

# Scientific Council Dinner

Presenting the Klerman & Freedman Awards

Friday, July 25, 2025



Awarding **NARSAD** Grants

Welcome to the Scientific Council Dinner, where we will present the 2025 Klerman & Freedman Awards.

The Klerman & Freedman Awards recognize exceptional clinical and basic research conducted by Brain & Behavior Research Foundation Young Investigator Grantees. The prize winners are selected by committees of the Foundation's Scientific Council.

The BBRF Scientific Council reviews and selects the most promising research ideas with the greatest potential to lead to further breakthroughs in brain and behavior research. We thank our Council for their time, expertise, and judgement to support the mission of the Foundation.

Tonight, we will recognize and honor the exceptional work of six outstanding young researchers. BBRF's Young Investigator Grant program supports early-career scientists as they gather pilot data and "proof of concept" for their innovative clinical and basic research.

Following our dinner, we will engage in an interesting and timely discussion on the state of mental health research with BBRF Scientific Council Member Dr. Joshua Gordon, the immediate past Director of the National Institute of Mental Health. Dr. Gordon currently serves as the chair of Psychiatry at Columbia University Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons, the Director of the New York State Psychiatric Institute, and Psychiatrist-in-Chief at the New York-Presbyterian campus at Columbia University Irving Medical Center.

BBRF continues to support the most promising ideas in brain research across disciplines, institutions, and continents. We hope that as you learn about the achievements of this evening's honorees, they will inspire your continued support of BBRF's vision of a future in which all people living with a psychiatric condition lead full, productive, and happy lives.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Borenstein". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jeff" being more prominent.

**Jeffrey Borenstein, M.D.**  
President & CEO

## 2025 KLERMAN PRIZE FOR EXCEPTIONAL CLINICAL RESEARCH

**Joseph Taylor, M.D., Ph.D.**

*Mass General Brigham  
Harvard Medical School*

### HONORABLE MENTIONS

**Ryan T. Ash, M.D., Ph.D.**

*Stanford University School of Medicine  
University of California, San Francisco*

**Nathaniel G. Harnett, Ph.D.**

*McLean Hospital  
Harvard Medical School*

## 2025 FREEDMAN PRIZE FOR EXCEPTIONAL BASIC RESEARCH

**Long Li, Ph.D.**

*Institute of Biophysics, Chinese Academy of Sciences*

### HONORABLE MENTIONS

**Hermany Munguba, Ph.D.**

*University College London*

**Zachary Pennington, Ph.D.**

*Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai  
University of British Columbia*

### About the Prizes

The Klerman & Freedman Prizes pay tribute to Drs. Gerald L. Klerman and Daniel X. Freedman, whose legacies as researchers, teachers, physicians and administrators have indelibly influenced neuropsychiatry. Their outstanding contributions to the field of brain and behavior research continue to inspire scientists who knew them, as well as those who are just entering the field.

## KLERMAN Prizewinners

1995	Dr. Rajiv Tandon
1996	Dr. Hans C. Brieter
1997	Dr. Schahram Akbarian
1998	Dr. Michael Maes
1999	Dr. Andrew L. Stoll
2000	Dr. Susan K. Schultz
2001	Dr. Cameron S. Carter Dr. Josephy R. Hibbeln Dr. Sarah H. Lisanby Dr. Perry F. Renshaw
2002	Dr. E. Sherwood Brown Dr. John W. Newcomer
2003	Dr. Ramin Mojtabai
2004	Dr. Helen Link Egger Dr. Joan L. Luby
2005	Dr. Melissa P. DelBello
2006	Dr. Hilary P. Blumberg
2007	Dr. Beng-Choon Ho
2008	Dr. Gabriel Alejandro de Erausquin
2009	Dr. Alina Suris
2010	Dr. Daniel P. Dickstein Dr. Mani N. Pavuluri
2011	Dr. Chadi Calarge
2012	Dr. Jess G. Fiedorowicz
2013	Dr. James McPartland
2014	Dr. Denis Jabaudon
2015	Dr. Alan Anticevic
2016	Dr. Katie McLaughlin
2017	Dr. Jennifer C. Felger
2018	Dr. Albert R. Powers III
2019	Dr. Nolan R. Williams
2020	Dr. Ellen Lee
2021	Dr. Nicholas L. Balderston
2022	Dr. Shan H. Siddiqi
2023	Dr. Danella M. Hafeman
2024	Dr. Juliet Beni Edgcomb

## KLERMAN Honorable Mentions

1995	Dr. Elizabeth D. Abercrombie Dr. Kim T. Mueser Dr. Jose V. Pardo
1996	Dr. Steven E. Arnold Dr. Helen S. Mayberg
1997	Dr. Andrew J. Francis Dr. Katharine A. Phillips
1998	Dr. Cameron S. Carter Dr. Mark R. Serper
1999	Dr. Shitij Kapur Dr. Brian F. O'Donnell
2000	Dr. Mark S. George Dr. Sohee Park
2002	Dr. Stephan Heckers Dr. Anissa Abi Dargham Dr. Jeffrey H. Meyer Dr. Yvette I. Sheline
2003	Dr. Catherine Monk Dr. Gerard Sanacora
2005	Dr. Anne L. Glowinski Dr. Gerard Sanacora
2006	Dr. Stephan Eliez Dr. Jordan W. Smoller
2007	Dr. Yuval Y. Neria Dr. Carolyn M. Salafia
2011	Dr. Brian M. D'Onofrio Dr. Jennifer S. Silk
2012	Dr. Johanne Renaud Dr. Manpreet Kaur Singh
2013	Dr. Daniel Mueller Dr. Andrea Danese
2014	Dr. Mazen A. Kheirbek Dr. Bo Li
2015	Dr. Chadi Abdallah Dr. Carrie J. McAdams
2016	Dr. Erin C. Dunn Dr. Avram Holmes
2017	Dr. Danai Dima Dr. Carolyn Rodriguez
2018	Dr. Timothy Y. Mariano
2019	Dr. Bo Cao Dr. Sarah A. O. Gray
2020	Dr. Soonjo Hwang Dr. Hadar Ben-Yoav
2021	Dr. Hengyi Cao Dr. Nolan R. Williams
2022	Dr. Rachel Emma Lean Dr. Sunny Xiaojing Tang
2023	Dr. Linden Parkes
2024	Dr. Elizabeth V. Goldfarb

# KLERMAN PRIZE

The Klerman Prize, established in 1994 by Myrna M. Weissman, Ph.D., in memory of her late husband, Gerald L. Klerman, M.D., honors exceptional clinical research by a BBRF Young Investigator Grantee. A distinguished psychiatric researcher and mentor at the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), Dr. Klerman pioneered studies of psychotropic medications and developed and tested interpersonal psychotherapy. Dr. Weissman serves on the BBRF Scientific Council.

## KLERMAN PRIZE SELECTION COMMITTEE

Responsible for selecting the Freedman Prizewinners, the following BBRF Scientific Council members make up the Selection Committee:

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**Cecile D. Ladouceur, Ph.D.**  
**Dost Ongur, M.D., Ph.D.**  
**Nina R. Schooler, Ph.D.**

# 2025 KLERMAN PRIZEWINNER

## FOR EXCEPTIONAL CLINICAL RESEARCH



**Joseph J. Taylor, M.D., Ph.D.**

*Mass General Brigham  
Harvard Medical School*

2022 BBRF Young Investigator

Dr. Taylor has been a core faculty member of the Center for Brain Circuit Therapeutics at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School since the Center launched in 2020. He is appointed as an Associate Psychiatrist at Brigham and Women's Hospital, and as an Instructor in Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. His research focuses on deriving and testing brain stimulation targets for psychiatric illness. He derives targets with network mapping, a method that leverages the human connectome (a wiring diagram of the human brain) to examine the connectivity patterns of brain lesion locations or brain stimulation coordinates that causally modify neuropsychiatric symptoms. Dr. Taylor tests these targets in clinical trials using invasive and non-invasive brain circuit interventions.

**"The Klerman Prize is a celebration of community—of the family members, friends, colleagues, mentors, mentees, administrators, patients, study participants, and funders who play a role in good science. I am deeply humbled, and I can't wait to pay it forward."**

## 2025 KLERMAN PRIZE

### HONORABLE MENTION



**Ryan Thomas Ash, M.D., Ph.D.**  
*Stanford University*  
*University of California San Francisco*

2022 BBRF Young Investigator

Dr. Ash is a psychiatrist and clinician-scientist, whose primary current research goal is to help develop novel methods to rebalance neural circuit stability and plasticity in deep-brain areas to enhance recovery from neuropsychiatric illness. His work is grounded in the new field of transcranial ultrasound stimulation (TUS), a noninvasive technique that allows focal neuromodulation of the deep-brain areas like the amygdala, striatum, and hippocampus most implicated in psychiatric disease. He is well positioned to lead the translation of this technique into a new generation of circuit-based therapeutics. His clinical specialty is in functional neurological disorder (FND), and he currently directs a FND tertiary-referral practice in the Stanford Neuropsychiatry Clinic. He is starting his independent research lab in the UCSF Department of Psychiatry in Fall 2025.

**“Receiving the BBRF Young Investigator award was extremely beneficial for launching my early career and initiating my first independent projects as a research fellow. And now it is a distinct honor and pleasure to be recognized by the distinguished Klerman award committee. I’m so grateful for the work that BBRF does, and I sincerely hope that their investment in my growth will lead to better treatments for those who suffer with mental illness.”**

## 2025 KLERMAN PRIZE

### HONORABLE MENTION



**Nathaniel G. Harnett, Ph.D.**

*McLean Hospital*

*Harvard Medical School*

2021 BBRF Young Investigator

Dr. Harnett is a neuroscientist whose research is focused on understanding the brain basis for why some people are more likely to develop stress-related disorders, such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), after trauma. His current work leverages magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) techniques—including functional MRI, structural MRI, and diffusion weighted imaging—to identify multimodal neural signatures of PTSD susceptibility in the acute aftermath of trauma exposure.

The overarching emphasis of Dr. Harnett's work is on elucidating neural circuitry linked to acute and long-term development of post-traumatic syndromes and identifying robust and generalizable neurobiological targets for early intervention and treatment. The goal of this research is to develop predictive and preventative neuroscience-based techniques to reduce the prevalence of trauma and stress-related disorders.

**"It is truly a great honor to be considered for the Klerman Prize. Recognition of the merits of our research increases our motivation to keep moving forward to understand the brain basis of PTSD."**



## FREEDMAN Prizewinners

1998	Dr. Yukiko Goto
1999	Dr. Stewart A. Anderson
2000	Dr. Edwin G. Abel
2001	Dr. Kelsey C. Martin
2002	Dr. Jon R. Backstrom
2003	Dr. Jose A. Esteban
2004	Dr. Luca Santarelli
2005	Dr. Lisa M. Monteggia
2006	Dr. Michael D. Ehlers
2007	Dr. Thomas A. Blanpied
2008	Dr. Evelyn K. Lambe
2009	Dr. Kerry J. Ressler
2010	Dr. David A. Baker
2011	Dr. Alexandre Bonnin
2012	Dr. Zhiping Pang
2013	Dr. Garret Stuber
2014	Dr. Theodore D. Satterthwaite
2015	Dr. Michael M. Halassa
2016	Dr. Kay Tye
2017	Dr. Ilana Witten
2018	Dr. Byungkook Lim
2019	Dr. Anna Victoria Molofsky
2020	Dr. Cody A. Siciliano
2021	Dr. Meaghan Creed
2022	Dr. Antonio Fernandez-Ruiz
2023	Dr. Ritchie Chen
2024	Dr. Christina K. Kim

## FREEDMAN Honorable Mentions

1998	Dr. Eric E. Turner Dr. Elizabeth Van Bockstaele
1999	Dr. Emmanuel N. Pothos Dr. Laurence H. Tecott
2000	Dr. Wayne Drevets Dr. Bernice E. Morrow
2001	Dr. Michael J. Caterina Dr. Aurelio A. Galli
2002	Dr. Michael W. Quick Dr. Fu-Ming Zhou
2003	Dr. William A. Carlezon Dr. Gleb P. Shumyatsky
2004	Dr. Michael D. Ehlers Dr. Sheena Ann Josselyn
2005	Dr. Steven A. Thomas Dr. Fang Liu
2006	Dr. Stewart A. Anderson Dr. Gabriella D' Arcangelo Dr. Karoly Mirnics
2007	Dr. Fang Liu Dr. Luca Santarelli
2008	Dr. M. Margarita Behrens Dr. Akira Sawa
2009	Dr. Jean-Martin Beaulieu Dr. Colleen Ann McClung
2010	Dr. Vincent P. Ferrera Dr. Benjamin Philpot
2011	Dr. Alberto Bacci Dr. Andrew A. Pieper
2012	Dr. Marie Carlen Dr. Genevieve Konopka
2013	Dr. Carmen Andreescu Dr. David Foster Dr. Hiroki Taniguchi
2014	Dr. Elena Ivleva Dr. Aristotle N. Voineskos
2015	Dr. Kristen J. Brennand Dr. Nandakumar Narayanan
2016	Dr. Conor Liston Dr. Margaret Cho
2017	Dr. Marcelo de Oliveira Dietrich Dr. Elise B. Robinson
2018	Dr. Christina Gremel Dr. Ueli Rutishauser
2019	Dr. Erin S. Calipari Dr. Dorothy Schafer
2020	Dr. Kevin Beier Dr. Lorna A. Farrelly
2021	Dr. Denise Cai Dr. Tomasz J. Nowakowski
2022	Dr. Chandramouli Chandrasekaran Dr. Mohsen Jamali
2023	Dr. Madeline Andrews Dr. Neir Eshel
2024	Dr. Erin Gibson Dr. Hugo A. Tejeda

# FREEDMAN PRIZE

The Freedman Prize honors the late Daniel X. Freedman, M.D., a pioneer in biological psychiatry and psychopharmacology and a founding member of the Brain & Behavior Research Foundation Scientific Council. It is awarded to a BBRF Young Investigator Grantee for exceptional basic research.

## FREEDMAN PRIZE SELECTION COMMITTEE

Responsible for selecting the Klerman Prizewinners, the following BBRF Scientific Council members make up the Selection Committee:

### **CHAIR**

**Ariel Y. Deutch, Ph.D.**

### **MEMBERS**

**Ted Abel, Ph.D.**

**Cecilia Flores, Ph.D.**

**Peter W. Kalivas, Ph.D.**

**Keri Martinowich, Ph.D.**

**Marina R. Picciotto, Ph.D.**

**Vikaas S. Sohal, M.D., Ph.D.**

# 2025 FREEDMAN PRIZEWINNER

## FOR EXCEPTIONAL BASIC RESEARCH



**Long Li, Ph.D.**

*Institute of Biophysics,  
Chinese Academy of Sciences*

2021 BBRF Young Investigator

Dr. Li's lab focuses on developing novel animal models for neuropsychiatric disorders, such as depression and PTSD, to uncover new molecular targets and therapeutic avenues. Specifically, they investigate neuronal molecular biomarkers modulated by innovative drugs for treating depression and anxiety, as well as seek to develop proactive coping strategies for stress. Their goal is to pinpoint which neurons and molecules can be targeted to alleviate disease symptoms. By elucidating the cellular mechanisms of therapeutic drugs in the brain, the lab aims to enhance drug specificity and minimize adverse effects. It is hoped that this foundational understanding will ultimately guide the design of optimized treatments with improved efficacy and tolerability.

**"As a young investigator, I am incredibly honored to receive the Freedman Prize, and deeply motivated by the Foundation's commitment to supporting basic science that lays the groundwork for better treatments. This recognition reinforces our mission to uncover the neural and molecular underpinnings of depression and PTSD, with the ultimate goal of translating these insights into more precise and effective therapies."**

## 2025 FREEDMAN PRIZE

### HONORABLE MENTION



**Hermany Munguba, Ph.D.**  
*University College London*

2022 BBRF Young Investigator

After completing his Ph.D. at the Karolinska Institute in Sweden, Dr. Munguba's curiosity about the brain evolved into a sense of urgency to understand the circuit basis of psychiatric disorders. During his postdoctoral training, Dr. Munguba's experience in neuronal cell diversity enabled him to merge his knowledge in circuit connectivity to his host labs' expertise in stress-related disorders and neuromodulation. Today, his research vision is to advance new discoveries at the intersection of basic and translational neuroscience, aiming to identify molecular, cellular, and circuit pathways involved in the onset and relief of symptoms common to major depressive disorder. His research aims to close the gaps between foundational neuroscience and clinical application, ultimately guiding the development of novel, disease-modifying treatments targeting cell types and circuits related to symptom-specific pathology.

**"Receiving the Freedman Prize Honorable Mention is a very meaningful recognition of my research journey. It validates the persistence, curiosity, and efforts that went into my projects, and encourages me to keep pursuing rigorous and translationally guided research. I'm honored to be acknowledged alongside such talented peers and inspired to continue contributing to the academic community."**

## 2025 FREEDMAN PRIZE

### HONORABLE MENTION



**Zachary Pennington, Ph.D.**

*Icahn School of Medicine at  
Mount Sinai*

*University of British Columbia*

2022 BBRF Young Investigator

Dr. Pennington's research focuses on understanding the alterations in brain function responsible for anxiety and stress-related disorders, with the ultimate goal of advancing novel treatments for these conditions. To pursue this goal, he uses cutting-edge tools for visualizing how neural circuits change in response to stressful life experiences, and manipulating these circuits to modify their influence on behavior. The hope is that by identifying the specific brain circuits involved in anxiety and stress, more targeted treatments can be discovered. Dr. Pennington is also a contributor to several open-source projects, helping make modern scientific tools accessible to all. With the help of BBRF support, Dr. Pennington defined a novel brain region's role in vulnerability to stressful life events and is continuing to identify specific cell types within this brain region that might be targeted in conditions like PTSD. Dr. Pennington will be opening his own lab at the University of British Columbia in January 2026.

**"I am immensely grateful to have been selected for a Freedman Prize Honorable Mention. Since the beginning of my training, my goal has been to advance our understanding of how changes in brain function influence mental health. To be selected for this distinction by a foundation that has made tremendous strides in this pursuit is a great honor. Moreover, as a young investigator just about to launch their own lab, this distinction is wonderful encouragement that I am on the right track."**

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Since 1987, the Foundation has awarded more than \$462 million to fund more than 5,600 leading scientists around the world. This has led to over \$4 billion in additional funding for these scientists. 100% of every dollar donated for research is invested in our research grants. Our operating expenses are covered by separate foundation grants.

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Since 1987 the Foundation has awarded more than \$462 million to fund more than 6,700 grants.

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researchers

Grants have been given to more than 5,600 leading scientists around the world.