Ming Xu, PhD (UConn) receives AFAR Rising Star Award in Aging Research

New York, NY – The American Federation for Aging Research (AFAR), a national non-profit organization whose mission is to support and advance healthy aging through biomedical research, is pleased to recognize the exemplary contributions of Ming Xu, PhD, to the field of aging research through the 2023 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. Xu is an Assistant Professor, UConn Center on Aging and the Department of Genetics & Genome Sciences at UConn Health. Dr. Xu’s research focuses on cellular senescence, one of the major players contributing to the fundamental aging process. His lab is leveraging novel mouse models and human tissues as tools to examine the role and underlying mechanism of senescent cells in various diseases and aims to develop novel drugs to make people live longer and healthier and alleviate a range of diseases as a group by targeting senescent cells. In this way, his pioneering research is advancing the understanding of age-related disease mechanisms and revealing novel therapeutic targets to treat these conditions. His findings have also laid the foundation for a number of ongoing clinical trials on senolytics. In addition to many co-authored publications, Dr. Xu has published 6 first author and 5 senior and corresponding author original research papers in key high-impact journals including Nature Medicine (2 times), Nature Aging, Cell Metabolism, Aging Cell (4 times), PNAS, Elife, npj Regenerative Medicine, and The Journal of Gerontology: Biological Sciences. All these publications have been extensively recognized and cited by other investigators.

“"A recipient of multiple AFAR grants, Dr. Xu has made a highly significant contribution to the field of aging research early in his career,” note Stephanie Lederman, EdM, Executive Director, AFAR. "He carries on the visionary commitment of this award’s namesake to advancing research that will help us all live healthier, longer."

The Vincent Cristofalo Rising Star Award in Aging Research is one of AFAR’s three annual Scientific Awards of Distinction, in addition to the Irving S. Wright Award and the Terrie Fox Wetle Rising Star Award in Health Services and Aging Research. Nominations for the awards are judged by an panel of leading aging researchers. To date, AFAR has presented 44 Wright Awards,16 Cristofalo Awards, and 4 Wetle Awards.

Dr. Xu will receive the Cristofalo Award at the Annual Scientific Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America in November 2023, where he also will present a lecture on his research.

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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 4,350 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.