



# McKNIGHT BRAIN RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Preserving memory, enhancing life

March 1, 2023

Tatjana Rundek, M.D., Ph.D.  
Professor of Neurology | Evelyn F. McKnight Chair for Learning and Memory in Aging  
Director, Evelyn F. McKnight Brain Institute  
University of Miami

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

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Dear Dr. Rundek,

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 Miami (UM). As in previous years, the report was seen as a well-organized and visually engaging synopsis of the productivity of the EMBI.

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The report is a testament to Dr. Ralph Sacco's outstanding leadership and reaffirms his extraordinary abilities as a scientist, mentor, community builder, and collaborator. It is remarkable that despite the many challenges presented by the pandemic and his devastating illness, the EMBI team has maintained its steadfast commitment to advancing the mission of the EMBI and the legacy that Dr. Sacco created. The MBRF commends your outstanding leadership during this difficult time and fully endorses your well-deserved appointment as the new Director of the UM EMBI. The trustees also congratulate you on your election to the Academy of Science, Engineering, and Medicine in Florida.

A highlight of the report is the recruitment of Dr. James Galvin as the new chief of the Cognitive Division and the successful opening of the Comprehensive Center for Brain Health. The trustees congratulate him on his well-deserved honor of being named the Alexandria and Bernard Schoninger Endowed Chair in Memory Disorders.

The trustees are pleased with your team's continued development of innovative and diverse collaborations, including the UM EMBI's role as a site within the Precision Aging Network (PAN). Dr. Bonnie Levin and the rest of the PAN team are commended for a successful start-up year. Your leadership within the UM Clinical Translational Science Institute (CTSI) and collaborations with the UM Center for AIDS Research are also remarkable, as is Dr. Xiaoyan Sun's and Dr. Levin's partnership with researchers at the Frost School of Music.

The trustees appreciate the award of two training grants to further the educational activities within the EMBI, which have continued to expand under Dr. Sun's role as Education Director. The trustees commend Dr. Alberto Ramos on his NIH R01 grant, *Sleep in Neurocognitive Aging and Alzheimer's Research (SANAR)*, and his mentee, Dr. Christian Agudelo, for obtaining a NIH Diversity Supplement to this grant. They further commend Dr. Christian Camargo for his appointment as assistant professor in the Cognitive Division.

As a follow-up to this letter, the trustees request some additional information, including an update on Dr. Agudelo's new faculty appointment and clarification on whether his Evelyn F. McKnight Neurocognitive Scholarship funding will be applied to another scholar, given his recent NIH Diversity Supplement award. Additionally, please provide an update on the selection of next year's Evelyn F. McKnight Neurocognitive Post-doctoral Fellow.

The trustees send their appreciation to you for the tremendous efforts in advancing the mission of the MBRF to increase our understanding and alleviation of age-related cognitive decline and memory loss.

Sincerely,

*Angelika Schlanger*

Angelika Schlanger, PhD  
Executive Director

CC: Dean Henri Ford, MD, MHA; Susan Fox-Rosellini, MBA; Stacy Merritt, MA, CCRP; MBRF Trustees

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