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The ACMG Foundation for Genetic and Genomic Medicine Announces the 2020 Recipient of the ACMG Foundation Carolyn Mills Lovell Genetic Counselor Award

BETHESDA, MD – March 18, 2020 | Katelynn Sagaser, MS, CGC was presented the 2020 **ACMG Foundation Carolyn Mills Lovell Genetic Counselor Award** for her platform presentation, “Not Just a Carrier: Hypophosphatasia Presentations of 12 *ALPL* Heterozygotes Identified Through Routine Expanded Carrier Screening.”

Ms. Sagaser is a certified genetic counselor and assistant professor of gynecology & obstetrics at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore, Maryland. She received her Bachelor of Science in Biopsychology from Messiah College and completed her master’s degree in genetic counseling at the University of Texas Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences in Houston. She is board certified in genetic counseling by the American Board of Genetic Counseling. Katie works as part of a team of five prenatal genetic counselors and two maternal fetal medicine geneticists at Hopkins. She and her genetic counseling colleagues see patients with a wide variety of prenatal and preconception genetics indications in the Johns Hopkins Prenatal Diagnosis and Treatment Center as well as the Johns Hopkins Center for Fetal Therapy. Katie is a clinical supervisor for genetics trainees from the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, the National Institutes of Health and the University of Maryland. She is the 2020 senior co-chair of the National Society of Genetic Counselors Prenatal Special Interest Group and the recipient of the 2019 National Society of Genetic Counselors New Leader Award. Katie’s professional interests include genetic counseling for complex congenital anomalies, fetal dysmorphism, intricacies of expanded carrier screening in the general population, and the role of spirituality in health care.

The Carolyn Mills Lovell Award was made possible by a generous donation from former ACMG medical director David Flannery, MD, FAAP, FACMG to honor Carolyn Mills Lovell, MAT, MS, CGC, a genetic counselor who continues to provide exemplary service and care to patients and their families at Augusta University, previously known as the Medical College of Georgia (MCG). Dr. Flannery worked with Carolyn Mills Lovell for more than 15 years while he was at MCG. Through this award he also wanted to recognize the contributions and accomplishments of genetic counselors.

The award includes a cash prize of \$1,000 and is presented to one recipient annually through 2025. The recipient is chosen based on the highest rated abstract submitted by a genetic counselor to the ACMG Annual Meeting.

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ACMG Foundation President Bruce R. Korf, MD, PhD, FACMG said, “Genetic counselors are valued partners in the care of individuals and families with genetic conditions. This award recognizes the importance of this partnership and their vital contribution to patient care.”

Upon receiving the award, Ms. Sagaser said, “Receiving the 2020 Carolyn Mills Lovell Genetic Counselor Award is a tremendous honor for which I am deeply grateful. The research honored by this award would not have been possible without the collaborative efforts of my abstract co-authors, especially Natalie Beck, MGC, CGC, whose expertise in genetic counseling for hypophosphatasia is unparalleled. Our research highlights the invaluable role of genetic counselors in thorough interpretation of genetic testing results as they apply to the health of patients and their family members with previously unrecognized disease, such as hypophosphatasia. We hope that this study will aid in illuminating the incidence and clinical symptomatology of heterozygous *ALPL* variants in the general population, and will also prompt critical dialogue regarding follow-up strategies for incidental diagnoses made from heterozygous results on expanded carrier screening ordered by genetic counselors and physicians for reproductive risk assessment.”

“Congratulations to Katelynn Sagaser on winning the 6th Carolyn Mills Lovell Award. This Award was established to recognize the important role of genetic counselors in genetic and genomic healthcare and in the ACMG. Ms. Sagaser’s study is a valuable contribution to clinical genetics and to carrier screening. It demonstrates the value of re-examining phenotype in a previously “well-known” condition and also highlights the important role genetic counselors play in research and clinical care,” said David Flannery, MD, FAAP, FACMG.

About the ACMG Foundation for Genetic and Genomic Medicine

The ACMG Foundation for Genetic and Genomic Medicine, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, is a community of supporters and contributors who understand the importance of medical genetics and genomics in healthcare. Established in 1992, the ACMG Foundation supports the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics (ACMG) mission to “translate genes into health.” Through its work, the ACMG Foundation fosters charitable giving, promotes training opportunities to attract future medical geneticists and genetic counselors to the field, shares information about medical genetics and genomics, and sponsors important research. To learn more and support the ACMG Foundation mission to create “Better Health through Genetics” visit www.acmgfoundation.org.

Note to editors: To arrange interviews with experts in medical genetics, contact ACMG Senior Director of Public Relations Kathy Moran, MBA at kmoran@acmg.net.

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