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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AUTISM SCIENCE FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES RECIPIENT OF NEW RESEARCH ACCELERATOR GRANT

Ms. Anne Roux of Drexel University to use funding to improve employment outcomes for transition-aged youth with autism

NEW YORK, NY (December 15, 2017) – The Autism Science Foundation, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing innovative autism research, today announced the recipient of its research accelerator grant. These grants are designed to expand the scope, speed the progress, increase the efficiency, and improve final product dissemination of active autism research grants. The award recipient is Anne Roux, MS, of Drexel University, whose research focuses on leveraging new federal law to improve employment outcomes for transition-aged youth (ages 16-24) with autism spectrum disorder.

"This funding allows researchers to leverage their findings quickly," said Autism Science Foundation Chief Science Officer Alycia Halladay, Ph.D. "In this case, this award will capitalize on changes in federal law to improve employment for people with autism entering the workforce. This is a traditionally understudied area with a huge impact in the lives of people with autism."

Ms. Roux's research at Drexel University, currently funded by the Organization for Autism Research, focuses on the study of how the use of vocational rehabilitation services influences employment outcomes on a state by state level for youth with autism. This July, as this research was being conducted, state plans were approved for use of federal funding under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). WIOA enables states to create unique strategies for delivering pre-employment transition programs for youth. The timing of the new WIOA state plans in the context of the study of state programs provides a unique opportunity for a natural experiment to determine the effect of changes in practices after the implementation of the new federal law. The ASF accelerator grant will allow her team to characterize the new programs emerging from WIOA on a state by state basis, and will establish metrics of autism-specific practices in each state. The accelerator funding will speed up the ability to identify what higher-performing states are doing well and inform the development of autism-specific practice guidelines.

About the Autism Science Foundation:

The Autism Science Foundation (ASF) is a 501(c)(3) public charity. Its mission is to support autism research by providing funding to scientists and organizations conducting autism research. ASF also provides information about autism to the general public and serves to increase awareness of autism spectrum disorders and the needs of individuals and families affected by autism. To learn more about the Autism Science Foundation or to make a donation, visit www.autismsciencefoundation.org.

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