



Rachel Horne Prize

USA NEUROLOGIST WINS INAUGURAL RACHEL HORNE PRIZE FOR WOMEN'S RESEARCH IN MS

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Rhonda Voskuhl, MD, neurologist, research-scientist and clinician at the University of California (UCLA) is the first winner of the **Rachel Horne Prize for Women's Research in MS** for her work looking at sexual differences in susceptibility and progression in multiple sclerosis (MS) and identifying potential therapies to improve outcomes.

Dr Voskuhl is Professor of Neurology at UCLA, holds the Jack H Skirball Chair for Multiple Sclerosis Research, and is Director of the UCLA Multiple Sclerosis Programme. She describes her research as a "Bedside to Bench to Bedside" approach – taking observations made in clinical settings to the laboratory to investigate relevant biological mechanisms and then designing clinical trials to benefit patients.

"We are delighted to award this prize to Dr Voskuhl from a strong field of entrants for this inaugural year of the Rachel Horne Prize," said Professor Emmanuelle Waubant, Chair of International Women in MS (iWiMS) which oversaw the review and judging process.

"The award recognises Dr Voskuhl's excellence in women's health research in MS. She has dedicated her career to unravelling the impact of sex hormones and genes on biological processes that modulate MS phenotype and progression, leading to new treatment targets for patients. Dr Voskuhl's 25-year outstanding track record of sex related research has paved the way to advance women's health in particular."

"I am so very thankful for this award," said Dr Voskuhl. "Women make up the majority of MS patients. Only now are we beginning to fully appreciate the role of estrogens and X chromosome genes in disease pathogenesis. It has taken women in positions of influence in clinics, laboratories, newsrooms, and politics to embrace the invaluable clues revealed by sex differences research. The remaining unmet need is to translate findings to novel

treatments optimally tailored for women. I hope this prize raises awareness and advances the goal of developing such treatments. It is such an honour to be recognized in the name of Rachel Horne given her esteemed accomplishments in news and journalism.”

Dr Voskuhl will receive the award at the 9th JointECTRIMS-ACRIMS meeting in Milan, Italy, in October 2023.

The US\$40,000 prize, to be used at the discretion of the recipient, is made possible by the generosity of the Horne Family Charitable Foundation.

Rachel Horne, founder of the annual award said, “Huge congratulations to Dr Voskuhl who is such a deserving recipient of the prize due to her ground-breaking work into why women are three times more likely to get MS compared to men, and how to target treatments to modify disease progression.”

EDITOR’S NOTES

ABOUT THE RACHEL HORNE PRIZE FOR WOMEN’S RESEARCH IN MS

The Rachel Horne Prize recognises a woman scientist for their outstanding contribution to research in the understanding and treatment of women’s specific health issues in MS. The international prize of US\$40,000 is judged through International Women in MS (www.iwims.world) and supported by the European Committee for Treatment and Research in Multiple Sclerosis (ECTRIMS www.ectrims.eu).

ABOUT MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

MS is an unpredictable, often disabling disease of the central nervous system. An estimated 2.8 million people live with MS in the world. It is usually diagnosed between the ages of 20-50, with women three times more often affected compared to men. MS symptoms vary from numbness and tingling to blindness and paralysis. There is currently no cure for MS, but treatments are available which can modify the disease course and manage symptoms.

www.rachelhorneprize.com

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 Rachel Horne

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