AFAR SCIENTIFIC AWARDS OF DISTINCTION LECTURES
AT GSA ANNUAL MEETING ON NOVEMBER 12

November 12, 2021 -- The American Federation for Aging Research (AFAR), a national non-profit whose mission is to support and advance healthy aging through biomedical research, will host its annual Scientific Awards of Distinction lectures and ceremony on Friday, November 12, 2021 online from 3:30pm-5:30pm ET in conjunction with the Annual Scientific Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America (GSA).

The online session will feature four award presentations and lectures.

Malene Hansen, PhD, will receive the 2021 Irving S. Wright Award of Distinction. This award is named in honor of AFAR's founder and recognizes exceptional contributions to basic or clinical research in the field of aging. Established in 1982, the award is a framed citation and carries a cash prize of $5,000.

Dr. Hansen will present a lecture on "Cellular recycling: Role of autophagy in aging and disease."

She is the Chief Scientific Officer and a Professor at the Buck Institute for Research on Aging, Novato, CA. Of note, Dr. Hansen is also a four-time AFAR grantee.

Morgan Levine, PhD, will receive the 2021 Vincent Cristofalo Rising Star Award in Aging Research. This award is named in honor of the late Dr. Cristofalo, who dedicated his career to aging research and to encouraging young scientists to investigate important problems in the biology of aging. Established in 2008, the award is a framed citation and carries a cash prize of $5,000.

Dr. Levine will present a lecture on "DNA Methylation Landscapes in Aging."

She is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Pathology at the Yale School of Medicine and a member of both the Yale Combined Program in Computational Biology and Bioinformatics, and the Yale Center for Research on Aging.

Two Terrie Fox Wetle Rising Star Awards in Health Services and Aging Research will be presented. This award honors a health services researcher in an early or middle phase of his/her career who has already made important contributions with work that respects the value of multidisciplinary health services science and that is likely to be highly influential in shaping practice and research for decades to come. Established in 2020, the award is a framed citation and carries a cash prize of $5,000.

Andrea Gilmore-Bykovskyi, PhD, RN, will receive the 2021 Wetle Award.

Dr. Gilmore-Bykovskyi will present a lecture on "Progress in investigating social and behavioral communication patterns among individuals with moderate to advanced dementia, particularly in minority and diverse populations."

She is an Assistant Professor (tenure-track) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW) School of Nursing, Investigator and Informatics Lead of the UW Alzheimer's Disease Research Center (ADRC) Care Research Core, and Deputy Director of the University of Wisconsin Center for Health Disparities Research. Notably, she is a current Paul B. Beeson Emerging Leaders Career Development Awards in Aging (K76) scholar, supported by AFAR.

Kali Thomas, MA, PhD, will receive the 2020 Wetle Award.
Dr. Thomas will present a lecture on "The role of home-delivered meals programs in improving health and promoting community independence for older adults."

She is Associate Professor of Health Services, Policy and Practice at Brown University's School of Public Health and a Research Health Science Specialist in the Center of Innovation in Long-Term Services and Supports at the Providence VA Medical Center.

"AFAR's Wright, Cristofalo, and Wetle awards are named in honor of farsighted scientists, and the recipients are chosen for their leadership and accomplishments," notes Stephanie Lederman, AFAR Executive Director. "This year's awardees join an impressive roster of scientists and practitioners who are advancing and applying research to improve health for older adults."

Nominations for the Wright, Cristofalo, and Wetle awards are by invitation and are judged by an independent panel of leading aging researchers.

In addition to the scientific awards, AFAR supports biomedical research on healthy aging through our grant programs. To date, AFAR has given more than $189 million to close to 4,300 investigators.

Register for the Annual Scientific Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America (GSA) at www.gsa2021.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 $189 million to nearly 4,300 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.