



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**National Non-Profit Contributes Thousands to Van Andel Research Institute
to Promote Parkinson's Study**

Grand Rapids, Mich. (February 9, 2015) — The KiMe Cure Neurological Disorders Fund (KiMe Fund), a national non-profit organization established through the East Tennessee Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit community foundation, today announced it has donated \$25,000 to Grand Rapids' Van Andel Research Institute (VARI) Center for Neurodegenerative Science (CNS). The contribution will help fund a breakthrough research initiative currently underway at VARI's CNS that aims to define the molecular mechanisms of a newly discovered gene that causes inherited Parkinson's disease.

Michigan-based business leader and philanthropist Deanna Hatmaker is vice chair and a director of the KiMe Fund Advisory Board and helped facilitate the partnership with VARI. Hatmaker selected the Research facility based on Dr. Patrik Brundin's reputation as world-renowned Parkinson's disease researcher and his ambitious plans for the Institute's CNS.

"The Van Andel Research Institute's CNS is a prominent facility that is focused on finding a cure for Parkinson's," said Hatmaker. "The KiMe Fund is proud to support Dr. Patrik Brundin's breakthrough neurological research that is aimed at making inroads that could one day lead to disease-modifying therapies and ultimately a cure."

Dr. Jeremy VanRaamsdonk, assistant professor and head of the Laboratory of Aging and Neurodegenerative Disease, VARI, Dr. Darren Moore, associate professor in VARI's CNS, and Dr. Trevor Tyson, VARI will head up the dynamic initiative regarding familial Parkinson's disease.

After being diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 2009, Steven Hodges established the KiMe Fund www.kimecnd.org in 2010 to support innovative approaches to Parkinson's disease research. Hodges, a business leader, researcher, and public speaker, named the Fund after his daughters, Kim and Megan, to serve as a constant reminder of the KiMe Fund goal to find a cure before the next generation has to face this disease.

“During our process of evaluating potential candidates to receive donations, it became apparent quickly that VARI shares our commitment to focus on finding a cure for Parkinson’s. We are hopeful that their research will help to achieve that objective. It is not a matter of if, it is a matter of when,” said Hodges.

“We are incredibly grateful to the KiMe Fund for this generous gift,” said Love Collins, III, vice president of Development, Communications & Marketing, Van Andel Institute. “Mr. Hodges’s commitment to fighting this disease is an inspiration to us all.”

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About Van Andel Institute

Van Andel Institute (VAI) is an independent biomedical research and science education organization committed to improving the health and enhancing the lives of current and future generations. Established by Jay and Betty Van Andel in 1996, VAI is based in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Van Andel Research Institute (VARI), VAI’s research division, is dedicated to determining the epigenetic, genetic, molecular and cellular origins of cancer, Parkinson’s and other diseases and working to translate those findings into effective therapies. More than 270 scientists and support staff work in on-site laboratories and in collaborative partnerships that span the globe. Find out more about Van Andel Institute or donate by visiting www.vai.org. 100% To Research, Discovery & Hope®