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OCT | 2025

Message from the Longer Life Foundation Leadership Team

Welcome to the October issue of the Longer Life Foundation (LLF) newsletter. It has been a busy summer at LLF and we are pleased to share updates from the last few months. If this email was forwarded to you by a colleague, we invite you to subscribe here to stay up to date with the Foundation's plans and events. And if you have any questions, please reach out to us at any time.

This autumn, we celebrate a new cohort of visionary researchers whose work embodies the spirit of LLF– bold, curious, and deeply committed to advancing human health. From protein prenylation in aging to AI-driven mortality prediction, our 2025 grantees are tackling some of the most pressing questions in medicine.

With creativity and rigor, their projects reflect the Foundation's mission to support early-stage investigators with the potential to transform lives and redefine longevity. We are proud to stand beside them as they begin their journey, and we look forward to sharing their progress in the months ahead.

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

2025 Grant Recipients

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

Congratulations to the LLF 2025 Grant Recipients:

Investigator	Year	Title of Research Project
Monika Bambouskova, PhD	1	Investigating Protein Prenylation in Aging
Rita Brookheart, PhD	2	Enhancing Muscle Mass and Metabolism to Combat Muscle Dysfunction
Alireza Ghanbarpour, PhD	1	Reprogramming AAA Proteases for Personalized Cancer Immunotherapy
Eva Klinman, MD, PhD	2	Evaluation of Neuronal Changes Associated with Healthy Aging and Alzheimer's Disease in Directly Converted Human Neurons
Laura McPherson, PhD	1	A Novel Neurophysiological Biomarker for MS Disease Progression
Joshua Oltmanns, PhD	1	AI-Driven Mortality Prediction: Integrating Biological, Psychosocial, and Linguistic Predictors of Mortality Using Deep Learning Transformer Models
Max Peterson, MD, PhD	1	Impact of the Ketogenic Diet on Cholesterol Synthesis and Cholesterol Absorption
Lindsay Underhill, PhD	2	Investigating Geographic Disparities in Social Determinants of Health and Hypertension in the Greater St. Louis Area
Priyanka Verma, PhD	2	High-content Approach to Predict Cancer Predisposing Germline Mutations in BRCA1 Gene

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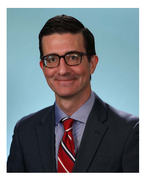
September Grand Rounds: "Leveraging (mis)fortune of the human genome to advance cardiovascular therapeutics"



The latest Grand Rounds on Septmber 25 featured Dr. Stitziel, a WashU Medicine Professor of Medicine and Genetics.

His extensive cardiology research explores how inherited traits influence heart health, using advanced data tools to discover new genes, develop smarter ways to analyze genetic information, and translate these insights into improved patient care.

Dr. Stitziel's presentation can be viewed by clicking here.

News from LLF Researchers (past and present)

Laura Marks, MD, PhD:

- Featured in a news release, *Innovative approach helps new mothers get hepatitis C treatment*, which overviewed the 'Meds to Beds' program at WashU Medicine. Early results indicate improvement of hepatitis C cure rates among postpartum mothers by initiating treatment and delivering medication at the bedside before hospital discharge, overcoming barriers to follow-up care.

Elizabeth Pollina, PhD:

- Named a 2025 Vallee Foundation Scholar in recognition of her pioneering research into how brain cells protect their DNA - work that holds promise for advancing our understanding of aging, neurodegeneration, and future therapeutic strategies. The Vallee Foundation is an international organization that supports the advancement of biomedical research and medical education.

Nathan Stitziel, MD, PhD:

- Selected as a 2025 Harrington Discovery Institute Scholar-Innovator for his transformative research into novel genetic pathways driving cardiovascular disease, paving the way for breakthrough therapies that extend beyond traditional risk factors. He is among 10 physician-scientists from across the nation who are honored this year.

Ali Javaheri, MD, PhD:

- Featured in a news release, *Strategy to prevent age-related macular degeneration identified*, which shared details around a new study from WashU Medcine. The research reveals that boosting levels of the molecule ApoM may help prevent or slow age-related macular degeneration by restoring healthy cholesterol metabolism– offering promising therapeutic potential for both vision loss and heart disease.

Alex Holehouse, PhD

- Spotlighted in a recent article, *New computational tool sheds light on 'wiggly' proteins*, which overviews an exciting update that researchers at WashU Medicine have developed. The Holehouse lab research method includes a new computational tool, FINCHES, that predicts the behavior of shape-shifting proteins, suggesting fresh insights into disease mechanisms and potential therapeutic targets for conditions like cancer and neurodegeneration.

Mark Your Calendars

LLF's Next Advisory Group meeting is set for Tuesday, December 2, from 8:30 - 10:30 a.m., CST. Three investigators (*below, from left to right*) – Drs. Ali Javaheri, Eva Klinman, and Rita Brookheart -- will discuss their continuing investigations.

This meeting will be hybrid and will include presentations and a short business meeting. Invitations have been sent to all Advisory Group members.