

NY Genome Center, Illumina, Feinstein Launch Alzheimer's Gene Study



By a GenomeWeb staff reporter

NEW YORK (GenomeWeb News) – The New York Genome Center, a new multi-partner genome sequencing and informatics initiative based in New York City, said today that in its first large-scale project it will team with Illumina and The Feinstein Institute for Medical Research to sequence and study 1,000 human genomes.

Focused on finding Alzheimer's disease susceptibility genes, this initial NYGC project will start with samples from 130 Alzheimer's patients for whom there is detailed clinical data and brain pathology information available, and will expand to 1,000 patients over a four-year period. Those samples will be sequenced, analyzed, and compared against a control group of samples from elderly individuals, NYGC said.

The Feinstein Institute is part of the North Shore-LIJ Health System, an institutional founding member of NYGC.

The goal of the effort, the data from which will be released to the scientific community, is to generate knowledge about genetic susceptibility genes in order to assist in assessing individual risk of developing Alzheimer's. In addition, the project seeks to define the molecular pathways for neuronal degeneration and to support development of early detection and targeted treatments.

"The Feinstein Institute's commitment to sharing the data resulting from these efforts with the greater research community could significantly accelerate the speed of translational research in Alzheimer's disease, with a profound impact on patient care and clinical outcomes, which is in line with the vision of NYGC," the center's Founding Executive Director, Nancy Kelley, said in a statement.

NYGC said that it will provide Illumina with access to its founding members at a number of academic and medical research institutes, and Illumina will provide the collaborators with early access to new products.

"The launch of this initiative with NYGC and The Feinstein Institute will enable a deeper understanding of the clinical application of genetics, along the path of improving human health," Illumina CEO and President Jay Flatley said in the statement.

The study is being funded through a grant from philanthropists Frank and Mildred Feinberg.

The 11-member non-profit NYGC, which officially launched last fall, is funded with an initial \$125 million investment and it has yet to settle on a space for its planned 120,000 square-foot location in Manhattan

In addition to the partners involved in this project, NYGC's founding members include Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory; Columbia University; Cornell University/Weill Cornell Medical College; Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center; Mount Sinai Medical Center; New York-Presbyterian Hospital; New York University/NYU School of Medicine; The Jackson Laboratory; The Rockefeller University; and Stony Brook University.