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SOLVE FSHD Supports the FSHD Canada Foundation in Funding of US$1.2M in Multidisciplinary Biomarker Grants

VANCOUVER, B.C. – SOLVE FSHD, the venture-philanthropy organization founded by entrepreneur Chip Wilson, announces its' financial support to the FSHD Canada Foundation's **strategic investment of US$1.2M in biomarker grant funding** to facilitate biomarker research in facioscapulohumeral muscular dystrophy (FSHD). The FSHD Canada Foundation acknowledges the generous support of **SOLVE FSHD** towards funding these grants.

The biomarker grants have been awarded to the following projects: **Circulating biomarkers of disease activity in FSHD: Skeletal muscle exosomes** (Professor Enzo Ricci and Dr. Giorgio Tasca, Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, Rome, Italy); **IMPROVE FSHD: Artificial intelligence analysis to validate new serum biomarkers and therapeutic target for FSHD** and **UNDERSTAND FSHD2: An 18-month prospective natural history study to gain insight FSHD2 pathophysiology and disease progression** (Dr. Sabrina Sacconi, Nice University Hospital Center); and **Investigation of circulating biomarkers in FSHD** (Dr. Yi-Wen Chen, Children's National Hospital, Washington, DC).

These biomarker grant projects were prioritized by **SOLVE FSHD** based on their proposed potential to impact clinical trial outcomes and accelerate timelines for the development of FSHD therapeutics. Biological markers are either molecules that circulate in the blood (proteins, microRNA, metabolites) or structural features that can be imaged by MRI or ultrasound. Identifying disease-specific biomarkers are critically important because they can confirm an FSHD-related change, can reliably track disease progression and can be an early predictor of the effects of new therapies, resulting in more efficient and shorter clinical trials.

"For diseases such as FSHD, there is a tremendous challenge for transforming scientific discoveries into new drug treatments due to the slow-progressing nature of the disease. The goal is to identify a biomarker that changes early and predicts disease progression," says **Dr. Eva Chin, SOLVE FSHD Executive Director**. "Funding the development of appropriate biomarkers will help to accelerate the development of new therapies by reducing the duration of clinical trials, potentially reducing the overall cost of developing innovative treatments, and ultimately the discovery of a cure for FSHD."

Facioscapulohumeral muscular dystrophy (FSHD) is a type of muscular dystrophy in which there is progressive muscle degeneration and muscle weakness that leads to an inability to lift objects, groom oneself and walk.

About SOLVE FSHD
SOLVE FSHD is funding innovative biotech and biopharma research and development activities that accelerate novel treatments of Facioscapulohumeral muscular dystrophy (FSHD) treatment. It is fully funded and created by Canadian entrepreneur and philanthropist Chip Wilson. The founder of yoga-inspired athletic apparel company Lululemon Athletica inc. has been living with FSHD for the last three

decades of his life. He has committed $100 million of his own money to create SOLVE FSHD and kick-start funding into projects that fit the organization's mission: accelerate research into new therapies and find a cure for the disorder by 2027.

Future announcements for grant funding will be issued on SOLVE FSHD's website - https://solvefshd.com.

For early-stage companies, contact SOLVE FSHD at info@solvefshd.com.

If you have FSHD and want to find out about clinical trials or be included in the FSHD registry, please visit SOLVE FSHD's website - https://solvefshd.com.

For more information on the FSHD Canada Foundation, please visit - https://fshd.ca.

For media inquiries or to request a media interview, please contact:
Kamran Shaikh, Account Director
PR Associates
kshaikh@prassociates.com
778-846-5406