



McKNIGHT BRAIN RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Preserving memory, enhancing life

March 15, 2021

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

Ralph L. Sacco, MD, MS
Executive Director, Evelyn F. McKnight Brain Institute
Tatjana Rundek, MD, PhD
Scientific Director and Evelyn F. McKnight Chair for Learning and Memory in Aging
Evelyn F. McKnight Brain Institute
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Dear Dr. Sacco and Dr. Rundek,

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 Miami (UM). The scope, depth, and impact of the academic and educational programs are to be commended, especially given the challenges that the past year presented.

The trustees were pleased to note the quality of the report and its thoughtful organization. The trustees commend you on the consensus driven approach to input and completion of the five-year strategic plan. Thank you for including a copy of the plan in the appendix of the report. In addition, the trustees note the many accomplishments, achievements, awards and presentations of the past year.

The adaptability and resourcefulness to COVID-related challenges were complimented by the trustees, including the development of a comprehensive online neuropsychological battery by Dr. Bonnie Levin and her team and the expanded cognitive aging curriculum and Public Education Outreach Program by Dr. Xiaoyan Sun. The trustees were interested in the education programs on nutrition and mindfulness, especially in light of the stress of the pandemic on the older adult, and your team was able to capitalize on remote education strategies to broaden impact. The progress made by Dr. Christian Camargo and Dr. Sarah Getz, McKnight Clinical Translational Research Scholars, was noted among many other areas of significant activity, including the recruitment of Dr. Christian Agudelo as the first Evelyn F. McKnight Neurocognitive Scholar. Your commitment to trainee education and fostering future generations of cognitive aging clinical researchers is appreciated.

The trustees were pleased to learn about the addition of new faculty and the success of the early investigators. Dr. Galvin who brings a robust NIH portfolio to the UM program and the work of the early investigators has great promise, although the majority of his efforts are focused on pathological aging rather than age-related cognitive decline. The trustees were also impressed with the focus on developing interdisciplinary team science.

The trustees appreciate Dr. Sacco's internationally recognized work and the MBI's participation in the Precision Aging Network Pilot Grant project. Congratulations to Dr. Sacco as the inaugural speaker for the Edward J. Kenton lecture at the 2020 International Stroke symposium. They express appreciation for Dr. Rundek's outstanding research and her commitment to mentoring, especially her recognition for inspiring women in medicine. The trustees add their congratulations on receipt of this prestigious UM award.

We look forward to the inter-institutional meeting on April 28 and 29 and thank you for all that has been done to develop and ensure an excellent program. The trustees send their collective appreciation for your 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:
Susan Fox-Rosellini MBRF Trustees
Stacy Merritt

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