

**NRFTD CONTINUES IT'S LONG STANDING SUPPORT OF THE SUMMER
FELLOWS PROGRAM AT THE COLUMBIA LYME CENTER**

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Wilton, CT – July 8, 2008 - Continuing its highly successful Summer Fellows program, supported in part by the National Fund for Tick-Borne Diseases (NRFTD), the Lyme and Tick-Borne Diseases Research Center at the Columbia University Medical Center has announced its Summer Fellows for 2008.

Columbia's Summer Fellows program was established in 2001 by Columbia and NRFTD to provide doctors-in-training with a comprehensive knowledge of the intricacies of tick-borne diseases.

Dr. Brian Fallon, Director of Columbia's Lyme Center, announced that two candidates have been selected for this year's Fellows program: Sarah Fulham and William Jackson. Ms. Fulham is a summa cum laude graduate of the University of Massachusetts Amherst. She holds two BA degrees -- one in social sciences and one in microbiology. Mr. Jackson, who hails from Trumbull, Connecticut, graduated magna cum laude from New York University with a BS degree in microbiology. "These two summer fellows are truly amazing young individuals whom we will be privileged to have with us for the summer," said Dr. Fallon. "In addition to their obvious intellectual gifts, both have shown impressive initiative by doing volunteer community health work during their medical school year."

Past topics of research by Columbia's Summer Fellows have included subjects as diverse as laboratory aspects of *Ixodes* tick coinfections, the differential diagnosis of depression, and Lyme disease immunopathogenesis.

"We are proud to have helped establish the endowment that supports Columbia's Summer Fellows Program," said NRFTD Research Board member Carl Brenner. "The program attracts ambitious students and gives them the opportunity to work with some of the world's foremost experts in tick-borne diseases. It is these students who will likely become the next generation of leaders -- both in research laboratories and in clinical practice -- in this complex and challenging field. We consider this program to be an important investment in the future of public health."

Additional financial support for the program comes from the Turn the Corner Foundation, Time for Lyme, Inc, and the Lyme Disease Association.

About the National Research Fund for Tick-Borne Diseases, Inc.

The NRFTD is a nonprofit, tax exempt organization devoted strictly to raising funds in support of scientific research on tick-borne diseases. It aims to advance scientific understanding of these complicated infections by sponsoring innovative research at premier institutions throughout the world.

The NRFTD was founded in 1999 to address the complex and critical research questions raised by thousands of patients afflicted with emerging tick-borne diseases, including Lyme disease, relapsing fever, anaplasmosis, babesiosis, and ehrlichiosis. The need for answers has grown markedly as Lyme disease continues to spread throughout the country and as other tick-borne infections have been recognized as public health threats.

For more information about the NRFTD, or to make a tax-deductible donation, please visit www.nrftd.org.