



Dr. Fabio Rossi wins 2018 Till & McCulloch Award

October 10, 2018 (OTTAWA, ON) – Dr. Fabio Rossi has been named winner of the 2018 Till & McCulloch Award for his research identifying a key mechanism driving muscle repair. The annual Award recognizes the most impactful stem cell research paper originating from a Canadian lab in the past year. Dr. Rossi will be presenting the Award lecture at the upcoming Till & McCulloch Meetings (TMM), November 12-14 in Ottawa, based on his [paper published in *Cell Stem Cell*](#) entitled, “Inhibition of Methyltransferase Setd7 Allows the In Vitro Expansion of Myogenic Stem Cells with Improved Therapeutic Potential.”

In the paper, Dr. Rossi and his team at the University of British Columbia (UBC) provide the first evidence that a protein known as Setd7 is a critical actor in the pathway that controls the expansion of muscle stem cells. Using a drug to regulate this protein, Dr. Rossi’s team was able to expand the number of muscle stem cells and show they could improve muscle function when implanted into mouse models of muscular dystrophy. The same approach was used to improve the expansion of human muscle stem cells in the lab, opening the way for future therapeutic applications.

“I’m extremely honoured to have been selected for this award and to be included among such a distinguished list of Canadian scientists,” said Dr. Rossi, a professor in the Department of Medical Genetics at UBC. “Drs. Till and McCulloch are role models in stem cell research and I look forward to acknowledging their pioneering work by giving a lecture in their name.”

Also announced today by TMM organizers, the Stem Cell Network and CCRM, is the recipient of the Drew Lyall Award of Excellence, which will be presented to Dr. Zakaria Orfi, a postdoctoral fellow at CHU Sainte-Justine Research Centre, University of Montreal. Dr. Orfi’s winning abstract, “Recessive mutations in the transcription factor PAX7 are a new genetic cause of human myopathy leading to the exhaustion of the muscle stem cell pool,” was selected by the TMM Abstract Review Committee as the best abstract submitted by a graduate student. His lecture will also be presented at the Meetings.

More than 400 leading stem cell researchers, bioengineers, graduate students and representatives from industry, government and the not-for-profit sectors will attend the Till & McCulloch Meetings in November, making it the largest and most influential conference of its kind in Canada.

About the Till & McCulloch Award

The Till & McCulloch Award, established in 2005, was created in honour of Canadian scientists and stem cell pioneers Drs. James Till and Ernest McCulloch. The Award is presented annually to one researcher in Canada, who has made an exceptional contribution to global stem cell research in that year. The Till & McCulloch Meetings Program Committee selects the awardee based on what is determined to be the year's most impactful and influential peer-reviewed article by a Canadian-based stem cell researcher.

About the Stem Cell Network: Building Canada's stem cell and regenerative medicine research sector has been the *raison d'être* of the Stem Cell Network (SCN) since its inception in 2001. In just over 17 years, SCN has forged a national community that has transformed stem cell research and pushed basic research towards translational outcomes for the clinic and marketplace. SCN has catalyzed 18 clinical trials, 17 regenerative medicine start-up companies and leveraged a \$100 million in partner contributions. SCN has invested over \$100 million into research, which has benefitted 170 world-class research groups and more than 2,500 trainees from across Canada. stemcellnetwork.ca

About CCRM

CCRM, a Canadian not-for-profit organization funded by the Government of Canada, the Province of Ontario, and leading academic and industry partners, supports the development of regenerative medicines and associated enabling technologies, with a specific focus on cell and gene therapy. A network of researchers, leading companies, investors and entrepreneurs, CCRM aims to accelerate the translation of scientific discovery into new companies and marketable products for patients, with specialized teams, dedicated funding, and unique infrastructure. CCRM is the commercialization partner of the Ontario Institute for Regenerative Medicine and the University of Toronto's Medicine by Design. CCRM is hosted by the University of Toronto. Visit us at ccrm.ca.

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