BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE RESEARCHER HONORED FOR PUBLICATION OF “MOST IMPACTFUL STUDY IN THE LAST TWO YEARS” AT ALZHEIMER’S ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE®

TORONTO, July 26, 2016 – The Alzheimer’s Association presented its Inge Grundke-Iqbal Award for Alzheimer’s Research today to Tsuneya Ikezu, M.D., Ph.D., Professor of Pharmacology & Experimental Therapeutics and Neurology at Boston University School of Medicine (BUSM). The Award was presented at the Alzheimer's Association International Conference® 2016 (AAIC® 2016) in Toronto, Canada.

Dr. Ikezu received the award for research that found brain immune cells called microglia may play an adverse role in transporting toxic tau protein during the early stages of Alzheimer’s disease. In the study, Ikezu and colleagues found that removing microglia from the brains of mice suppressed the spread of tau from one brain region to another. They also found that small vesicles called exosomes are implicated in the spared of tau. Researchers suggest this may be a viable therapeutic pathway to slow the progression of Alzheimer’s.

The significant findings were detailed in a paper, “Depletion of microglia and inhibition of exosome synthesis halt tau propagation,” published in the journal Nature Neuroscience in November 2015.

“The research in Dr. Ikezu’s paper breaks new ground and suggests an important, new direction for future research,” said Maria C. Carrillo, Ph.D., chief science officer at the Alzheimer’s Association. “Every contribution that offers new insight into the role of tau in Alzheimer’s disease is important to advancing our efforts to slow and eventually prevent it – especially now that the first drugs targeting tau in Alzheimer’s are reaching late-stage clinical trials. We commend Dr. Ikezu and his fellow researchers for expanding knowledge in this important area.”

Dr. Ikezu’s research focuses on the role of neuroinflammation in the pathophysiology of dementia and as a potential therapeutic target in Alzheimer’s disease, Frontotemporal Dementia and chronic traumatic encephalopathy. Since 2011, Dr. Ikezu has been a member of the Alzheimer’s Disease Center at BUSM.

The Inge Grundke-Iqbal Award for Alzheimer’s Research is granted to the senior author of the most impactful study published in Alzheimer’s research during the two calendar years preceding AAIC. The award was created to honor Inge Grundke-Iqbal, Ph.D., who served as Professor and Head of Neuroimmunology at the New York State Institute for Basic Research in Development Disabilities from 1977 until her passing in September 2012. A world renowned scientist and Alzheimer’s disease researcher, Dr. Grundke-Iqbal made several seminal findings in the biology of Alzheimer’s disease and related conditions, including a landmark discovery of tau in neurofibrillary tangles that opened a new area of research in neurodegeneration.
The Alzheimer’s Association is committed to accelerating the global effort to eliminate Alzheimer’s disease and to recognizing the efforts of researchers who further our understanding about this devastating disease. The Association is the largest nonprofit funder of Alzheimer’s research. It currently supports more than 350 ongoing research projects in 21 countries, totaling more than $80 million. Since 1982, it has awarded more than $350 million to almost 2,300 scientific investigations.

About AAIC
The Alzheimer’s Association International Conference (AAIC) is the largest gathering of leading researchers from around the world focused on Alzheimer’s and other dementias. As a part of the Alzheimer’s Association’s research program, AAIC serves as a catalyst for generating new knowledge about dementia and fostering a vital, collegial research community.
AAIC 2016 home page: www.alz.org/aaic/
AAIC 2016 newsroom: www.alz.org/aaic/press.asp

About the Alzheimer’s Association®
The Alzheimer’s Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support and research. Our mission is to eliminate Alzheimer’s disease through the advancement of research, to provide and enhance care and support for all affected, and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer’s. Visit alz.org or call 800.272.3900.

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