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# INAUGURAL SOPHIE AWARD FOR YOUNG KCNQ2 INVESTIGATORS ANNOUNCED

HOUSTON, TX. December 2, 2016 – At today's opening session of the 70th annual meeting of the American Epilepsy Society, the Jack Pribaz Foundation (Jack's Army) announced the inaugural Sophie Award for Young KCNQ2 Investigators. The recipient is Dr. John Millichap, attending physician at the Neurology and Epilepsy Center at the Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital in Chicago and Assistant Professor of Pediatrics and Neurology, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine. The award is a grant in the amount of $15,000, designed to support and encourage research of KCNQ2-related epilepsy. The Jack Pribaz Foundation chose Dr. Millichap as the first recipient for his dedication to bridging bench science and clinical application and for his contributions to the medical literature.

"We are delighted to give this award to Dr. Millichap," said Mike Pribaz, President of the Foundation and one of the directors of the Board. "Dr. Millichap has shown a commitment to excellence in the efforts to identify new patients with KCNQ2 mutations and to educate the medical community throughout the world about this rare condition. The entire KCNQ2 family and the larger community of pediatric neurology has a great ally in Dr. Millichap."

"I'm so proud to receive this award and to be a part of KCNQ2-related epilepsy research," Millichap said. "The spirit of collaboration I've found on an international scale among both researchers and families is uncommon and powerful. Together we have come a long way in a relatively short time, but there is a lot of work ahead of us," he said. "Receiving the Sophie Award is exciting but also humbling, because at the heart of our efforts are children and families who desperately need science to catch up with their conditions."

Presentation of the award will take place later this month at Lurie Children's.

The Jack Pribaz Foundation established the Sophie Award in honor of a child named Sophie who passed away from complications of the disease. The aim of the award is to inspire the next generation of KCNQ2 researchers. Young investigators are encouraged to learn more about the award and how to be nominated for consideration of future Sophie Awards at http://kcnq2.org/nomination-for-a-sophie-award/.

Mutations in the KCNQ2 gene for potassium channels in the brain are responsible for KCNQ2-related epilepsy and encephalopathy, which usually manifest with seizure onset in the first days of life and a spectrum of developmental disability.

Seven-year-old Jack Pribaz of Winfield, IL, was one the first known cases of KCNQ2 encephalopathy in the United States. His diagnosis prompted the establishment of the foundation that bears his name and now advocates for more than 400 families worldwide. Researchers are hopeful that knowledge of the mechanisms of this rare form of epilepsy may unlock greater understanding and treatment of epilepsy in general, a disease which affects one in 26 Americans.

More information about KCNQ2-related epilepsy and about the Jack Pribaz Foundation can be found at www.KCNQ2.org and www.JacksArmy.org.

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