

WASHINGTON- Congressman Spencer Bachus is happy to announce 6 grants awarded by the Department of Health and Human Services to the University of Alabama Birmingham. “These grants will allow researchers to investigate and defeat diseases, and I am proud to be associated with such an endeavor”, Congressman Bachus said.

\$242,500 was designated to the search for an HIV-1 T cell vaccine. Dr. Jerry Blackwell, the project director, described the project as, “an attempt to program dendritic cells to more quickly recognize and respond to HIV...by creating rapid response immune cells, it may be possible to stop HIV infection before it spreads out of control.”

Dr. Tang Jianming’s investigation into how HIV alters gene expression in infected individuals received a grant of \$251,950. “Information gathered from this study will provide researchers with a better understanding of the complex HIV puzzle and may ultimately lead to new HIV/AIDS treatments”, explained Dr. Jianming.

Heart attacks permanently damage parts of the body other than the heart. Dr. Paul Brookes study focuses on the deprivation of oxygen experienced during a heart attack, and how it destroys the mitochondria. These are small particles in cells that are responsible for converting food into energy. \$290,000 in grant money has been allocated to this effort. “The findings may eventually lead to the development of new drugs to enhance a patient’s recovery from a heart attack”, said Dr. Brookes.

Dr. Cornelius Becker is leading a study that received \$337,750 for the study of how malaria enters human cells. The study will provide a better understanding of how parasites cause infection and may aid in improving disease control.

Two additional studies received \$299,813 and \$290,000 respectively. Clinical research on neurological disorders, headed by Dr. David Weiss and blood disease research led by Dr. Ryan Thomas both received grants in the amounts listed above. “All of these diseases will hopefully one day be wiped from the face of the earth, and these funds are the first step”, Congressman Bachus concluded.