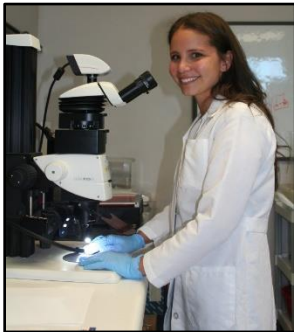


# NREF Success Story



The following is a summary of a conversation between **Dr. Teresa Purzner** and **Dr. William Couldwell** during the 2017 American Academy of Neurological Surgery meeting in California.

**Dr. Couldwell:** *Can you describe how the NREF funding helped you acquire significant other funding?*



**Dr. Purzner:** When I received NREF funding, I had very preliminary data. It is hard to get funding from other resources with preliminary data. I really needed proof of concept, proof that the hypothesis was likely true. What the NREF funding did was give me a year of cushion time, where I could do the experiments that could prove the hypothesis with high potential.

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**Dr. Purzner:** When I received NREF funding, I had very preliminary data. It is hard to get funding from other resources with preliminary data. I really needed proof of concept, proof that the hypothesis was likely true. What the NREF funding did was give me a year of cushion time, where I could do the experiments that could prove the hypothesis with high potential.

Because I was able to do this, the very next year I was awarded a \$200,000 fellowship from another source that funded me for three years, as well as provided the opportunity to achieve some preclinical data. Once we had the preclinical data showing some efficacy in the animals, we were able to acquire other grants to pursue the work further, ultimately about \$500,000.

**Dr. C:** *Did the Canadian government help you with funding as well?*

**Dr. P:** Unfortunately, no. Because I was a Canadian resident working in the U.S., I was unable to qualify for Canadian funding and many NIH resources. It narrowed the scope to foundation funding, private and philanthropic sources. To receive funding from these sources, we really needed good preclinical data to demonstrate clinical translational potential. That is why the NREF funding was such a blessing to get, to allow me to get preliminary data as a necessary first step that enabled other funding.

**Dr. C:** *Awesome. What are your goals?*

**Dr. P:** I love developmental biology and its relevance to understanding cancer with rational and targeted therapies. My goal is to continue to study developmental biology, apply my knowledge and interest in drug development and apply my skills and interest in clinical trials to clinical treatment. I would like to pursue high yield targeted therapies.

**Dr. C:** *Where do you plan on working following your training?*

**Dr. P:** My husband and I have two more years of clinical training left in residency after we finish our PhDs; we will have to see who is willing to hire two married neurosurgeons at the same time!