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Message from the Longer Life Foundation Leadership Team

As summer gives way to autumn, we are pleased to share the latest updates from the Longer Life Foundation. This issue highlights the research, collaborations, and conversations that continue to advance our understanding of healthy aging, longevity, and the factors that shape long-term health outcomes.

Recently, we were delighted to hear from **Dr. Samuel Klein**, a member of the LLF Board of Governors and a leading researcher in obesity and metabolic health, during a discussion with RGA leadership. Dr. Klein shared perspectives on emerging obesity research, including the understanding that individuals with obesity can experience markedly different metabolic outcomes. This discussion exemplifies the valuable exchange of ideas that the Foundation seeks to foster between the scientific and insurance communities.

We are also excited to share updates on LLF-funded research, recognize the accomplishments of our investigators, and a save the date for our fall advisory group meeting. Thank you for your continued support of our mission to advance research that helps people live longer, healthier lives.

To learn more about the Longer Life Foundation, visit https://longerlife.org.

Thank you,

Preeti Dalawari



Preeti Dalawari, MD, MSPH, DBIM
Managing Director, Longer Life Foundation
Vice President and Medical Director, USIL, RGA



Joesph Zhang, PhD
Deputy Director, Longer Life Foundation
Vice President & Senior Actuary, Enterprise Risk Analytics, RGA

2026 Grant Recipients

The Longer Life Foundation Board of Governors has approved the recommended grant applications put forth by the Scientific Review Committee and Advisory Group.

Congratulations to the LLF 2026 grant recipients.

New Year (Year 1) Applications

Researcher	Research Project Title
Sadaf Amin, PhD, MS	Innate Immune Regulation of RNA Splicing Fidelity During Aging
Nicholas Borcherding, MD, PhD	Deep Paired TCR Sequencing for Early Detection and Prediction of Kidney Transplant Rejection
Hao-Wei Chang, PhD	Macrophage Heterogeneity in Human Adipose Tissue
Naomi Dirckx, PhD, MS	Targeting Citrate Metabolism to Preserve Skeletal Function and Mobility During Aging
Yan Wang, MD, MSCI	Proteomic Signatures of Vascular Contributions to Cognitive Impairment and Dementia

Renewal (Year 2) Applications

Researcher	Research Project Title
Monika Bambouskova, PhD	Investigating Protein Prenylation in Aging
Alireza Ghanbarpour, PhD	Reprogramming AAA Proteases for Personalized Cancer Immunotherapy
Laura McPherson, DPT, PhD	A Novel Neurophysiological Biomarker for MS Disease Progression
Joshua Oltmanns, PhD	AI-Driven Mortality Prediction: Integrating Biological, Psychosocial, and Linguistic Predictors of Mortality Using Deep Learning Transformer Models
Max C. Petersen, MD, PhD	Impact of the Ketogenic Diet on Cholesterol Synthesis and Cholesterol Absorption

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Board of Governors Update



LLF welcomes Dr. Bruce Levy to the Board of Governors. He replaces Dr. David H. Perlmutter who recently departed the Board. Dr. Levy serves as Executive Vice Chancellor for Medical Affairs and George and Carol Bauer Dean of WashU Medicine.

An accomplished academic leader and internationally recognized physician-scientist, he leads one of the nation's premier academic medical institutions, where the interconnected missions of research, patient care, and education accelerate discoveries that improve lives around the world.

September Grand Rounds: "Metabolic Heterogeneity of Obesity and Response to Weight Loss"



The Grand Rounds held on September 10 featured Dr. Samuel Klein, a William H. Danforth Professor of Medicine and Nutritional Science, prior LLF grantee, and current member of the LLF Board of Governors.

His research emphasizes that obesity exists across a spectrum of metabolic health with significant variation in risk, and to elucidate the underlying pathologic mechanisms that may be at play.

News from LLF Researchers (past and present)



Elizabeth Pollina, MD (awardee 2023–2025)
Received a one-year grant from The Hope Center for the project entitled "Activity-Dependent Genome Control Mechanisms in Astrocyte Longevity." The Hope Center funds innovative disease-focused research, establishes state-of-the-art core resources and technical expertise, and develops a research infrastructure that promotes collaboration across disciplines and institutions for neurological disorders.



Nathan Stitziel, MD, PhD (awardee 2021–2023)
Awarded $1.9 million over five years from The Leducq Foundation as part of a $9.5 million international Network of Excellence grant. He is one of five principal investigators leading the international collaboration. The researchers hope to create a prioritized list of therapeutic targets that could ultimately lead to more effective treatments and prevention strategies for cardiovascular disease.



Anuja Java, MD, PhD (awardee 2021–2023)
Invited for the third consecutive year to speak at the International Society of Nephrology's World Congress of Nephrology. Her talk focused on the functional impact of genetic variants in complement mediated kidney disease, such as atypical hematolytic uremic syndrome, C3 glomerulopathy, and preeclampsia. The congress assembles kidney professionals, researchers, and educators from more than 140 countries to share advances in research, clinical care, and global kidney health.

Mark Your Calendars

The next LLF Advisory Group meeting will be held on November 17 at 9:00 a.m. CST. Three investigators (pictured below, from left to right) – Drs. Leslie Gewin, Max Petersen, and Lindsay Underhill -- will discuss their continuing research.

The meeting will be hybrid and include presentations and a short business meeting.







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