

Bérénice Benayoun (USC) receives 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 **Bérénice Benayoun, PhD**, to the field of aging research through the **2024 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 encouraged young scientists to investigate important issues in the biology of aging. Established in 2008, the award is a framed citation and carries a cash prize of \$5,000.



Dr. Benayoun is an Associate Professor of Gerontology, Biological Sciences, Biochemistry and Molecular Medicine at the University of Southern California Leonard Davis School of Gerontology. Dr. Benayoun's research focuses on big data, sex differences, and immune function in relation to aging; her lab's overarching goal is to understand how genomic regulation mechanisms influence aging, health, and chronic disease, and how these mechanisms are modulated in response to environmental stimuli and in the context of specific endogenous factors, such as biological sex, in vertebrate model organisms. Ultimately, this research may discover novel target genes and pathways playing a role in healthy aging by leveraging the power of big data, or 'omics'. She has authored 71 peer-reviewed publications (43 as first and/or corresponding author), and her overall body of work

has been cited more than 5600 times. Leveraging her 2020 [Glenn Foundation for Medical Research and AFAR Grants for Junior Faculty](#), she has secured a total of \$7.58M in direct costs (\$10.7M in total costs) across 16 grants, 14 as principal investigator/co-principal investigator, including an R35 Maximizing Investigators' Research Award from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences and a prestigious K99/R00 Pathway to Independence grant from the National Institute on Aging. Dr. Benayoun also has been recognized with numerous awards for her research, including the Nathan Shock New Investigator Award from the Gerontological Society of America, Rising Star in Reproductive Biology Award from the Society for the Study of Reproduction, Rosalind Franklin Young Investigator Award in Mammalian Genetics, Pew Biomedical Scholar Award, and Junior Scholar Award from the Global Consortium for Reproductive Longevity and Equality (GCRLE).

"Dr. Benayoun's impact on the field of aging research and scientific community is far reaching, she has become a trusted collaborator to many and developed innovative new resources and data sets that she shares freely with the geroscience community," shares Stephanie Lederman, EdM, Executive Director, AFAR. "She carries on the visionary commitment of this award's namesake by advancing research that will help us all live healthier, longer."

The Vincent Cristofalo Rising Star Award in Aging Research is one of AFAR's four annual Scientific Awards of Distinction, in addition to the Irving S. Wright Award of Distinction, the Terrie Fox Wetle Rising Star Award in Health Services and Aging Research, and the George M. Martin Lifetime Achievement in Mentoring Award. Nominations for the awards are judged by a panel of leading aging researchers. Dr. Benayoun will receive the Cristofalo Award at the American Aging Association (AGE) Annual Meeting on June 2 in Madison WI, where she will present a lecture on her research titled "Sex-dimorphic regulation of macrophage aging in mice."

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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 \$200 million to nearly 4,440 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.