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## **AVE MARIA UNIVERSITY RECEIVES FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH GRANT TO RESEARCH ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE**

**AVE MARIA, Fla. (January 10, 2018)** — Approximately 480,000 Floridians are currently affected by Alzheimer's disease, and researchers around the world are studying new methods of diagnosis and treatment. While significant research progress has been made, it is still unclear why some individuals develop Alzheimer's disease.

To solve this question, the Florida Department of Health has awarded a \$100,000 pilot grant from the Ed and Ethel Moore Alzheimer's Disease Research Fund to Ave Maria University chemists and biologists. Increasing evidence suggests that Alzheimer's is linked to changes in the metabolic profiles of patients that diminish neuron survival.

Four Ave Maria University professors propose to investigate how the nicotinamide metabolites affect the aging-related protein sirtuin-1 (SIRT1) to promote neuron survival. The multi-investigator team includes Assistant Professor of Chemistry Dr. Antonio Barbosa (principal investigator), and co-investigators Associate Professor of Biology Dr. Stephen Cronin, Assistant Professor of Chemistry Dr. Diana West, and Assistant Professor of Chemistry Dr. James Vranish. With expertise in biochemistry, medicinal chemistry, and biology, this research team will work alongside Ave Maria University undergraduates to better understand how SIRT1 can be harnessed to prevent the formation of Tau tangles and amyloid beta plaque build-up in Alzheimer's.

A portion of the grant award will initiate scholarships for undergraduates to conduct biomedical research in the summer. The Ave Maria University research team anticipates that this research will be beneficial for the discovery of new therapies for Alzheimer's. For more information on this research project, please contact Dr. Tony Barbosa at [tony.barbosa@avemaria.edu](mailto:tony.barbosa@avemaria.edu).

Ave Maria University established its permanent campus near Naples in 2007, and has since expanded the number of majors offered from 11 to 34, including programs in business, nursing, education, and the arts and sciences. The University this year has an enrollment of 1,100 that includes students from 45 states and 20 countries, and a student body that is approximately 85% Catholic, 25% minority, and evenly-divided between men and women. Ave Maria's state-of-the-art campus offers six residence halls with a capacity for 1,300 students and rests on a tract of over 300 acres in Southwest Florida.

Ave Maria University is a Catholic, liberal arts institution of higher learning devoted to Mary the Mother of God, inspired by St. John Paul II and St. Teresa of Calcutta, and dedicated to the formation of joyful, intentional followers of Jesus Christ through Word and Sacrament, scholarship and service. For more information on Ave Maria University, visit <https://www.avemaria.edu>.

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