

## **Award Highlights Diabetes Research**

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Dr. Vivian Fonseca, renowned researcher in diabetes and professor of medicine, is the newest recipient of the Oliver Fund Scholar Award, which is presented to Tulane faculty members to support research initiatives.



Dr. Vivian Fonseca is developing a novel treatment for diabetes based on the use of adult stem cells. He received the Oliver Fund Scholar Award. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

[Fonseca](#), who is chief of the section of endocrinology at the Tulane School of Medicine, will receive \$45,000 to fund his research in the management and treatment of diabetes. He also is vice president of science and medicine for the American Diabetes Association.

"It is an honor to make this prestigious award to a clinician-scientist of Dr. Fonseca's caliber," says Laura Levy, professor of microbiology and immunology, and associate

senior vice president for research. “We anticipate that his exciting and innovative project will significantly advance Tulane's capacity and leadership in regenerative medicine.”

Together with his research team, Fonseca is developing a novel treatment for diabetes based on the use of adult stem cells. These cells, cultured from the fat tissue of non-diabetic subjects, first will be delivered to animal models of diabetes in preclinical studies to test their efficacy in controlling inflammation and tissue damage caused by the disease.

The results of these studies will be used to develop human clinical trials for this innovative approach to diabetes treatment.

The [Oliver Fund](#) was created to support and enhance Tulane's faculty and intellectual capital. The fund is intended to stimulate faculty research initiatives, sustain such projects and increase their competitiveness for national research support.

Competition for Oliver Fund awards is held twice yearly, each focusing on an area of research strength in the sciences and engineering. Fonseca was selected through a rigorous process of peer review and scoring. Other finalists of this round were: Aline Betancourt, research assistant professor of microbiology and immunology; Manjong Han, research assistant professor of cell and molecular biology; and Kim O'Connor, professor of chemical and biomolecular engineering.