

September 14, 2010

Media Statement

DIABETES RESEARCH SEES STUDENT SNAP UP SCIENCE PRIZE

A PhD student from the Western Australian Institute for Medical Research's (WAIMR) Centre for Diabetes Research has taken out a prize for his work into Type 1 diabetes.

Ben Dwyer was awarded the \$2,000 New Investigator Prize for Biomedical Research by the WA Department of Health at the recent Combined Biological Sciences Meeting.

The conference, held at the University Club of WA, promoted biological science in Western Australia by encouraging the interaction of scientists, students, and industry from all of the life sciences, including medical research.

WAIMR Professor and Centre for Diabetes Research Director Grant Morahan congratulated Ben on his achievement.

"This prize is a great honour and recognises Ben's innovative work towards stem cell-based treatments for Type 1 diabetes – a condition that is on the rise," said Professor Morahan.

Ben's \$2,000 prize is to be used towards travel to a national or international conference to present his work.

"My research is focused on investigating the development of islet cells in the pancreas," said Mr Dwyer.

"The destruction of these cells by the body's immune system cause Type 1 diabetes, so if we can understand more about them, we may be able to create new ways of tackling Type 1 diabetes using stem cell-based treatments."

The research is being done in collaboration with WAIMR's Monoclonal Antibody Facility, AbSolutions.

In another highlight, Jane Chi Jie, a medical student visiting the Centre from Shanghai Jiao Tong University also took out an award at the UWA Winter School Program, winning the best presentation amongst the visiting students.

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