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For Immediate Release

**\$9 MILLION+ IN GRANTS FROM THE JOHN A. HARTFORD FOUNDATION
WILL HELP MEET URGENT NEED FOR GERIATRICIANS
Grants to American Federation for Aging Research Will Fund Two Programs
Aimed At Increasing Geriatrics Workforce**

New York, NY – October 24, 2012 - Two generous grants from The John A. Hartford Foundation to the American Federation for Aging Research (AFAR), totaling more than \$9 million, will provide significant funding for the John A. Hartford Foundation's Centers for Excellence in Geriatric Medicine and Geriatric Psychiatry and the Medical Student Training in Research (MSTAR) program. The two initiatives seek to address the shortage of geriatrics faculty at American medical schools and the dearth of physicians entering geriatric medicine.

"We invest in these two programs because of the ongoing, urgent need to increase the geriatrics workforce to serve a burgeoning older population," said Corinne H. Rieder, EdD, Executive Director and Treasurer, John A. Hartford Foundation. "AFAR has been a long-time partner in our efforts to address this issue."

AFAR was awarded \$8.4 million for the Centers of Excellence program, and \$624,424 for the MSTAR program.

"The John A. Hartford Foundation has been a leader in addressing our country's critical need for physician scientists, teachers and clinicians to improve health and health care for older Americans," said AFAR Medical Officer Richard W. Besdine, MD, Professor of Medicine and of Health Policy, Greer Professor of Geriatric Medicine, Director of the Center for Gerontology and Health Care Research, and Director of the Division of Geriatrics and Palliative Medicine at the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University. "Geriatricians are desperately needed to address the complex medical problems of an aging population, and this need will only increase as tens of millions of Baby Boomers age."

Geriatrics or geriatric medicine is a subspecialty of internal medicine and family medicine that focuses on the care of older people. The aged body is physiologically different from

the younger adult body, and older adults may have more complex health issues and develop serious complications from even mild problems. According to the Association of Directors of Geriatric Academic Programs, despite rapid growth in the elderly population, the ratio of geriatricians to seniors will significantly decrease – from one geriatrician for every 2,620 Americans age 75 and older today, to one geriatrician for every 3,798 older Americans in 2030. The most recent data show that only 56 percent of first-year geriatrics training slots in American medical schools were filled, and the percentages are even lower for geriatric psychiatry and geriatric osteopathic medicine fellowships.

The John A. Hartford Foundation Centers of Excellence in Geriatric Medicine and Training were initiated in 1988 to address the critical shortage of geriatrics faculty at medical schools across the country. Currently, 28 Centers of Excellence are training fellows and faculty in the special knowledge and skills needed to ensure quality healthcare for older adults. To date, nearly \$50 million has been granted to create a cadre of academic leaders in geriatrics.

The Medical Student Training in Aging Research (MSTAR) program seeks to expose future physicians to geriatric medicine experiences early in their careers. The program gives these medical students the opportunity to participate in a summer of aging-related research, education, and clinical training at National Institute on Aging (NIA)-funded training centers and at some of the nation's top-tier academic institutions. The scholarships, which range from 8 to 12 weeks, provide students with monthly stipends of approximately \$1,750. In addition to The John A. Hartford Foundation, MetLife Foundation and the NIA are major funders of the MSTAR program.

About the John A. Hartford Foundation

The John A. Hartford Foundation is America's leading philanthropy with a sustained interest in aging and health. The Foundation seeks to strengthen the nation's capacity to provide effective, affordable care to our rapidly growing older population. The Foundation's grant funding educates health professionals, supports new research, and develops innovations that improve and integrate health and supportive services for older adults.

About AFAR

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.