



March 1, 2023

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 | PO Box 245115 | Tucson, AZ 85724

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

Dear Dr. Barnes,

At the February 16, 2023, meeting of the McKnight Brain Research Foundation (MBRF), the trustees reviewed the 2022 annual report submitted by the Evelyn F. McKnight Brain Institute (EMBI) at the University of Arizona (UA). The report was seen as a well-organized synopsis of the productivity of the EMBI. The trustees appreciate the role that UA played in hosting the first in-person Inter-Institutional meeting since the pandemic – it was a clear continuation of the high bar set in 2008 when UA hosted the first inter-institutional meeting. The trustees were impressed by your descriptions of the many research achievements at the EMBI in this first “post-pandemic” year and congratulate the eight investigators who received honors and awards this past year.

The trustees commend you on your success in receiving the renewal for the NIA Training Grant and for a favorable review with an outstanding priority score on the additional grant submission. It is impressive that these two awards and the others in your portfolio will support advancements in research on brain aging and cognition for the next five years. The trustees applaud your stimulating and collaborative leadership over many years, culminating in the receipt of the U19 grant and successful progress judged by the Program Officers at the NIA of the Precision Aging Network Project, at the end of its first year. Through this monumental effort, the scientific community is collectively inspired by the constellation of efforts and partnerships that are advancing this national initiative.

The trustees also noted the accelerated progress made this year to meet the balance of the match requirement for the EMBI’s endowment. We are confident that with renewed fundraising efforts, the UA EMBI will be able to complete the match.

As a follow up to this letter, the trustees request an organizational chart of the EMBI to better understand the various roles and reporting structure between the EMBI and the University’s administration. Additionally, the report does not mention the associate director of the EMBI or the advisory committee and its role in the management of the EMBI. The trustees will appreciate receiving additional information regarding these topics.

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,

Angelika Schlanger, PhD
Executive Director

CC: Robert Robbins, MD, President, UA; J.P. Rocznik, President and CEO, UA Foundation; Peggy Nolty, Executive Assistant and Administrator, EMBI, Department of Psychology; MBRF Trustees

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