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Alzheimer's Association Announces Chapter's Largest Research Gift

FORT WORTH, Texas (May 20, 2016) – The Alzheimer's Association - North Central Texas Chapter announced its largest financial research gift, which was awarded to five new investigator grants, including a Texas-based study to correlate Alzheimer's disease with traumatic brain injuries.

Meharvan “Sonny” Singh, PhD, board chair of directors for the Alzheimer's Association and dean of the graduate school of biomedical sciences for the University of North Texas Health Science Center in Fort Worth announced the funding of \$500,000 at the chapter's 15th annual Memory Gala.

“These are the investigators that I'm passionate about - I want these young researchers to stay in the pipeline after I retire because I want to make sure someone else continues the fight,” Singh said.

Ines Moreno-Gonzalez, PhD, Alzheimer's researcher for the University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston, said the grant will allow her to continue studying the risk of developing Alzheimer's after brain trauma, such as concussions.

Moreno-Gonzalez and her colleagues will be using an imaging technique called positron emission tomography (PET) to visualize brains that have experienced acute to mild traumatic brain injury.

“When people think of ‘traumatic’ they think of something severe, like a bad car wreck and losing consciousness, but TBI does not always mean you lose consciousness for it to be a traumatic event,” she said.

Moreno-Gonzalez said sufferers of TBI can include sports players, those involved in vehicle accidents or falls, victims of violence and individuals exposed to blasts - such as war veterans.

The other four new investigator research grants include: Karen Rodrigue, PhD, and the study of brain iron and beta-amyloid deposition at the University of Texas at Dallas, Wen Hu, PhD, and the study of abnormal phosphorylation and tau protein at New York State Institute for Basic Research in Developmental Disabilities, Laura Beth McIntire, PhD, and the study of the method, CRISPR, to screen and identify genes at Columbia University Medical Center and Sandra Almeida, PhD, and the study of molecular pathogenic pathways and frontotemporal dementia at the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

According to the Alzheimer's Association, Alzheimer's disease is the only illness among the top 10 causes of death in America that cannot be prevented, cured or even slowed. Currently 5.4 million Americans have Alzheimer's disease, which kills more people than prostate and breast cancer combined.

About the Alzheimer's Association

The Alzheimer's Association - North Central Texas Chapter is affiliated with the national Alzheimer's Association, headquartered in Chicago. The chapter covers a 40-county service area and Fort Worth serves as headquarters for the chapter, which has regional offices in Abilene, Waco and Wichita Falls.

Nationally, the Alzheimer's Association is the largest nonprofit funder of Alzheimer's research, having awarded more than \$350 million to over 2,300 projects since 1982. Alzheimer's Association research grants are intended to advance the understanding of Alzheimer's disease, help identify new treatment strategies, provide information to improve care for people with dementia and further knowledge of brain health and disease prevention.

For more information on the chapter and/or to donate please visit:

http://www.alz.org/northcentraltexas/alzheimers_disease_donate.asp or call 1-800-272-3900.

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