

ALZHEIMER'S LOS ANGELES PARTNERS WITH BRIGHTFOCUS FOUNDATION TO FUND NEW ALZHEIMER'S STUDY

Local Alzheimer's Group Donates \$50,000 to Scientific Research

LOS ANGELES, CA (September 17, 2019) -- **Alzheimer's Los Angeles (ALZLA)**, a local dementia-focused nonprofit serving Los Angeles and the Inland Empire, today announced a donation of \$50,000 to BrightFocus Foundation to help support an important new Alzheimer's study by Zhen Zhao, PhD, an assistant professor of physiology and neuroscience at the Zilkha Neurogenetic Institute at the Keck School of Medicine at the University of Southern California.

With a research grant from Alzheimer's LA and BrightFocus, the USC researcher is studying the role of mild traumatic brain injury in the development of Alzheimer's disease. Mild traumatic brain injury is a leading risk factor for dementia, but it receives only a small portion of the overall research funding by the US government on Alzheimer's and associated dementias. The resulting vascular damage and cognitive damage, particularly from repeated brain injuries, could be directly linked to the biology of Alzheimer's disease. Dr. Zhao's research aims to test his hypotheses linking vascular dysfunction, the build-up of amyloid plaques, and cognitive impairment in mice.

"Our central hypothesis is that vascular dysfunction after traumatic brain injury tips the balance between the production and clearance of beta amyloid in the brain, and directly contributes to neurodegeneration and cognitive impairment," Zhao said. "The generous support from the BrightFocus Foundation and Alzheimer's Los Angeles will help us better understand this link."

"We are pleased to work with BrightFocus and honor the dedication of Dr. Zhao in the field of Alzheimer's," said Heather Cooper Ortner, President and CEO, Alzheimer's Los Angeles. "We are committed to supporting young, local researchers to help eradicate this disease."

"Alzheimer's is taking a growing personal and financial toll on our nation and world, but the innovative and exciting work of scientists such as Dr. Zhao gives me great hope for the future," said BrightFocus President and CEO Stacy Pagos Haller.

About Alzheimer's Los Angeles

For nearly 40 years Alzheimer's Los Angeles has been serving Los Angeles and the Inland Empire. 100% of funds raised stay local, providing free support and services for individuals and families. Low cost training and education are also offered for professionals. Alzheimer's Los Angeles focuses on care, support, advocacy, and local research. Alzheimer's is a devastating neurodegenerative disease that weakens the memory and other cognitive and emotional functions. For more information, call the Helpline at 844.HELP.ALZ or visit www.AlzheimersLA.org.

About BrightFocus Foundation

BrightFocus Foundation is a premier source of funding for scientific research and public awareness to defeat Alzheimer's, glaucoma, and macular degeneration. Through its Alzheimer's Disease Research program, BrightFocus is currently managing over 100 Alzheimer's' projects around the globe. For more information, visit www.BrightFocus.org or call 800.437-2423.

Media Contacts

Diana Bianchini
DiModa PR
310.288.0077
diana@dimodapr.com

Michael Buckley
BrightFocus Foundation
301.556.9370
mbuckley@brightfocus.org