



## PRESS RELEASE

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### Emerging Scientists Awarded Grants to Fund Critical Pancreatic and Ovarian Cancer Research

Greenwich, CT – (November 13, 2024) – The [Hopper-Belmont Foundation](#) (HBF) is honoring five of the nation’s most innovative early-career cancer researchers with **the HBF Inspiration Award**.

Since the Foundation’s inception in 2020, 21 grantees have received critical funding to propel their research forward. This year’s awards focused on two of the deadliest cancers - pancreatic and ovarian. Pancreatic cancer is the third leading cause of cancer death with a five-year survival rate of just 11 percent.

The 2024 awardees are:

- Ryne Ramaker, MD/PhD, Duke University
- Nikita Bhalerao, PhD, University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School
- Jurgis Alvikas, MD, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center
- Cassandra Holbert, PhD, Johns Hopkins /Loyola University, Maryland
- Hanna Hong, PhD, Koch Institute at MIT

“We are truly excited to present the HBF Inspiration Awards to this talented and dedicated group of researchers,” said Joan Fowler, HBF executive director. “Garnering funding for early-career research can be a challenge, and we hope these grants will help these passionate awardees continue their quest for improved treatment outcome and a cure.”

Past award recipients have gone on to win major research funding, publish in highly respected journals, earn professorship roles, and launch their own labs at major oncology centers.

The next grant cycle will open in Spring 2025. For more information or to join the HBF mailing list visit [hopperbelmont.org](http://hopperbelmont.org).

The HBF Inspiration Award is designed to be a launch pad for bright, innovative researchers to gain early-stage financial support for concepts that can change the paradigm of cancer research.

**About the Hopper-Belmont Foundation:**

Hopper-Belmont Foundation (HBF) is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) focused on identifying, motivating, and supporting exceptional early-career research talent, who are pursuing innovative approaches in solving health and wellness challenges. Founded in 2019 by non-profit research and patient advocacy foundation leaders, the HBF created the Inspiration Award as a core initiative of the Foundation. The award targets senior post-doctoral or clinical fellow (MD, PhD, MD/PHD) or primary investigators in the first three years of their initial faculty appointment, or clinical fellows in the first three years, or post-doctoral faculty in the first three years of tenure. HBF welcomes individuals and families to join their mission and help annually recognize amazing talent that can accelerate the road to cures. Tax deductible donations can be made directly at [www.hopperbelmont.org/donate-now](http://www.hopperbelmont.org/donate-now) (100% of donations go directly to support research).