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Hearing Industry Research Consortium Announces New Grant Recipients

Winners Receive \$150,000 Each to Advance the Understanding of Dynamic Spatial Listening Scenarios

MINNEAPOLIS, Dec. 3, 2013 – The **Hearing Industry Research Consortium** (IRC) is excited to announce its most recent grant proposal recipients. The team of Theo Goverts, Ph.D., and Steve Colburn, Ph.D., along with Virginia Best, Ph.D., were selected to receive \$150,000 each for research which will advance the understanding of the perception of dynamic spatial listening scenarios.

Formed in 2012, the IRC is made up of the heads of research from the top hearing aid manufacturers in the world with the purpose of creating research that will benefit the hearing aid industry and audiology community as a whole.

The IRC received 24 outstanding grant proposals from around the world for this most recent RFP. **Last May**, Piers Dawes, Ph.D., and Andrea Pittman, Ph.D., were awarded the first IRC grants for research aimed to advance the understanding of the interaction between cognition and hearing aids.

Goverts is head of the Audiological Center and a medical physicist audiologist at the VU University Medical Center in Amsterdam, and Colburn is the director of the Hearing Research Center and professor of biomedical engineering at Boston University. Their research will take a detailed look at speech recognition in realistic dynamic listening scenarios.

"We are very excited by the opportunities provided by this grant to address questions related to spatial hearing in complicated listening situations," said Goverts. "We hope that our work will help audiologists to better treat people with hearing problems."

Best currently works as a research scientist with the National Acoustic Laboratories in Sydney, Australia, and as a research assistant professor at Hearing Research Center, Boston University. Her research will examine a dynamic speech comprehension task for assessing real-world listening ability and hearing aid benefit.

"We are delighted that the IRC has decided to support this work. The grant will enable us to develop a new test that measures how well people can follow dynamic conversations in noisy places," said Best. "Using this test we will also gather new knowledge about how hearing loss and hearing aids affect this critical part of everyday communication."

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"We are very pleased to have received quite a large number of excellent proposals from renowned universities all around the world, and we want to thank every applicant for his or her contribution," said Stefan Launer, 2013 Chair of the IRC. "It shows us that we have selected a topic of great interest and potential for the research community and thus our entire industry. We have selected proposals that present a mixture between innovative approaches to basic science and direct clinical applicability. We wish the two selected research teams great success with their projects, and we very much look forward to seeing the results being openly and publicly presented and discussed. Hopefully this initiative will stimulate further research in this exciting field."

About the Hearing Industry Research Consortium

The Hearing Industry Research Consortium (IRC) is made up of the heads of research from the top hearing aid manufacturers in the world, which include **GN ReSound**, **Oticon**, **Phonak**, **Siemens** Hearing Instruments, **Starkey Hearing Technologies** and **Widex**. The IRC was created to promote a non-competitive, mutually agreed upon research agenda benefitting the hearing aid industry, its customers and end users. For more information about the Hearing Industry Research Consortium, visit www.hearingirc.com.

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