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AAIC>21

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FROM THE ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2021

**SEVEN RESEARCHERS HONORED FOR SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENTS
AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE DEMENTIA FIELD AT ALZHEIMER'S
ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**

DENVER, JULY 26 – The Alzheimer's Association will present seven awards at the [Alzheimer's Association International Conference](#)® (AAIC®) 2021, recognizing innovative researchers for their achievements and contributions to the field of Alzheimer's and dementia science.

“The Alzheimer's Association is thrilled to recognize these seven researchers for the important contributions they have made to the field of Alzheimer's and dementia research,” said Maria C. Carrillo, Ph.D., chief science officer, Alzheimer's Association. “Through these distinguished honors we hope to inspire these scientists to even greater heights, and also establish a golden summit to which other current and future leaders might aspire.”

Bill Thies Award

New this year, the Bill Thies Award for Distinguished Service to ISTAART recognizes a member who has provided continued and outstanding service to the [Alzheimer's Association International Society to Advance Alzheimer's Research and Treatment](#) (ISTAART) community. The award honors William (Bill) Thies, Ph.D., who passed away on August 16, 2020. During his tenure from 1998 to 2020 as the Alzheimer's Association's chief medical and scientific officer, and then as its senior medical science advisor, Thies was instrumental in bringing AAIC under the Association and launched the peer-reviewed journal *Alzheimer's & Dementia*®: *The Journal of the Alzheimer's Association*, as well as the Association's Research Roundtable.

Jeffrey Kaye, M.D., is the inaugural recipient of the Bill Thies Award for Distinguished Service to ISTAART. He is Layton Endowed Professor of neurology and biomedical engineering at Oregon Health & Science University, director of the NIA-Layton Aging and Alzheimer's Disease Center, and director of the Oregon Center for Aging and Technology (ORCATECH). [His research](#) spans the fields of genetics, neuroimaging and digital technology, and focuses on understanding healthy aging. Kaye was chair of ISTAART from 2014-2018.

AAIC Lifetime Achievement Awards

The AAIC Lifetime Achievement Awards are named in honor of Henry Wisniewski, M.D., Ph.D., Khalid Iqbal, Ph.D., and Bengt Winblad, M.D., Ph.D., the co-founders of the International Conference on Alzheimer's Disease, now known as the Alzheimer's Association International Conference. These awards honor significant contributions to Alzheimer's and dementia research, either through a single scientific discovery or a body of work.

Michael W. Weiner, M.D., is the recipient of the Henry Wisniewski Lifetime Achievement Award. He is Professor in Residence in Radiology and Biomedical Imaging, Medicine, Psychiatry and Neurology at University of California, San Francisco, and Principal Investigator of the Alzheimer's Disease Neuroimaging Initiative, which is the largest observational study in the world concerning Alzheimer's disease. His work with MRI, PET and blood-based biomarker methods has contributed greatly to the diagnosis of neurodegenerative disorders, monitoring of patients under treatment and detection of Alzheimer's disease before symptoms arise.

Michal Novák, D.V.M., Ph.D., D.Sc., is the recipient of the Khalid Iqbal Lifetime Achievement Award. He played a crucial part in the discovery of tau as the constituent of neurofibrillary tangles and the protein's major role in Alzheimer's disease. Novák is the founder of Axon Neuroscience, a company focused on developing clinical therapies targeting tau. He is the former director of the Institute of Neuroimmunology at the Slovak Academy of Sciences.

Hilkka Soininen, M.D., Ph.D., is the recipient of the Bengt Winblad Lifetime Achievement Award. She is Professor of Neurology at University of Eastern Finland. Soininen has led numerous national, international and European Union projects and consortia, and has been principal investigator of 15 drug trials in Alzheimer's disease or mild cognitive impairment. Her current focus of research is improving diagnosis, therapy and prevention of Alzheimer's disease.

Zaven Khachaturian Award

Jianping Jia, M.D., Ph.D., is the recipient of the Zaven Khachaturian Award at AAIC 2021. This award is presented to an individual whose compelling vision, selfless dedication and most extraordinary achievement has significantly advanced the field of Alzheimer's disease science. Jia is the Founding Director of the Innovation Center for Neurological Disorders at Xuanwu Hospital of Capital Medical University in China. He is universally recognized as the chief architect of Alzheimer's disease research in China, being a leader for many dementia organizations in his country. His research focuses on genetics, epidemiology, diagnosis and drug development for dementia, and he has been principal investigator in 27 domestic and international dementia-focused clinical trials. Jia's achievements have led to significant leaps in understanding dementia in low- and middle-income countries.

Inge-Grundke-Iqbal Award

Fernanda G. De Felice, Ph.D., is this year's recipient of the Inge Grundke-Iqbal Award for Alzheimer's Research. This award is presented to the senior author of the most impactful study published in Alzheimer's research during the two calendar years preceding AAIC. De Felice is Associate Professor at Queen's University, Canada. She received the award for her finding that levels of an exercise-induced protein, expressed in a brain center important for memory called the hippocampus, were reduced in

mouse models of Alzheimer's. Conversely, boosting hippocampal levels of the protein enhanced memory in the mice. "Exercise-linked FNDC5/irisin rescues synaptic plasticity and memory defects in Alzheimer's models" was published in *Nature Medicine* in 2019, and provides important insights into the cellular mechanisms and lifestyle risk factors that lead to dementia development.

Blas Frangione Early Career Achievement Award

Eleanor Drummond, Ph.D., is the 2021 recipient of the Blas Frangione Early Career Achievement Award. This award recognizes early career researchers whose cutting-edge research in Alzheimer's and dementia has the potential to impact the field by propelling it in novel directions. Drummond is Bluesand Research Fellow at The University of Sydney, Australia. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Western Australia and completed her postdoctoral training at Murdoch University and New York University School of Medicine. Her research focuses on the early protein changes in Alzheimer's disease, and she has developed a new proteomics technique to analyze protein biomarkers in human brain samples.

About the Alzheimer's Association International Conference (AAIC)

The Alzheimer's Association International Conference (AAIC) is the world's largest gathering of researchers from around the world focused on Alzheimer's and other dementias. As a part of the Alzheimer's Association's research program, AAIC serves as a catalyst for generating new knowledge about dementia and fostering a vital, collegial research community.

AAIC 2021 home page: www.alz.org/aaic/

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About the Alzheimer's Association

The Alzheimer's Association is a worldwide voluntary health organization dedicated to Alzheimer's care, support and research. Our mission is to lead the way to end Alzheimer's and all other dementia — by accelerating global research, driving risk reduction and early detection, and maximizing quality care and support. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer's and all other dementia®. Visit alz.org or call 800.272.3900.

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