



# McKNIGHT BRAIN RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Preserving memory, enhancing life

February 16, 2022

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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  
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Dear Dr. Barnes,

At the February 9, 2022, meeting of the McKnight Brain Research Foundation (MBRF), the trustees reviewed the 2021 annual report submitted by the Evelyn F. McKnight Brain Institute (EMBI) at the University of Arizona (UA). The report was seen as well-organized synopsis of the productivity of the MBI. The trustees appreciated the submission of supplemental information in advance of the formal review.

The research achievements included in the report are significant, especially given the continued challenges imposed by the pandemic. It is impressive that the EMBI at the UA experienced no Covid-19 infections and there were no transmissions of the virus within the laboratories throughout the UA. Despite the isolation with most research scientists working remotely, the trustees are impressed with the grant support received in 2021 and the collaborative research which was able to be accomplished.

The trustees commend you on your success in receiving four new grants in 2021. It is exciting that the one RO1 award for five years, which has been running **since 1982**, will study aging rats, monkeys, **and humans** all within the same grant. The approval of the new RO1 application to NIH to understand the basis of brain and cognitive resilience and the preliminary approval of the Training Grant application on the Neurobiology of Aging provide a very balanced portfolio of research.

However, the ultimate achievement is the approval for funding of the \$60 Million U19 grant entitled **"Precision Aging Network: Closing the Gap Between Cognitive Healthspan and Human Lifespan"**. You, as the Principal Investigator, are strongly commended and congratulated for having the vision, stamina, determination and respect among your colleagues and peers to develop such a broad collaborative consortium of investigators. Without the leadership of you and your team, the largest award ever received for research leading to a better understanding of the normative aging brain and cognition would not have been possible. The trustees are inadequate to express the level of admiration, praise, and pride for this monumental personal and professional achievement.

The trustees are reminded the MBI at UA hosted the first inter-institutional meeting in 2008 and set the standards for future meetings which have continued annually, uninterpreted except for 2020, due to the pandemic. It is with pleasure and anticipation that the 13th inter-institutional meetings will be hosted by the MBI at UA. The trustees express appreciation to you and your enduring leadership as chair of the leadership council in planning what is anticipated to be another successful meeting.

The trustees send their collective appreciation to you for your leadership and the 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      Lee Ryan, PhD      MBRF Trustees  
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