

## **Dr. Vivian Fonseca Receives Oliver Fund Scholar Award**

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anead@tulane.edu  
504-247-1443

Tulane University has presented the Oliver Fund Scholar Award to Dr. Vivian Fonseca, Tullis A. "Tulane Alumni Chair in Diabetes, professor of medicine and chief of the section of endocrinology of Tulane University School of Medicine.

Fonseca, who is also vice president of science and medicine at the American Diabetes Association, will receive \$45,000 to fund his research in the management and treatment of diabetes. 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, will first 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.

Competitions for Oliver Fund awards are held twice yearly, each one focused on a particular area of research strength in the sciences and engineering at Tulane. Fonseca was selected as the award recipient through a rigorous process of peer review and scoring. The 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.

"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."