedfordresearch.org. All inquiries are confidential.

###