

**American Federation for Aging Research (AFAR)
Stresses Importance of Funding from Public and Private Sectors in
Its Mission to Diagnosis and Treat Alzheimer's Disease.**

**Financial Support from a Range of Sources Fuels
Research Leading to Breakthroughs in Age-Related Health Issues**

NEW YORK, NY— Breakthroughs in diagnoses. New methods in identifying who is most at risk. Promising treatments. And new proposed guidelines in detecting and ultimately treating Alzheimer's Disease. Executives at The American Federation for Aging Research (AFAR) champion progress in all avenues leading to a greater understanding and treating age-related illnesses. This progress, they cite, results from research. And funding, in turn, that fuels this research.

"Funding is the lifeblood of the ongoing work that leads to important advances in diagnosis and treatment of Alzheimer's Disease and other age-related illnesses," explains Stephanie Lederman, Executive Director of AFAR, based in Manhattan. "Critical work is under way at some of the most prestigious universities and research centers across the country, and so much of it can lead to significant progress in understanding Alzheimer's Disease, its causes, who is susceptible, and how to diagnosis and treat it. Research is the only way we will gain a greater understanding of the disease, and it's the only avenue to finding a cure."

Presently the federal government spends approximately \$640 million annually on Alzheimer's Disease research. By comparison, about \$1 billion is spent yearly on breast cancer research.

At AFAR the study of aging takes a two-pronged approach: understanding the fundamentals of the diseases that are instrumental in the aging process; and identifying the underlying mechanisms of aging and how they manifest themselves in the human body as aging progresses. AFAR has spearheaded research into both areas by providing grant money to over 2,600 scientists since its founding in 1981. As a measure of its success in and its impact on research into age-related illness, 90 percent of AFAR's grantees go on to secure federal funding at the culmination of their AFAR Research Grant.

"This is a very significant number," Ms. Lederman points out. "At present the federal funding rate for young investigators is less than 12 percent." Given the fact that federal funding is likely to be reduced in the foreseeable future, "the importance of funding from AFAR cannot be overstated," she explains. "AFAR grants establish a track record that allow researchers to secure funding from a wide range of resources, from public and private to corporate giving." It's the private funding, she stresses, that allows AFAR to

take risks in awarding grants for research that journeys into heretofore uncharted territory in Alzheimer's Disease and age-related disease research.

As the only not-for-profit organization actively providing funding for research into the biology of aging, AFAR provides grant money for scientists to participate in research leading to new diagnostic methods and cutting-edge discoveries into the dynamics of aging and concomitant diseases. AFAR recently awarded a total of \$10 million in grants to scientists studying aging nationwide for this fiscal year.

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