



Philanthropy News

Bulgari Corporation supports Rockefeller's COVID-19 research and women scientists

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hepatitis C. When COVID-19 struck, Dr. Riccardo Lax and the Rice lab shifted their focus to the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Their accomplishments include engineering harmless pieces of replicating coronavirus genetic material that can serve as a surrogate for the virus in lab research, allowing researchers to study the basic biology of the virus and screen for n

Since the emergence of SARS-CoV-2, the coronavirus that causes COVID-19, at least 25 Rockefeller labs specializing in infectious disease, immunology, genomics, structural biology, and other areas have pivoted to studying the virus and how it causes disease. The effort currently involves more than 75 women scientists, and the Bulgari gift will support them as they work to develop novel preventions and treatments.

The studies underway are already yielding promising results. For example, newly developed drugs based on powerful neutralizing antibodies, present in the blood of some people who have recovered from SARS-CoV-2 infection, will soon be entering clinical trials. In other lines of investigation, Rockefeller scientists have discovered a potential way to block coronaviruses from entering human cells and identified human gene mutations that might explain why some infected individuals develop life-threatening pneumonia and other severe symptoms while others experience milder disease.

Part of Bulgari's Virus Free Fund created to support leading institutions pursuing innovative research into the cure and remission of different types of viruses, the new Bulgari Women & Science Fund to Accelerate COVID-19 Research at The Rockefeller University will establish nine Bulgari Women & Science Fellowships in COVID-19 for women graduate students and postdoctoral fellows working on the disease. It will also support the development and clinical testing of new coronavirus therapeutics, including drugs to help combat SARS-CoV-2 in the near term as well as treatments that hold promise as long-term strategies both to alleviate the present coronavirus pandemic and prevent future ones.

In a webinar announcement of the gift, Rockefeller University President Richard P. Lifton commended Bulgari for its dedication to corporate social responsibility.

"Bulgari's visionary generosity is not only helping Rockefeller address the global health crisis we are now facing, but it is also providing the foundation for future discoveries by generations of world-class women scientists," Lifton says, adding that the two organizations share a commitment to supporting women in their profes-