



The Thoracic Surgery Foundation (TSF)  
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Chicago, IL 60611  
312-202-5868  
[www.thoracicsurgeryfoundation.org](http://www.thoracicsurgeryfoundation.org)

## PRESS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **TSF Announces \$951,500 in Funding for Cardiothoracic Surgery Grants for 2019**

*Projects will help develop new heart and lung surgery options and provide treatment to underserved populations*

CHICAGO, IL (February 27, 2019) – The Thoracic Surgery Foundation (TSF) has announced 24 new grants totaling \$916,500 in support of research and education programs in cardiothoracic surgery. These grants will help advance treatment options for patients with heart and lung diseases and offer much-needed assistance to underserved patients in developing countries, including Kenya, Mongolia, Nepal, Nigeria, Rwanda, and Uganda. The Foundation expects to distribute additional educational and travel scholarships awards for cardiothoracic surgeons in June, making TSF’s annual award total an estimated \$951,500.

“Choosing the 24 grant recipients was a tough decision; many worthy funding applications were received, and the selected 24 rose to the top,” said TSF President Joseph E. Bavaria, MD. “The results from these projects will help us understand more about the biology and treatment of heart and lung diseases. The contributions of these award recipients to cardiothoracic surgery and our patients will be significant.”

Dr. Bavaria was elected TSF President on January 26, 2019. He is Past President of The Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS) and currently serves as Chair of the STS/ACC TVT Registry Steering Committee. He also is the Brooke Roberts-William M. Measey Professor of Surgery, Vice-Chief of the Division of Cardiovascular Surgery, and Director/Founder of the Thoracic Aortic Surgery Program at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. Dr. Bavaria is an enthusiastic supporter of STS and its charitable arm—TSF. He is committed to helping advance the TSF mission of fostering the development of surgeon scientists in cardiothoracic surgery, increasing knowledge and innovation to benefit patient care.

The TSF Board of Directors voted unanimously to support the following projects for 2019:

#### **RESEARCH:**

Mallory L. Irons, MD

Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania

“A Novel Assessment of the Effects of Chronic Hypoxia on Brain Development in Utero: Utilizing a Fetal Sheep Model to Identify Clinically Translatable Targets for the Treatment of Congenital Heart Disease”

Nina Starr Braunwald Research Fellowship Award, \$60,000

Arman Kilic, MD

University of Pittsburgh

“Evaluating the Predictive Utility of Machine Learning Algorithms in Adult Cardiac Surgery”

TSF Research Award, \$80,000

Amine Mazine, MD

University of Toronto

“Generation of Human Pluripotent Stem Cell-Derived Left Ventricular Cardiomyocytes for the Treatment of Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome”

TSF Resident Research Fellowship Award, \$60,000

Gita N. Mody, MD

University of North Carolina

“Improving Lung Cancer Surgery Using Patient Centered Outcomes”

TSF Research Award, \$80,000

Philicia Moonsamy, MD

Massachusetts General Hospital

“Trial of a Novel Oral Anticoagulant vs. Warfarin in New Onset Atrial Fibrillation after Cardiac Surgery”

Nina Starr Braunwald Research Fellowship Award, \$30,000

Laura M. Piechura, MD

Brigham and Women’s Hospital

“Targeting the Innate Immune System to Mitigate Primary Graft Dysfunction via Ex Vivo Lung Perfusion”

TSF Resident Research Fellowship Award, \$60,000

Vignesh Raman, MD

Duke University

“Elucidating the Genome of Large Cell Lung Neuroendocrine Cancer”

TSF Resident Research Fellowship Award, \$30,000

Lillian L. Tsai, MD

The Johns Hopkins Hospital

“An Implantable Microdevice for Personalized Chemotherapy to Prevent Recurrence in Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer”

Southern Thoracic Surgical Association (STSA) Resident Research Award, \$60,000

Jonathan C. Yeung, MD, PhD

University of Toronto

“Personalizing Therapy for Esophageal Adenocarcinoma using Patient Derived Cancer Organoids”

STS Research Award, \$80,000

Yuanjia Zhu, MD

Stanford University

“Bioengineered Autologous Cytokine-Eluting Arterialized Conduits using Tri-layered Cell Sheet Technology”

TSF Resident Research Fellowship Award, \$60,000

## **EDUCATION:**

Leah Backhus, MD

Stanford University

“Pectus Repair Traveling Scholarship”

The Levi Watkins Innovation and Leadership Development Scholarship, \$5,000

Crystal J. Erickson, MD

UCHealth Memorial Hospital

“Pectus Excavatum Repair in the Adult Patient”

Carolyn E. Reed Traveling Fellowship Award, \$3,000

Amy G. Fiedler, MD

University of Wisconsin

“Cardiac Transplantation, Advanced Circulatory Support, and Translational Heart Failure Research at Duke University”

Carolyn E. Reed Traveling Fellowship Award, \$9,000

Ashleigh A. LeBlanc

Doernbecher Children’s Hospital at Oregon Health & Science University

Sarns Terumo Perfusion Fellowship Award, \$10,000

Damien J. LaPar, MD

Columbia University

“Complex Pulmonary Artery Reconstruction and Unifocalization Surgical Fellowship”

Robert L. Replogle Traveling Fellowship Award, \$10,000

Aaron J. Spooner, MD

Libin Cardiovascular Institute  
“Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement”  
Michael J. Davidson Fellowship Award, \$25,000

Monisha Sudarshan, MD  
Mayo Clinic  
“Launching an Esophageal Disease Epidemiology and Outcomes Program”  
Carolyn E. Reed Traveling Fellowship Award, \$4,500

**SURGICAL OUTREACH MISSIONS:**

Adanna C. Akujuo, MD  
Albany Medical Center  
“VOOM Foundation Open-Heart Cardiac Surgery Program in Nigeria”  
TSF Every Heartbeat Matters Award, \$35,000

Ralph M. Bolman, III, MD  
University of Vermont  
“Advancing Cardiac Care for Rheumatic Heart Disease in Rwanda”  
TSF Every Heartbeat Matters Award, \$37,500

Lyle D. Joyce, MD, PhD  
Medical College of Wisconsin  
“Meeting the Challenge of Rheumatic Valve Disease in Kenya”  
TSF Every Heartbeat Matters Award, \$35,000

Jeffrey D. McNeil, MD  
Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgeons, PA  
“VOOM Foundation – Continued Development of Cardiac Surgery Program in Enugu, Nigeria”  
TSF Every Heartbeat Matters Award, \$35,000

Jay D. Pal, MD  
University of Colorado  
“Enhancing Access to Care and Treatment of Cardiovascular Disease in Nepal”  
TSF Every Heartbeat Matters Award, \$37,500

Craig Selzman, MD  
University of Utah Health  
“Mongolia Cardiac Surgery Program”  
TSF Every Heartbeat Matters Award, \$35,000

Pranava Sinha, MD  
Children’s National Health System  
“Management of Rheumatic Heart Disease in Uganda”  
TSF Every Heartbeat Matters Award, \$35,000

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The Thoracic Surgery Foundation is a pivotal force for growth and vitality in cardiothoracic surgery, especially for research and academic career development, awarding more than \$17 million in cardiothoracic surgery research and education grants. The Foundation was first established in 1988 as a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit charitable organization and is the charitable arm of The Society of Thoracic Surgeons. The mission of TSF is to foster the development of surgeon scientists in cardiothoracic surgery; increasing knowledge and innovation to benefit patient care. If you would like to learn more about TSF grants or apply for a research or education award, please visit [thoracicsurgeryfoundation.org](http://thoracicsurgeryfoundation.org).

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