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**La Jolla  
Institute**  
FOR IMMUNOLOGY

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## For Immediate Release

# New Prebys Foundation grant supports LJI mission to train the next generation of researchers

*With this new \$300,000 grant, LJI Assistant Professor Miguel Reina-Campos, Ph.D., sets out to make scientific training more accessible*

LA JOLLA, CA—LJI Assistant Professor [Miguel Reina-Campos, Ph.D.](#), has received a \$300,000 two-year grant to train and mentor paid interns from diverse backgrounds through the Prebys Foundation's [Youth Workforce Initiative](#).

"This funding from Prebys Foundation is critical for getting young people rotating through laboratories and gaining work experience," says Dr. Reina-Campos.

The Reina Lab focuses on harnessing "tissue resident" T cells to fight diseases such as cancer. With this new support, Reina will hire paid undergraduate and graduate students to conduct immune system research in his lab. His goal is to mentor interns as they build valuable skills and explore potential careers in the sciences.

"These interns will learn how to design and execute experiments alongside more experienced lab members, and they will practice skills such as histology, tissue culture, and working with mouse models," says Reina. "These trainees will finish their internships at LJI well equipped to decide if they want to further pursue careers in science."

## LJI supports equity for STEM trainees

Prebys Foundation is the largest independent private foundation in San Diego County. Through the Youth Workforce Initiative, Prebys has awarded \$5.89 million to twenty-four local organizations with a track record in workforce development and in supporting youth from historically underinvested communities.

"The dedication of La Jolla Institute for Immunology is truly inspiring, as it helps San Diego's emerging workforce discover their purpose and develop essential skills," said Grant Oliphant, CEO

of Prebys Foundation. "We are deeply thankful for the internship opportunities they provide, which empower our young people and open doors to a brighter future."

Prebys Foundation and LJI have worked together on several projects to strengthen San Diego's research community. Earlier this year, Prebys Foundation granted [Prebys Research Heroes Awards](#) to LJI Associate Professor Sonia Sharma, Ph.D., LJI Professor Sujan Shresta, Ph.D., and LJI Professor, President & CEO Erica Ollmann Saphire, Ph.D., MBA.

This generous support from Prebys Foundation included funding for lab and administrative personnel, including the Institute's first-ever Inclusion and Mentorship Program Coordinator—a key step in expanding LJI's professional development and internship programs to include more trainees from underinvested backgrounds. Additionally, the funding supported high-risk, high-reward research in the labs of the funded scientists.

"LJI strives to make careers in STEM more accessible for all San Diegans," says Saphire. "We are thankful for the Prebys Foundation's vision and support as we work to make science more equitable."

## **About La Jolla Institute**

La Jolla Institute for Immunology (LJI) is dedicated to understanding the intricacies and power of the immune system so that we may apply that knowledge to promote human health and prevent a wide range of diseases. Since its founding in 1988 as an independent, nonprofit research organization, the Institute has made numerous advances leading toward its goal: life without disease. Visit [lji.org](http://lji.org) for more information.

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