

VFW Ladies Auxiliary Awards Iowa Student \$100,000 Fellowship

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KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Kristina Wyatt Thiel, Ph.D., postdoctoral fellow in the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine, is the recipient of a two-year, \$100,000 fellowship from the Ladies Auxiliary to the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

Thiel, whose mentor is UI faculty member Paloma Giangrande, Ph.D., studies novel ways to treat certain kinds of breast cancer cells that may become immune to therapies such as Herceptin, a drug that helps many patients with breast cancer.

Thiel plans to identify an agent that, once inside a tumor, halts survival of the breast cancer cells. She will use a "Trojan horse" approach to get this agent -- a small-interfering RNA -- into cancer cells. This therapy will cause the cancer cells to die without affecting normal healthy cells.

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