

VA spotlights research opportunities

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The Veterans Administration is building a new research facility that is part of the newly built Project Legacy complex. The facility, which incorporates a portion of the iconic Dixie Brewery building, is slated to open in early 2017. (Architectural rendering from the Veterans Administration)

While most know the National Institutes of Health as a research powerhouse, there's another familiar name in the game that's a major backer of medical research: the Department of Veterans Affairs.

In fact, Tulane University's first Nobel Prize-winning scientist [Dr. Andrew Schally](#), a former endocrinologist at the Tulane School of Medicine, was a VA Distinguished Medical Research Scientist whose labs studied peptide hormone production at the

New Orleans VA Medical Center.

“Tulane always has had a very strong relationship with the VA for research,” said Joseph Constans, associate chief of staff for research at the Southeast Louisiana Veterans Healthcare System.

The local facility is hosting a one-hour seminar at 4 p.m. on Thursday (May 21) at 2400 Canal St., to let medical researchers know about funding opportunities for research projects within the VA, which issues approximately \$600 million in grants annually. The event is part of [National VA Research Week](#).

“Our facility is very proud to host a VA Research program,” Constans said. “The innovations our researchers discover and develop advance health care not only for veterans in the New Orleans area, but also for veterans throughout our nation and for all American citizens.”

Medical researchers within the VA have access to an extensive patient population within a system that has “the best and most elaborate electronic medical record system,” Constans said. The system allows for more efficient research and is a wealth of data for retrospective analysis. The program also has career development opportunities for VA scientists and funding programs for smaller research projects that can grow into larger grants.

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For more information about the research seminar, contact Richard Mirabelli at 504-566-8435.

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