



Sallie Bernard, awardee Arthur Ryan, PhD and Liz Bell at the Suicide Summit

## **JKBF bestows first Biological Research Award**

At the 2019 International Summit on Suicide Research in Miami, the International Academy of Suicide Research (IASR) and JKBF presented the first *James Kirk Bernard Foundation Award for Excellence in the Biological Exploration of Suicide* to Arthur Ryan, Ph.D. Selected by an IASR committee as a finalist in a pool of early career researchers presenting innovative biological studies, Dr. Ryan was chosen by JKBF for his work investigating fatty acid profiles associated with suicide. Dr. Ryan's research was done in collaboration with co-authors and mentors from several leading research institutions, including the Uniformed Services University of the Health

Sciences, The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and the Washington D.C. VA hospital.

Dr. Ryan is an advanced postdoctoral research fellow studying the biology of suicidal behavior in U.S. Veterans at the Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center, a research institute located within the Baltimore VA hospital. He received his Ph.D. in clinical psychology from Emory University, where he studied the development of psychotic disorders. Dr. Ryan's goal is to become a career VA research scientist developing biological treatments to prevent suicide in Veterans and other individuals living with mental illness.

JKBF's interest in the exploration of biological factors involved in suicide plays out in Dr. Ryan's research, which suggests that fatty acid profiles may be associated with suicide. His work is described in our first *From the Scientist* piece below. We celebrate the cross-institutional collaborations involved in this work, as we believe that a gathering of various perspectives and expertise promotes discovery. JKBF is pleased that our first award recipient exhibits a dedication to researching the biological factors related to suicide, and we wish Dr. Ryan success and productivity in his career ahead.

JKBF appreciates the collaboration with IASR and the efforts of the selection committee members, Gil Zalsman, Maria Oquendo, and Cornelis van Heeringen, in making this award possible. Dr. Ryan received an honorarium as well as an award featuring a piece of Jamie's art, and his research is being submitted for publication in a research journal.