The mission of the Pelvic Floor Disorders (PFD) Research Foundation is to transform the lives of women through the support of innovative and effective research that advances the prevention, treatment and cure of female pelvic floor disorders.

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“The PFD Research Foundation afforded me the support that I needed to help launch my academic career and to gain prestige for additional sources of funding.”

Anne Suskind, MD
2011 Thomas Benson Award in Neuromodulation Recipient
Every contribution to the PFD Research Foundation builds a stronger future for female pelvic medicine and reconstructive surgery and is a great way to honor the work and passion of those we respect.

A total of $112,494 in contributions was raised by individuals and corporate supporters in 2017.

This year, 258 individuals contributed to support the PFD Research Foundation, representing 14 percent of the AUGS membership.

Source of Funds

Corporate and Partner: 44%

Individual: 56%

Corporate and Partner contributions: $50,000

Individual contributions: $62,494

Total: $112,494

Grant Dollars awarded by year

2006 $114,000
2007 $164,000
2008 $185,000
2009 $185,000
2010 $192,000
2011 $240,000
2012/2013 $195,000
2014 $145,000
2015 $110,000
2016 $75,000
2017 $75,000

Recent Grant Recipient AUGS Abstract Presentations

# Grant Recipients Subsequent Abstracts Presented

2011
2012/2013
2014
2015
2016
The PFD Research Foundation, together with the June Allyson Foundation, has awarded more than $1.5 million in grants to American Urogynecologic Society (AUGS) members since 1997. The Foundation serves the medical profession by supporting promising, innovative research regarding the causes, prevention, treatment and cure of pelvic floor disorders.

In 2017, the Foundation’s research funds were made available to qualified OB/GYN and urology fellows and junior faculty to pursue their research. The goals of this research grant program are to support the completion of research projects which will lead to publications and presentations at PFD Week (AUGS’ Annual Scientific Meeting) and to support the development of junior researchers in the field who will go on to obtain additional funding for future research on pelvic floor disorders.

In 2017, the Foundation offered the following grants:

**PFD Research Foundation Faculty Research Award**
A two-year grant awarded to a junior faculty or affiliate member for clinical/patient-oriented, educational, or lab-based/basic science research.

**June Allyson Memorial Fund Research Award**
A two-year grant awarded to a fellow for lab-based/basic science research.

### Foundation Grant Recipients

**PFD RESEARCH FOUNDATION FACULTY RESEARCH AWARD**

Mary Ackenbom, MD  
University of Pittsburgh Medical Center  
Postoperative Cognitive Dysfunction in Older Women Undergoing Pelvic Organ Prolapse Surgery

Allison Wyman, MD  
University of South Florida  
Estimated Levator Ani Subtended Volume (eLASV): A Novel Assay for Predicting Surgical Outcomes in Pelvic Organ Prolapse

**JUNE ALLYSON MEMORIAL FUND RESEARCH AWARD**

Judy Yeh, MD  
Yale University School of Medicine  
Protective Host Defense Mechanisms Against Urinary Tract Infection in Bladder Urothelium with Estrogen Receptor β Overexpression

Help support the PFD Research Foundation—Make a donation today!  
Over the past 11 years, the PFD Research Foundation has awarded more than $1.5 million in grants to AUGS members. We are proud to share the success of our grant recipients and how their research is advancing prevention, treatment, and the cure of female pelvic floor disorders.

In 2015 the PFD Research Foundation Mesh/Graft Science in Pelvic Reconstructive Surgery Grant was presented to Joseph Kowalski, MD, for his project Molecular markers of angiogenesis in polypropylene mesh-related vaginal exposures.

Study
Vaginal mesh exposure is the most common complication from mesh use in prolapse and incontinence surgery. Angiogenesis is an essential component of tissue healing, and defective angiogenesis plays a role in chronic wounds. We hypothesized that patients with exposures will have impaired angiogenesis as evidenced by altered tissue vascular endothelial growth factor A (VEGFA) expression and microvessel density (MVD). The study objective was to compare angiogenesis in women with vaginal mesh exposures, those with vaginal mesh without exposures and in women who were mesh-naïve. Patients undergoing polypropylene mesh removal and patients without mesh undergoing urinary incontinence or prolapse surgery were recruited. Full-thickness vaginal epithelial biopsies were obtained. The relative abundance of VEGFA RNA was measured with RT-PCR. VEGFA and CD31 immunohistochemistry (IHC) were also performed. 92 subjects were enrolled and biopsied. Mean age (SD) was 57.2 (12.8) years, 16 (17.4%) were smokers and 68 (73.9%) were postmenopausal. VEGFA RNA expression did not differ between subjects with mesh exposure and with mesh but no exposure (p=0.89). However, compared to subjects with no mesh, vaginal VEGFA expression was decreased in subjects with any implanted mesh (relative expression=0.72, p=0.02). MVD was increased in subjects with mesh exposure compared to subjects with no mesh (p<0.01). VEGFA expression by IHC was significantly lower in postmenopausal subjects without estrogen treatment compared to premenopausal and postmenopausal subjects being treated with estrogen (p=0.02).

Results
We conclude that the presence of polypropylene mesh and hormonal status are associated with evidence of altered angiogenesis.

Other Research Projects
I also received IUGA grant funding for RCT comparing absorbable and permanent suture for USLS. This project has closed enrollment, and 12 month follow up is about 50% complete. I am PI on this grant. LURN-associated systematic review of biomarkers for LUTS. LURN is an NIH-NIDDK funded network. My mentor is a co-PI. Systematic review of outcome definitions in POP surgery studies. I am starting a FPMRS tissue bank at the University of Iowa as part of our larger OBGYN tissue bank, which is primarily maternal-fetal and oncology currently.

Publications
The manuscript is currently accepted and in production at FPMRS.

“Receiving this grant provided me with a lot of the courage and motivation to proceed with expanding our tissue bank into FPMRS patients. I hope that this project will lead to more translational research in the not too distant future.”

Joseph Kowalski, MD
PFD Research Foundation Legacy Circle

The PFD Research Foundation is known for providing research support to advance the science of Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery (FPMRS). Our success is a direct result of the dedicated group of individual and corporate donors that have supported the Foundation over the past eight years.

To recognize the efforts of our dedicated individual donors we have created the Legacy Circle. The Legacy Circle is the most prestigious level of recognition by the Foundation, as it acknowledges those who have given over $25,000 in cumulative donations or designated the Foundation in their estate planning.

The term legacy was specifically chosen because of its meaning to reflect anything handed down from a predecessor, either a gift or a significant contribution to history. Without the legacy of these donors, the PFD Research Foundation would not have experienced continued success.

2017 Legacy Circle Members

Linda Brubaker, MD, MS  
Loyola University Chicago  
Maywood, IL

Andrew P. Cassidenti, MD  
St. Joseph's Hospital  
Orange, CA

Vincent Lucente, MD, MBA, FACOG  
The Institute for Female Pelvic Medicine  
Allentown, PA

2017 PFD Research Foundation Donor of the Year Award

The PFD Research Foundation presents the Donor of the Year Award to an individual in recognition of commitment to the Foundation’s mission of transforming the lives of women through the support of innovative and effective research that advances the prevention, treatment, and cure of female pelvic floor disorders.

Kimberly Kenton, MD is a consistent and generous donor to the Foundation and a strong supporter of the Foundation’s mission. Her cumulative donations total is more than $20,000.
The work of the PFD Research Foundation in female pelvic floor disorders research is made possible through the generous support of the following individuals. We are grateful for their continued generosity and commitment to the prevention, treatment, and cure of female pelvic floor disorders. (Recognized gifts from October 12, 2016 – December 31, 2017)

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$1,000–$4,999
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Catherine Bradley
Jeffrey Clemons
Patrick Culligan
Douglass Hale

$500–$999
Vivian Aguilar
Cindy Amundsen
Cynthia Brincat
Sarah Collins
Kathleen Connell Kieran

$250–$499
Amanda Clark
Jill Danford
Autumn Edenfield
Tanaz Fazerdizi
Sean Francis

$100–$249
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Michael Albo
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Kathryn Arendt
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Jessica Bracken
Megan Bradley
Heidi Brown
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Thank You to Our Corporate Supporter

The PFD Research Foundation Research Grants Program is made possible through the generous support of our corporate supporters and partners. In 2017, the Foundation raised $50,000 in donations from:

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Your contribution to the PFD Research Foundation builds a stronger future for Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery and honors the work and passion of those we respect.

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