

**AFAR recognizes Lei Zhang of the University of Minnesota
with 2022 Sagol Network GerOmic Award for Junior Faculty**
Grant will advance research using Omics to Explore DNA Repair and Aging

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NEW YORK — The American Federation for Aging Research (AFAR) is pleased to announce the **2022 Sagol Network GerOmic Award for Junior Faculty recipient: Lei Zhang, PhD**, Research Assistant Professor, University of Minnesota.

Omics is a rapidly evolving, multi-disciplinary, and emerging field that encompasses genomics, epigenomics, transcriptomics, proteomics, and metabolomics. Each of these fields offers the possibility to understand and view biology from a global perspective in a way that was previously unthinkable. Given the biological complexity and heterogeneity of the aging process, omics research can play an important role in providing important insights into the aging process and many age-related diseases.

Established in 2020, the [Sagol Network GerOmic Award for Junior Faculty](#) is a one- to two-year award given to junior faculty (MDs and PhDs) to conduct aging-related -Omics (GerOmics) research.

Zhang's funded project is titled "[Single-cell epigenomic analysis of premature aging syndromes.](#)" Given that DNA damage occurs tens of thousands of times daily to every cell of a subject, it is conceivable that DNA damage over time is a major cause of the aging epigenome. Dr. Zhang's lab will test this hypothesis by comparing epimutation frequencies of normal aging and DNA repair-deficient subjects. The results of this study will provide a foundation for understanding the molecular mechanisms of the aging epigenome.

"The Sagol Network is pleased to collaborate with AFAR in various ways, and specifically through this award program," says Sami Sagol, Founder, Sagol Network and AFAR board member. "Omics research has tremendous potential to impact healthy lifespan and build on the foundation of knowledge in the basic biology of aging and geroscience that AFAR has advanced for decades."

"GerOmics research is essential to help unfold the complexity of biology of aging," says Stephanie Lederman, Executive Director, AFAR. "This Award encourages early career investigators to focus their research on this vital emerging field."

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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 more than four decades, AFAR has served as the field's talent incubator, providing more than \$193 million to nearly 4350 investigators at premier research institutions to date—and growing. In 2022, AFAR is expected to award over \$11,000,000 to more than 60 investigators. 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 and American Federation for Aging Research on LinkedIn.

About the Sagol Network

The Sagol Network was set up by the Sagol Family with a vision to support and accelerate advanced research, education and therapy in the fields of Neuroscience & Healthy lifespan. Under the leadership of Sami Sagol, the family set up a virtual network of schools & research centers based in leading academic and medical institutions promoting multidisciplinary projects, laboratories, and technologies. Among these, The Sagol School of Neuroscience at Tel Aviv University, Joseph Sagol Neuroscience Center at Sheba Medical Centre, Sagol Institute for Longevity Research, Weizmann Institute, The Sagol Center for Neurobiology & Ethology and Emily Sagol Center for Creative Art Therapy at Haifa University, Sagol Healthy Human Longevity Center at Bar-Ilan University, Sagol center for Brain & Mind at the IDC, The Sagol Brain center at Sourasky (Tel Aviv) medical center, The Sagol program for computational healthcare at Hebrew University, Kahn-Sagol-Maccabi Health Data Science Institute and The Sagol Center for Hyperbaric Medicine & Research at Shamir Medical Center. The Sagol Network's philanthropic efforts have also extended to 'bridge' & promote collaborations between Ivy league institutions throughout the world, with initiatives such as Sagol MIT-Weizmann Bridge program, Sagol-Kandel Brain Longevity Initiative at Columbia University, and The Sagol Center for Epigenetics of Metabolism and Aging between Monash University, in Sydney and Tel Aviv Medical Center. The Sagol Network GerOmic Awards for Junior Faculty with American Federation for Aging Research exemplify the Sagol Network's global approach.