

**For Immediate Release**

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## DOCTORS S. JAY OLSHANSKY AND LUIGI FONTANA HONORED FOR THEIR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO 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 proud to recognize the outstanding contributions of Doctors S. Jay Olshansky and Luigi Fontana to the field of aging research through its annual honorary Scientific Awards of Distinction:



**S. Jay Olshansky, PhD**, Professor of Public Health at the University of Illinois at Chicago, will receive the **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.



**Luigi Fontana, MD, PhD, Professor of Medicine and Nutrition** at Washington University in St. Louis (USA) and Brescia University (Italy), will receive the **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.

“These awards are given annually to members of the aging research community whose work advances the field, and advances our understanding of aging,” notes AFAR Executive Director Stephanie Lederman, EdM. “Both awards are named in honor of farsighted scientists, and the recipients are chosen for their vision and accomplishments as well.”

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

On **Friday, November 18** at the Annual Scientific Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America (GSA) in New Orleans, Drs. Olshansky and Fontana will receive their awards and present lectures: Dr. Olshansky's lecture is themed “In Pursuit of the Longevity Dividend” and Dr. Fontana's lecture will explore “Promoting health and longevity through diet: metabolic & molecular mechanisms”

The awardees also were recognized at AFAR's 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner on November 2 in New York City.

To date, AFAR has presented thirty-seven Irving Wright Awards and nine Vincent Cristofalo awards. Learn more about the **history of AFAR's Scientific Awards and past awardees** at <http://www.afar.org/research/awards/scientific-awards>

In addition to these honorary awards of distinction, AFAR supports the field of aging research through its biology of aging and physician training grant programs. To date, AFAR's grant programs have contributed more than \$172 million to the field of aging research, by supporting more than 4,000 investigators and students.

## About this Year's Awardees

In nominating **Dr. Jay Olshansky** for the **Irving S. Wright Award of Distinction**, a colleague notes: “No other public health professional has championed the socio-economic savings of extending healthspan—our healthy years as we age—as passionately and persistently as Dr. Jay Olshansky. In both academic and popular media, his voice and vision have lent significant value and momentum to biomedical research on the processes of aging.”

Dr. Olshansky is currently a Professor in the School of Public Health at the University of Illinois at Chicago; Research Associate at the Center on Aging at the University of Chicago and at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine; and founder and Chief Scientist at Lapetus Solutions, Inc. His research interests include estimates of the upper limits to human longevity; health and public policy implications associated with individual and population aging; forecasts of the size, survival, and age structure of the population; pursuit of the scientific means to slow aging in people (The Longevity Dividend); global implications of the re-emergence of infectious and parasitic diseases; and insurance linked securities. Dr. Olshansky is a member of the AFAR Board of Directors, an Associate Editor of the *Journal of Gerontology: Biological Sciences and Biogerontology*, on the editorial board of several other scientific journals, and a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the New York Academy of Sciences, and the Gerontological Society of America (GSA). He is the co-editor of *Aging: The Longevity Dividend* (Cold Spring Harbor Press).

The winner of this year's **Vincent Cristofalo Rising Star Award in Aging Research**, **Dr. Luigi Fontana**, has been lauded by his nominators as “an internationally known and innovative human systems biologist who has done pioneering work studying effects of diet, most notably calorie restriction with adequate nutrition on aging” whose “work in humans is a critical step as we take the discoveries in animal models and try to exploit them to extend human healthspan.”

Dr. Fontana is co-director of the Longevity Research Program and Professor of Geriatrics & Nutritional Science at Washington University in St. Louis as well as a Professor in the Department of Department of Clinical and Experimental Sciences, Brescia, University, Italy. He is interested in preventive medicine and in the mechanisms mediating healthy longevity in humans. Dr. Fontana has published over 100 manuscripts in prestigious journals including *Science*, *Nature*, *Cell*, *New England Journal of Medicine*, *JAMA*, *Cell Metabolism*, *Cell Reports*, *Circulation*, *Journal American College of Cardiology*, *Diabetes*, *Aging Cell* and *PNAS*. He is a Scientific Member of the Board of Directors of the American Aging Association. In addition to numerous other awards, Dr. Fontana has received two prestigious grants from AFAR: the 2009 Glenn/AFAR Breakthroughs in Gerontology (BIG) Award and the 2011 Glenn Award for Research in Biological Mechanisms of Aging.

## About AFAR

The American Federation for Aging Research (AFAR) is a national non-profit organization whose mission is to support and advance healthy aging through biomedical research. Founded in 1981, AFAR has championed the cause and supported the funding of science in healthier aging and age-related medicine. To address the shortage of physicians and researchers dedicated to the science of healthier aging, AFAR funds physicians and scientists probing the fundamental mechanisms of aging, as well as specific diseases associated with aging populations at critical points throughout their careers. AFAR engages the public through webinars, conferences and our online resource, InfoAging, featuring over two dozen downloadable guides, edited by guest experts on topics ranging from theories of aging, age-related conditions, healthy lifestyle tips, and more. Learn at [www.afar.org](http://www.afar.org) or follow AFARorg on Twitter and Facebook.