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Hepatitis B Foundation's 'Nobel Challenge' Raises \$3 Million to Support Research for a Cure

Funds allow Hepatitis B Foundation to attract top scientific talent to the Baruch S. Blumberg Institute to advance its research towards a cure for hepatitis B, which is the leading cause of liver cancer worldwide



Board members and staff of the Hepatitis B Foundation celebrated the completion of its Nobel Challenge campaign, which raised \$3 million to further its mission to eliminate the hepatitis B virus.

DOYLESTOWN, Pa. (January 2016) – The Hepatitis B Foundation is pleased to announce the successful completion of its “Nobel Challenge” campaign, which has raised more than \$3 million to further its mission to eliminate the deadly hepatitis B virus. Funds will support the efforts of the foundation’s nonprofit research arm, the Baruch S. Blumberg Institute, to recruit top scientific talent from around the world and to accelerate the pace of research in pursuit of a cure for hepatitis B.

“Our goal is not merely to support the development of treatments for hepatitis B or to raise awareness about this serious liver disease. Our ultimate goal is to eradicate hepatitis B, to relegate it to the history books,” said Dr.

Timothy Block, president and co-founder of the Hepatitis B Foundation and the Baruch S. Blumberg Institute. “To achieve this, we are recruiting the finest minds in science and medicine from around the world to work fulltime on finding a cure for hepatitis B. The extraordinarily successful fundraising campaign will power our efforts to do precisely that.”

Named for the Nobel Prize-winning discoverer of the hepatitis B virus, and co-founder of the Hepatitis B Foundation, the Baruch S. Blumberg Institute already has gathered the largest concentration of nonprofit scientists in the United States working on the challenge of hepatitis B and liver cancer. Worldwide, the statistics are staggering. Roughly one third of the global population – more than 2 billion – has been infected with the hepatitis B virus, which is transmitted through infected blood. An estimated 250 million people worldwide, including 2 million Americans, are chronically infected with hepatitis B and are at increased risk of dying prematurely from progressive liver disease. Currently, up to 1 million people die each year from hepatitis B and its complications, including liver cancer.

In March 2015, the Blumberg Institute recruited a team of nationally renowned scientists to focus exclusively on research to develop a cure for hepatitis B. Four principal scientists – Drs. Timothy Block, Jinhong Chang, Ju Tao Guo and Ying-Hsiu Su – and 16 of their staff and laboratory researchers moved from Drexel University to the Blumberg Institute. In June 2015, Dr. Tianlun Zhou was recruited from a multinational pharmaceutical company located in Shanghai where he led a team working on hepatitis B.

The success of the Nobel Challenge fundraising campaign, which will be leveraged for new federal grant funds and additional philanthropic contributions, allows the Blumberg Institute scientists to concentrate fully on working to discover breakthrough therapies for hepatitis B that will result in human clinical trials within the next three years. With promising drugs in the research pipeline, the Hepatitis B Foundation

and the Blumberg Institute are establishing relationships with companies that can take their discoveries from the lab to the clinic, where they can ultimately benefit people worldwide.

A special donor plaque to recognize the many individuals who contributed to the Nobel Challenge campaign will be unveiled at the Hepatitis B Foundation's annual Crystal Ball on Friday April 8, 2016 at the Warrington Country Club in Warrington, PA.

About the Hepatitis B Foundation: The Hepatitis B Foundation is the nation's leading nonprofit organization solely dedicated to finding a cure for hepatitis B and improving the quality of life for those affected worldwide through research, education and patient advocacy. To learn more, go to <http://www.hepb.org>, read our blog at <http://wp.hepb.org>, follow us on Twitter [@HepBFoundation](https://twitter.com/HepBFoundation), find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/hepbfoundation or call 215-489-4900.

About the Baruch S. Blumberg Institute: The Baruch S. Blumberg Institute is an independent, nonprofit research institute established in 2003 by the Hepatitis B Foundation to fulfill its research mission and to conduct discovery research and nurture translational biotechnology in an environment conducive to interaction, collaboration and focus. It was renamed in 2013 to honor Baruch S. Blumberg, who won the Nobel Prize for his discovery of the hepatitis B virus and co-founded the Hepatitis B Foundation. To learn more, visit www.blumberginstitute.org.

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