

For Immediate Release

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AFAR selected as national coordinating center for NIA Clin-STAR program

Led by AFAR; Yale University; University of California, San Francisco; and Johns Hopkins University, Clin-STAR will synergize career development of clinician-investigators across specialties and disciplines to improve care of older adults

October 8, 2019 (New York, NY) – The American Federation for Aging Research (AFAR) has been selected by the National Institute on Aging (NIA), part of the National Institutes of Health, as the coordinating center for the newly launched Clinician-Scientists Transdisciplinary Aging Research (Clin-STAR) program.

NIA is funding Clin-STAR through a cooperative agreement with AFAR and three academic resource centers: Johns Hopkins University; the University of California, San Francisco; and Yale University. NIA's support is expected to total nearly \$4.5 million over five years.

The Clin-STAR Coordinating Center will develop a multi-faceted, national platform to promote and enrich the career development, training and trans-disciplinary research of clinician-investigators across the U.S., particularly early stage investigators who are committed to careers in aging research.

“Because of their clinical training and personal experience caring for patients, clinician-scientists approach research questions differently. They are a valuable bridge between providing care and expanding the scientific knowledge needed to provide optimal care for older adults,” says Stephanie Lederman, Ed.M., AFAR Executive Director and Co-investigator of the Clin-STAR grant. “AFAR is honored to bring decades of experience in program management in aging research and career development for physician-researchers to the Clin-STAR Coordinating Center.”

Comprised of established, senior physician-researchers, three Clin-STAR Cores (Leadership Core, Mentoring and Career Development Core, and a Research and Dissemination Core) will lead the design and implementation of the proposed Clin-STAR activities, while the academic resource centers will support the three Cores in executing these activities.

The Clin-STAR Coordinating Center will build on the collective and complementary experience of four principal investigators, senior administrative leadership at AFAR, and a team that includes more than 20 clinician investigators from a diverse array of 20 academic institutions across the country, to:

- Develop an organizational and management infrastructure that will facilitate the exchange and dissemination of scientific and research knowledge on aging and the care of older persons.
- Provide mentoring and career development support for emerging investigators committed to pursuing aging research in their clinical specialty or discipline.
- Stimulate aging research, foster networking and collaborations across disciplines, and identify and support high priority and understudied areas of aging research.
- Develop and implement strategies for assessing the effectiveness of the Clin-STAR program and to use this information to guide future directions and report outcomes to stakeholders.

The principal investigators are:

- **Thomas Gill, M.D.**, geriatrician and clinical epidemiologist and the Humana Foundation Professor of Geriatric Medicine at Yale University School of Medicine;
- **Kristine Yaffe, M.D.**, neurologist and the Scola Endowed Chair and Vice Chair and Professor of Psychiatry, Neurology and Epidemiology at the University of California, San Francisco;
- **Jeremy Walston, M.D.**, geriatrician and the Raymond and Anna Lublin Professor of Geriatric Medicine at Johns Hopkins University;
- **Odette van der Willik**, Deputy Executive Director and Director of Grant Programs at AFAR.

“Substantial investments by the NIA and private partners in training, career development and research over the years have led to a growing number of clinician-scientists in aging research from a diverse array of specialties and disciplines,” says Basil Eldadah, M.D., Ph.D., chief of NIA's Geriatrics Branch, Division of Geriatrics and Clinical Gerontology. “Clin-STAR will leverage this foundation by nurturing an even broader pipeline of investigators dedicated to the health and well-being of older adults.”

About AFAR. The American Federation for Aging Research (AFAR) is a national non-profit organization that supports and advances pioneering biomedical research that is revolutionizing how we can live healthier and longer. For nearly four decades, AFAR has served as the field's talent incubator, providing more than \$181 million to close to 4,200 investigators at premier research institutions nationwide. A trusted leader and strategist, AFAR also works with public and private funders to steer high quality grant programs and interdisciplinary research networks.

AFAR-funded researchers are finding that modifying basic cellular processes can delay—or even prevent—many chronic diseases, often at the same time. They are discovering that it is never too late—or too early—to improve health. This groundbreaking science is paving the way for innovative new therapies that promise to improve and extend our quality of life—at any age. Learn more at www.afar.org or follow AFARorg on Twitter and Facebook.

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