



# McKNIGHT BRAIN RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Preserving memory, enhancing life

March 15, 2021

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*Established by  
Evelyn F. McKnight  
to Alleviate Memory Loss  
in the Aging*

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Carol A. Barnes, PhD  
Director, Evelyn F. McKnight Brain Institute  
Evelyn F. McKnight Chair for Learning and Memory in Aging  
University of Arizona Regents Professor  
University of Arizona  
Tucson, AZ 85724

Dear Dr. Barnes,

At the February 2021 meeting of the McKnight Brain Research Foundation (MBRF), the trustees reviewed the 2020 annual report submitted by the Evelyn F. McKnight Brain Institute (MBI) at the University of Arizona (UA). The report was seen as well-organized and representative of the productivity of the MBI. The trustees appreciated the consolidation in the report of the scientific achievements by nonhuman animal and human aging experiments and the overall attractive format and impressive content.

The research achievements included in the report are significant, especially given the challenges the past year presented. The trustees were impressed with the MRI imaging of the brains of rodents and the study of executive function in humans by observing the patterns of daily word use. The studies of episodic future thinking in older adults and those investigating the role of physical activity were noted by the trustees.

The trustees commend you and your team for the perseverance and organization required to submit the new RO1 application to NIH to better understand the basis of brain and cognitive resilience. In addition, the submission of a P30 grant to build the infrastructure to guide efforts to reach consensus on the most effective operational definitions for brain and cognitive reserve will lead to an important outcome. We support your continued role on the executive committee working with Dr. Yaakov Stern and others.

The preparation required to resubmit the U19 grant for the Precision Aging Network was a remarkable achievement. We applaud you and all who were involved. The collaboration with UM, Johns Hopkins, and Emory will prove to be a fruitful one. Like you, the trustees envision making great strides in understanding how the brain changes during aging and how this impacts cognition. Please let us know when the decisions on approval of the grants are shared with you, **as well as the status of the pilot study which we funded in an effort to help with the U19 resubmission. (Already submitted by UM. Correction shared with Dr. Barnes)**

It was exciting to learn of the growth in the matching funds for the MBRF Gift. The commitment of the University of Arizona Foundation under the capable leadership of Mr. Rocznik in completing the match is impressive and acknowledged with appreciation by the trustees.

The trustees send their collective appreciation to you for your leadership and tremendous efforts in continuing to advance the research initiatives of the MBRF leading to the understanding and alleviation of age-related cognitive decline and memory loss.

Sincerely,

Amy Porter  
Executive Director

cc: Robert Robbins, MD, President  
J.P. Rocznik, President and CEO, UA Foundation  
Lee Ryan, PhD  
LuAnn Snyder  
MBRF Trustees

Please address all correspondence to:

Melanie Cianciotto ♦ SunTrust Bank ♦ Post Office Box 620005 ♦ Orlando, Florida 32862 ♦ 407--237-4485

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202-302-9849

### **Website:**

[www.mcknightbrain.org](http://www.mcknightbrain.org)