



### **Dr. Freda Miller wins 2019 Till & McCulloch Award**

**October 8, 2019 (OTTAWA, ON)** – Dr. Freda Miller has been named winner of the 2019 Till & McCulloch Award for a new research discovery in tissue repair and regeneration that holds potential for future therapies. The Award is presented annually to one researcher in Canada who has made an exceptional contribution to global stem cell research in that year. Dr. Miller will present the Award lecture on November 5 at the Till & McCulloch Meetings (TMM) taking place in Montréal, Québec, based on her *Cell Stem Cell* paper entitled, [“Mesenchymal Precursor Cells in Adult Nerves Contribute to Mammalian Tissue Repair and Regeneration.”](#)

In this paper, Dr. Miller and her team at The Hospital for Sick Children provide important new insights into the role peripheral nerves play in the repair of injured tissues. Peripheral nerves are perhaps best known as communication lines for controlling tissues and organs, and for gathering sensory information. Dr. Miller’s work demonstrates that peripheral nerves are also a reservoir of mesenchymal precursor cells, which participate in tissue repair, revealing a previously unappreciated regeneration mechanism. (Mesenchymal precursor cells are a type of stem cell.) This exciting new knowledge is a gateway to harnessing the body’s own resident cells to regenerate injured tissues, and may eventually open new therapeutic avenues.

“For a stem cell researcher in Canada, there are few awards that hold as much prestige as the Till & McCulloch Award, especially since the very bedrock of our science originated in this country,” said Dr. Miller, a Senior Scientist at the SickKids Research Institute and Professor at the University of Toronto. “This award has been given to some very influential and inspirational scientists in the past and I am extremely honoured to join their ranks.”

The TMM organizers – the Stem Cell Network and CCRM – also announced today the recipient of the fourth annual Drew Lyall Award of Excellence, presented to the author of the best abstract submitted by a graduate student. Neemat Mahmud, a Ph.D. candidate also at The Hospital for Sick Children, will present her top-ranked abstract entitled, “Acquisition of a developing mesenchymal precursor-like blastema state underlies successful adult mammalian digit tip regeneration.”

TMM is expected to attract close to 500 leading stem cell researchers, bioengineers, graduate students and representatives from industry, government and the not-for-profit sectors over the three-day event taking place November 4-6 in Montréal.

### **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**

*Tomorrow's health is here.* The Stem Cell Network (SCN) is a national non-profit that supports stem cell and regenerative medicine research, training the next generation of highly qualified personnel, and delivering outreach activities across Canada. SCN's goal is to advance science from the lab to the clinic for the benefit of Canadians. SCN has been supported by the Government of Canada since inception in 2001. This strategic funding, valued at over \$100M has benefitted approximately 170 world-class research groups and 3,000 trainees and has catalyzed 19 clinical trials. [stemcellnetwork.ca](http://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](http://ccrm.ca).

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