

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Media Contact:**

K.K. Apple  
kk@afar.org  
212-703-9977

**The American Federation for Aging Research Announces  
the 2011 Hartford Scholars in Geriatric Medicine**

***Program provides funding to advance academic geriatric training and research; addresses nation's  
shortfall of geriatricians***

**New York, NY (May 20, 2011)**—The American Federation for Aging Research (AFAR) today announced \$2.5 million in career development awards to 83 advanced fellows and junior faculty at 27 Centers of Excellence in Geriatric Medicine and Training across the country. This effort, funded with support from the John A. Hartford Foundation, has to date, granted more than \$5 million to create the cadre of academic leaders in geriatrics. As our nation ages, we need these leaders to teach current and future generations of medical students about the unique care needs of older patients and to do the research we need to develop new advances in their care.

“We at AFAR are very proud to play an important role in improving our health care system—nurturing the leadership that will ensure all physicians are prepared for the growing numbers of older patients they will treat,” said William Hall, M.D., chair of AFAR’s National Program Office Advisory Committee. “Providing support to these promising scholars early in their careers is also instrumental to creating the new geriatrics knowledge we need and to the continued growth of the field.”

For a complete list of this year’s scholars, please visit [www.afar.org/grantees](http://www.afar.org/grantees).

***The critical need for geriatricians***

The first Boomers turn 65 this year, average life expectancy is rising, and the number of older Americans continues to grow. Patients aged 65 and older require by far the largest share of health care services. Some estimates project a need for 36,000 geriatricians by 2030, but currently there are fewer than 7,500 physicians with the skills and expertise necessary to care for older patients. The shortage is further compounded by a dearth of academic geriatricians to train medical specialists and subspecialists, general practitioners, and other geriatricians. Currently, there are fewer than 900 full-time academic

geriatricians in the U.S., while some experts project that 2,400 are required to meet the growing demand.<sup>1</sup>

“Simply put, we need many more physicians to pursue geriatrics research, teaching, and practice,” said Nora OBrien-Suric, senior program officer at The John A. Hartford Foundation. “We are pleased to work with AFAR, which has a proven ability to develop rigorous review processes that find the best and brightest in the field.”

### **Building Centers for Geriatrics Excellence**

The awards announced today are part of the Centers of Excellence (CoE) initiative that supports medical schools that have the necessary components for training academic geriatricians— research and medical education infrastructure, advanced training opportunities, academic mentoring, and enlightened institutional support.

CoE funds add resources to these institutions to train larger numbers of future faculty more rapidly than would otherwise be possible. The funding for scholars provides protected time for research, training to become expert clinician educators, and the ability to pioneer new models of research, training, and care. With the highest quality mentorship and support, these talented scholars acquire the skills to build a solid foundation on which to launch successful careers and to become tomorrow’s leaders and innovators in the fields of geriatric medicine and geriatric psychiatry.

For more information on the CoE program, please visit [www.geriatricsrecruitment.org](http://www.geriatricsrecruitment.org).

\*\*\*\*\*

### **About AFAR**

Founded in 1981, AFAR has championed the cause and supported the funding of science in healthier aging. Due to the shortage of physicians and researchers dedicated to the bioscience of aging, AFAR partners with foundations, corporations and individuals to fund important research into the fundamental mechanism of aging, age-related health, and diseases such as Alzheimer’s disease, cancer, heart disease, and other illnesses. For more information visit AFAR’s website at [www.afar.org](http://www.afar.org).

### **About the John A. Hartford Foundation**

Founded in 1929, The John A. Hartford Foundation is a committed champion of health care training, research, and service system innovations that will ensure the well-being and vitality of older adults. Its overall goal is to improve the health of older Americans. Today, the Foundation is America’s leading philanthropy with a sustained interest in aging and health. For more information about The John A. Hartford Foundation, visit [www.jhartfound.org](http://www.jhartfound.org).

# # #

---

<sup>1</sup>2009 Task Force on Aging Research Funding, Alliance for Aging Research