
[James Gardner Receives Pew Award in Biomedical Sciences](#)

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Submitted by jchen on June 15, 2023

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James Gardner MD PhD, a transplant surgeon and Assistant Professor in Surgery and Diabetes Center, is the first surgeon to be named a Pew Biomedical Scholar in the program's nearly 40-year history for his work on how the body teaches itself to distinguish between its own tissues and foreign pathogens.

As a trainee in Mark Anderson's lab, Gardner discovered a class of cells called extrathymic Aire-expressing cells, or eTACs, that may act as immune educators. These cells play a critical role in immune regulation for conditions ranging from healthy pregnancy and maternal-fetal tolerance to the prevention and treatment of autoimmune diseases like Type I diabetes. Gardner hopes learning how to manipulate and modify these immune educator cell populations will lead to more precise treatments for a broad range of human diseases.

“As a surgeon-scientist I believe I’m in a unique position to help promote collaboration and crosstalk between basic and translational research,” he said. “And I’m incredibly fortunate to be a part of a division and department here at UCSF that supports this kind of fundamental research. UCSF is a place that truly fosters collaboration and innovation, and none of this would be possible without that environment.”

The Pew Scholars Program in the Biomedical Sciences provides funding to young investigators of outstanding promise in science relevant to the advancement of human health. The program makes grants to selected academic institutions to support the independent research of outstanding individuals who are in their first few years of their appointment at the assistant professor level.

The Pew Charitable Trusts, which funds the awards, an independent nonprofit, is the sole beneficiary of seven individual charitable funds established between 1948 and 1979 by two sons and two daughters of Sun Oil Company founder Joseph Newton Pew and his wife, Mary Anderson Pew. Honoring their parents' religious conviction that good works should be done quietly, the original Pew Memorial Foundation was a grantmaking organization that made donations anonymously.

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