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## PRESS RELEASE

### **McKnight Brain Research Foundation Announces Support For Proposed National Brain Study**

The McKnight Brain Research Foundation\* and its four McKnight Brain Institutes voice strong support for President Barack Obama's plan for a decade-long scientific effort to examine the workings of the human brain by way of a National Study. According to a report published by PricewaterhouseCoopers in May 2012, total costs of all diseases of the brain in the United States will reach \$515 billion and expected to be 19% of the total national health expenditures in 2012. People with diseases of the brain also have a shortened life expectancy and their quality of life is diminished.

Cognitive decline and dementia associated with aging are major components of the brain diseases in the aging population and the costs of this group alone are projected to be \$47.3 billion in 2012 in the United States. The decline in cognitive aging abilities resulting from the aging process is of universal concern. Older adults make up the fastest growing age group worldwide. At the present time, there are 700 million people over the age of 60 and it is projected to be two billion by 2050.

Since its inception in 1999, the McKnight Brain Research Foundation and the host institutions of the four McKnight Brain Institutes have invested over \$70 million in support of research in cognitive aging and memory loss associated with the aging process. The foundation promotes research of the brain with the goal of preventing or delaying age-related memory loss, and strives to develop therapeutic interventions.

The McKnight Brain Research Foundation has established Brain Institutes at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, the University of Arizona, the University of Florida and the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine. The research scientists in each of the McKnight Brain Institutes investigate the fundamental mechanisms that underlie the neurobiology of memory and combine their findings with clinical relevance to the problems of age related memory loss.

“The McKnight Brain Research Foundation and its four McKnight Brain Institutes are very excited to merge our complementary goals and objectives with the National Brain study”, said Dr. Robert Wah, trustee of the McKnight Brain Research Foundation. “We pledge individual and collective dedication to any collaborative research which has the potential of preventing, retarding, or ameliorating cognitive decline associated with the aging process”.

“Aging-associated disorders of cognition exact a heavy toll on families, medical care organizations, and needless to say the patients themselves”, said UAB Evelyn F. McKnight Institute Director Dr. David Sweatt. “The need for investment in understanding disorders of the brain has never been greater than it is right now”

\*The McKnight Brain Research Foundation® ([www.tnbrf.org](http://www.tnbrf.org)) is a tax exempt organization organized exclusively for charitable, educational and scientific purposes.

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