Dr. Steve Finkbeiner is an Associate Director and Senior Investigator at the Gladstone Institute of Neurological Disease (GIND). At Gladstone, he conducts his research at the Roddenberry Stem Cell Center. Dr. Finkbeiner also directs the Taube-Koret Center for Huntington’s Disease Research and the Hellman Family Foundation Alzheimer’s Disease Research Program. He is also a Professor of Neurology and Physiology at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF).

Dr. Finkbeiner studies the molecular mechanisms that are responsible for learning, memory and neurodegeneration. A better understanding of the mechanisms that control memory formation in neurons will yield crucial insights into the development and progression of neurodegenerative diseases—and the memory disorders that often characterize them.

As one of the first investigators to join GIND in 1999, Dr. Finkbeiner is best known for his pioneering work on neurodegenerative diseases. He invented robotic microscopy, a new form of imaging that has helped unravel cause-and-effect relationships in amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS, or Lou Gehrig’s disease), Huntington’s, Alzheimer’s and other neurodegenerative diseases. Dr. Finkbeiner used his robotic microscope to resolve a long-standing puzzle in Huntington’s disease. A study based on results from the microscope became the most-cited paper in the field of neuroscience in the last decade.

With the help of Bay Area philanthropists, Dr. Finkbeiner established the Taube-Koret Center in 2009 to accelerate the development of drug therapies for patients suffering from conditions such as Huntington’s disease.

Dr. Finkbeiner is Associate Editor of Autophagy and serves on the editorial board of the Journal of Huntington’s Disease and BioMed Central. He has received numerous awards for his work, including the Lieberman Award, the Taube-Koret Prize and the Award for Outstanding Research Achievement from Nature Biotechnology. He is a member of several scientific and professional societies, including the American Neurological Association, the Society for Neuroscience, the Society for Cell Biology and the Biophysical Society. He is active in graduate training and is a member of the Neuroscience, Biomedical Sciences and Medical Scientist Training Programs at UCSF.

In 1986, Dr. Finkbeiner earned a bachelor’s degree from Wheaton College. He earned both an MD and a PhD in neuroscience from Yale University in 1991. He completed an internship in internal medicine and chief residency in neurology at UCSF, followed by a research fellowship at Harvard Medical School.