



**AGA**INSTITUTE

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**THE ELI AND EDYTHE BROAD FOUNDATION INVESTS IN  
GASTROENTEROLOGY'S FUTURE**

*Five High School Students Selected as Broad Scholars*

**Bethesda, Maryland (July 24, 2007)** – The American Gastroenterological Association (AGA) and its Foundation for Digestive Health and Nutrition (FDHN) today announced a three-year grant from the Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation, which will benefit high school students who demonstrate high potential for careers in digestive disease research. The Student Research Fellowship Awards program was created by the AGA more than a decade ago to stimulate interest in gastroenterological (GI) research careers in high school, college and medical school students.

“Youth are the future of scientific research,” noted Sidney Cohen, MD, AGAF, Chairman of the Foundation. “Our Foundation has recognized the need to begin fostering an interest in the field at the earliest point in a student’s academic career.”

The Eli and Edythe Broad Student Research Fellowships will provide five students with \$2,500 each to fund a 10-week session of research in digestive diseases or nutrition under the supervision of an approved preceptor. Preceptors are AGA members who serve as full-time faculty members at accredited North American institutions.

The 2007 AGA Foundation – Broad Scholars are:

Jennifer Li  
Westwood High School, Austin, Texas  
Research location: Dallas VA Medical Center  
*Role of Oncogenic Ras in the Neoplastic Progression of Barrett’s Esophagus*

Yuan Tao  
Gunn High School, Palo Alto, California  
Research location: Palo Alto VA Hospital  
*Monitoring of apoptosis in liver diseases with a novel keratin-cleavage specific antibody*

Alice B. Conant  
Phillips Andover Academy, Andover, Massachusetts  
Research location: University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine  
*Association of physical activity and biomarkers on colorectal cancer risk*

- more -

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Laura G. Mirviss

Montgomery Blair High School, Silver Spring, Maryland  
Research location: Johns Hopkins School of Medicine

*An examination of the possible effects of BFT and/or ETBF for activating Stat3 as a potential mechanism of oncogenesis of colon cancer associated with ETBF*

Colleen Middleton

St. Ignatius College Preparatory, Chicago, Illinois

Research location: University of Illinois at Chicago

*Relationship between EPEC-induced barrier function disruption and host cell death*

“We are most grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Broad for their understanding and generosity in allowing us to increase our efforts to interest talented young people in science generally and in gastroenterology in particular,” said Dr. Cohen. He noted that a 2002 survey of past participants in the program showed that 93 percent were, in fact, pursuing careers in science or medicine. “We are aware of one high school grantee in particular who went to medical school and became a practicing gastroenterologist,” he noted.

Mr. Broad, a founder of KB Homes, Inc., established The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation in 1967 to provide financial assistance to charitable, educational, and scientific organizations. In 2001, the Foundation created the Broad Medical Research Program for Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) Grants. The program is unique in that it can rapidly fund innovative research proposals that will lead to improvements in diagnosis, therapy, or prevention of Crohn’s disease or ulcerative colitis.

In recognition of his service to the field of gastroenterology, Mr. Broad was selected to receive the 2007 AGA Outstanding Service Award. The award is presented to individuals who have contributed significantly to society’s health and welfare.

High School students interested in applying for the 2008 AGA Foundation Broad Student Research Fellowships can find more information on the foundation’s Web site at [www.fdhn.org](http://www.fdhn.org).

There are over 300 digestive diseases that adversely affect the lives of more than 65 million Americans. Thirty percent of Americans suffer a gastroenterological illness each year, resulting in over 8 million hospital admissions and 30 million doctor visits. At least 40 million Americans are burdened with chronic digestive conditions that disrupt their lives. More Americans are hospitalized for digestive diseases than for any other type of illness. Nearly one in four cancer deaths is related to the digestive system. The annual costs associated with digestive diseases have continued to rise to an all time high of more than \$85 billion and the magnitude of this problem is increasing rapidly. Since 1985, the number of people suffering digestive health problems in the United States has climbed by 20 percent. By 2025, our nation’s average life expectancy will increase from 77 to 82 years. Because many digestive diseases occur as we age, their incidence may skyrocket.

The AGA is dedicated to the mission of advancing the science and practice of gastroenterology. Founded in 1897, AGA is one of the oldest medical-specialty societies in the United States. The AGA’s more than 15,000 members include physicians and scientists who research, diagnose and treat disorders of the gastrointestinal tract and liver. For more information, visit [www.gastro.org](http://www.gastro.org).

The Foundation for Digestive Health and Nutrition (FDHN) is the Foundation of the American Gastroenterological Association (AGA). The Foundation’s ultimate mission mirrors that of the AGA: to improve the human condition through understanding, preventing, diagnosing and curing digestive

diseases. Separately incorporated and governed by a distinguished board of AGA physicians and the lay public, the Foundation raises funds for research and public education. Donors to the Foundation include AGA physicians, patients and family members of those who suffer from digestive diseases, national foundations and the pharmaceutical industry. For more information on the awards program or to make a donation, visit [www.fdn.org](http://www.fdn.org).

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