



american federation  
for aging research



**RESEARCH CENTERS  
COLLABORATIVE NETWORK**  
of the National Institute on Aging, NIH

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## **NIA awards up to \$5 million to Wake Forest University and AFAR to continue leading the Research Centers Collaborative Network (RCCN)**

NEW YORK — Wake Forest School of Medicine and the American Federation for Aging Research (AFAR) have received a renewal award for up to \$5 million over five years from the National Institute on Aging (NIA), National Institutes of Health, to continue their management of the **Research Centers Collaborative Network (RCCN)**. The RCCN brings together scientists from six NIA center programs focused on addressing a wide range of issues affecting older adults.

Established in 2018 through a \$2.5 million award over three years from NIA, the RCCN aims to spur multidisciplinary efforts in aging research across the NIA centers through five complementary strategies: conferences, pilot programs, early career faculty education, web-based resource identification tools, and fundraising/proposal development.

The six NIA centers under the Research Centers Collaborative Network are:

- **Alzheimer's Disease Research Centers**
- **Centers on the Demography and Economics of Aging**
- **Claude D. Pepper Older Americans Independence Centers**
- **Nathan Shock Centers of Excellence in the Basic Biology of Aging**
- **Resource Centers for Minority Aging Research**
- **Roybal Centers for Translational Research on Aging**

These six Centers encompass and engage more than 90 individual centers throughout the United States.

The RCCN is led by Wake Forest School of Medicine and AFAR. Stephen B. Kritchevsky, PhD, co-director of the Sticht Center for Healthy Aging and Alzheimer's Prevention at the Wake Forest School of Medicine and principal investigator of the Wake Forest Older Americans Independence Center, will continue to serve as multiple-principal investigator together with Stephanie Lederman EdM, AFAR's Executive Director.

"AFAR manages two other NIA-funded initiatives, the Clinician-Scientist Transdisciplinary Aging Research (Clin-STAR) Coordinating Center and Nathan Shock Centers of Excellence Coordinating Center," notes AFAR Executive Director Stephanie Lederman. "We are ideally positioned to continue to provide strong support for the RCCN mission through this renewal award and are excited to continue our collaboration with the NIA and Wake Forest to support the RCCN."

Wake Forest is primarily responsible for the network's scientific endeavors and outreach to the aging research community, while AFAR is primarily responsible for the administrative functioning of the network, including communications, planning workshops and webinars and grants.

"In its first three years, the RCCN has encouraged in-depth conversations and interconnected collaborations in aging research, and has funded 7 projects to advance science at the intersection between disciplines" notes Stephen B. Kritchevsky, Co-PI of the RCCN Coordinating Center. "Through this renewal award, the RCCN is poised to help expand discussions across disciplines and further engage the leadership of the NIA Centers."

With the renewal award, the RCCN will expand the scope of the workshops and pilot award programs, enhance its early career programs and will develop a new RCCN scholars program to provide on-going support for early career investigators. In addition, the RCCN will initiate a new process to build tools and support the development of standards and guidelines to promote cross-disciplinary research and expand its collaboration with the Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA) program to develop, promote and evaluate a strategy to increase the recruitment of older adults into clinical research.

"Improvements in healthspan and healthcare for older adults can come from interdisciplinary research, and the RCCN exemplifies the power of cross-disciplinary exchange," notes Basil Eldadah, MD, PhD, Supervisory Medical Officer of the Division of Geriatrics and Clinical Gerontology (DGCG) at the NIA. "NIA looks forward to the continued and expanded work of the Research Centers Collaborative Network in support of our mission, which is to conduct genetic, biological, clinical, behavioral, social, and economic research on aging; foster the development of research and clinician scientists in aging; provide research resources, and disseminate information about aging and advances in research to the public, health care professionals, and the scientific community, among a variety of audiences.

Learn more about the Research Centers Collaborative Network (RCCN) at [www.rccn-aging.org](http://www.rccn-aging.org).

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## **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 live healthier and longer. For four decades, AFAR has served as the field's talent incubator, providing more than \$184 million to more than 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](http://www.afar.org) or follow AFARorg on Twitter and Facebook.