Yaffe honored by NIH with 2021 Gordon Lecture

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UC San Francisco researcher Kristine Yaffe, MD [1], has been selected by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) as the recipient of the 2021 Robert S. Gordon, Jr. Lectureship Award [2] in recognition of her work in the epidemiology of cognitive aging and dementia, as well as her innovative research on the modifiable risk factors of dementia and their potential for furthering prevention efforts. She will receive her award and deliver a lecture titled "Epidemiology of Cognitive Aging: Why Observational Studies Still Matter" on February 10, 2021, as part of the NIH Director?s Wednesday Afternoon Lecture Series [3].

Yaffe is the Roy and Marie Scola Endowed Chair and a professor of psychiatry, neurology, and epidemiology at UCSF, as well the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences' vice chair for the Weill Institute for Neurosciences [4]. She is also the chief of neuropsychiatry and director of the Memory Evaluation Clinic at the San Francisco VA Medical Center and director of the UCSF Center for Population Brain Health [5].

As an internationally recognized expert in the epidemiology of dementia and cognitive aging, Yaffe has served as the principal investigator on multiple grants from NIH, the U.S. Department of Defense, and several foundations, and delivered testimony as a subject expert to the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging [6]. Her work focuses on the identification of modifiable risk factors?including cardiovascular and metabolic risk factors, sleep
disturbances, and traumatic brain injury?and the critical role they play not just in late life, but across the entire lifespan. Her work has also provided important insight into the pathways that increase dementia risk.

Yaffe served as co-chair of the National Academy of Medicine?s Committee on Cognitive Aging [7], which assessed the public health dimensions of cognitive aging and released a report, Cognitive Aging: Progress in Understanding and Opportunities for Action, in 2015, and was appointed to the Governor's Task Force on Alzheimer's Prevention and Preparedness [9] by California Governor Gavin Newsom in 2019. She was elected to the National Academy of Medicine in 2019 and has received numerous awards in recognition of her work, including the American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry?s Distinguished Scientist Award, the American College of Psychiatrists? Research Award in Geriatric Psychiatry, and the American Academy of Neurology?s Potamkin Prize for Alzheimer?s Research.

NIH established the Robert S. Gordon, Jr. Lectureship in 1995 to recognize scientists who have contributed significantly to the field of epidemiology or clinical trials research. The lectureship is given annually on the recommendation of the NIH Epidemiology and Clinical Trials Interest Group and is organized by the NIH Office of Disease Prevention. It is named in honor of Robert S. Gordon, Jr., MD, a former assistant surgeon general of the U.S. Public Health Service and special assistant to former NIH director James Wyngaarden, MD.

About UCSF Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences

The UCSF Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences [10] and the Langley Porter Psychiatric Institute are among the nation's foremost resources in the fields of child, adolescent, adult, and geriatric mental health. Together they constitute one of the largest departments in the UCSF School of Medicine and the UCSF Weill Institute for Neurosciences, with a mission focused on research (basic, translational, clinical), teaching, patient care, and public service.

UCSF Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences conducts its clinical, educational, and research efforts at a variety of locations in Northern California, including Langley Porter Psychiatric Hospital and Clinics [11]; UCSF Medical Centers at Parnassus Heights, Mission Bay, and Mount Zion; UCSF Benioff Children?s Hospitals in San Francisco [12] and Oakland [13]; Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center; the San Francisco VA Health Care System; UCSF Fresno; and numerous community-based sites around the San Francisco Bay Area.

About the UCSF Weill Institute for Neurosciences

The UCSF Weill Institute for Neurosciences [14], established by the extraordinary generosity of Joan and Sanford I. "Sandy" Weill, brings together world-class researchers with top-ranked physicians to solve some of the most complex challenges in the human brain.

The UCSF Weill Institute leverages UCSF?s unrivaled bench-to-bedside excellence in the neurosciences. It unites three UCSF departments?Neurology, Psychiatry, and Neurological Surgery?that are highly esteemed for both patient care and research, as well as the Neuroscience Graduate Program, a cross-disciplinary alliance of nearly 100 UCSF faculty members from 15 basic-science departments, as well as the UCSF Institute for Neurodegenerative Diseases, a multidisciplinary research center focused on finding effective
treatments for Alzheimer’s disease, frontotemporal dementia, Parkinson’s disease, and other neurodegenerative disorders.

About UCSF

The University of California, San Francisco [15] (UCSF) is exclusively focused on the health sciences and is dedicated to promoting health worldwide through advanced biomedical research, graduate-level education in the life sciences and health professions, and excellence in patient care. UCSF Health [16], which serves as UCSF’s primary academic medical center, includes top-ranked specialty hospitals [17] and other clinical programs, and has affiliations throughout the Bay Area.

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