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News Release

New award from the Bayer Science & Education Foundation:

Bayer Thrombosis Research Award 2013 for Dr. Krystin Krauel

Research scientist at Ernst-Moritz-Arndt University Greifswald honored for her work in the field of antibacterial host defenses

Leverkusen, February 22, 2013 – The first winner of the Bayer Thrombosis Research Award has been decided. The Board of Trustees of the Bayer Science & Education Foundation and the Scientific Committee for this award have presented Dr. Krystin Krauel with the EUR 30,000 prize in recognition of her work on the interaction of thrombotic processes with antibacterial host defenses. Dr. Krauel showed that a small signal molecule (chemokine) released from platelets can also bind bacteria. Up to now, this chemokine has been known for its interaction with the antithrombotic medication heparin and this can cause severe heparin-induced thrombocytopenia (HIT). This discovery could lead to the development of new treatments for patients with HIT and for HIT prevention.

“Germany’s future will be shaped by advances in basic and industrial research. We want to promote research and strengthen excellence, especially in Germany,” said Professor Wolfgang Plischke, member of the Board of Management of Bayer AG responsible for Innovation, Technology and Sustainability, and member of the Board of Directors of the foundation. “As an inventor company, it is very important for us to support pioneering work – especially in clinical research. Through its various foundations and this award in particular, Bayer is looking to help promote the use and profile of future technologies in the health care sector,” said Plischke.

The Thrombosis Research Award recognizes the outstanding achievements of up-and-coming researchers in the field of basic and clinical thrombosis research. It was established in 2011 by Bayer scientists Dr. Frank Misselwitz, Dr. Dagmar Kubitzka and Dr. Elizabeth Perzborn, who in 2009 won the German Future Prize for developing the

anticoagulant Xarelto®. These three researchers donated their EUR 250,000 prize money to establish this award for up-and-coming researchers. Bayer doubled the starting capital to EUR 500,000.

According to Dr. Frank Misselwitz, prize sponsor and head of the cardiovascular and coagulation therapeutic area of clinical research at Bayer: “Krystin Krauel is a talented researcher, whose work stands out from the numerous other nominations. She combines basic research with clinical issues and, in doing so, comes to surprising and fundamentally significant conclusions. Based on her excellent scientific research into the interaction of thrombosis, immunological mechanisms and antibacterial host defenses, Dr. Krauel well and truly deserves this award.”

With the exception of the prize sponsors themselves, the scientific judging panel for the new award is made up exclusively of experts from universities and hospitals throughout Germany. They are Prof. Michael Böhm (Saarland University Medical Center), Prof. Andreas Greinacher (Greifswald University Medical Center), Prof. Edelgard Lindhoff-Last (Department of Medicine II, Johann Wolfgang Goethe University Hospital in Frankfurt am Main), Dr. Bernhardt Nieswandt (Rudolph Virchow Center of the University of Würzburg), Prof. Sebastian Schellong (Dresden Friedrichstadt Hospital) and Prof. Christoph Bode (Freiburg University Hospital).

Prof. Bode was delighted with the choice of winner: “The winner has discovered new and pioneering aspects of heparin-induced thrombocytopenia – namely the correlation between infection, the body's infection defenses, this disease and, in particular, platelet factor 4. It is highly likely that we will be able to derive clinically relevant and useful therapeutic principles from these basic molecular mechanisms in the future.”

The prize is awarded by the Bayer Science & Education Foundation. The primary objectives of the foundation are the recognition of outstanding research achievements, the promotion of talented researchers and support for significant school projects of a scientific nature. In terms of content, the sponsorship activities focus on natural science and medicine. The foundation honors outstanding research achievements every two years with the Hansen Family Award and in the off years with the Otto Bayer Award, each of which carries a purse of EUR 75,000. In 2008, the foundation established a third scientific prize – the EUR 50,000 Bayer Climate Award. The program is rounded off by two prizes for up-and-coming researchers. The international Early Excellence in Science

Award is presented annually in the categories biology, chemistry and materials, each with prize money of EUR 10,000. The Bayer Thrombosis Research Award, which supports scientists in the German-speaking region whose work focuses on basic and clinical research into thrombosis, is presented every two years and has prize money of EUR 30,000.

This year's winner Dr. Krystin Krauel studied human biology at the Ernst-Moritz-Arndt University Greifswald and in 2007 completed her degree thesis on "Nachweis von Plättchenfaktor 4 auf humanen Thrombozyten" (evidence of platelet factor 4 on human platelets) under Prof. Dr. Greinacher. She then studied for a PhD as part of DFG training research group 840 "Wechselwirkung zwischen Erreger und Wirt bei generalisierten bakteriellen Infektionen" (interaction between pathogens and hosts in the case of generalized bacterial infections) at the Institute for Immunology and Transfusion Medicine at Ernst-Moritz-Arndt University Greifswald. In 2012, she completed a PhD on the "Interaktionen von Thrombozytenproteinen mit Bakterien als Brücke zwischen unspezifischer und spezifischer Immunabwehr" (interaction of platelet proteins with bacteria as a bridge between unspecific and specific immune defenses) under Prof. Werner Weitschies. Back in 2011, Krauel received the Young Scientists Grant for Thrombosis Research/Vascular Medicine at the 55th annual conference of the German Society of Thrombosis and Haemostasis in Wiesbaden.

About heparin-induced thrombocytopenia (HIT): Heparins are anticoagulants used to prevent blood clotting. They are not absorbed from the gastrointestinal tract and therefore need to be administered intravenously. Heparins are used to prevent and treat thrombosis. A possible side-effect is heparin-induced thrombocytopenia (HIT), where the number of platelets falls. The potentially life-threatening complications of this are venous and arterial thrombosis, which can lead to pulmonary embolisms and infarctions.

For more information go to:
www.hike-autoimmunity.de

Note to editors:

Photos are available for download at <http://www.press.bayer.com>.

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