JUST A FEW MONTHS AGO, our community reached a significant milestone when local and international scientists came together to celebrate the 30th anniversary of our Massachusetts Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center – one of approximately 30 centers of excellence anchored by the National Institutes of Health to find effective cures in light of the tectonic shift to an aging population in the U.S. and beyond. The Center was established by Dr. John Growdon in 1984, and he is credited for grooming some of the most talented clinicians and scientists in the Alzheimer’s disease field, including Dr. Reisa Sperling – this year’s co-recipient of the prestigious Potamkin Prize (see Page 7), and a much-admired neurologist known to many of you. Dr. Growdon’s remarkable career is captured in our interview with him in this issue, along with features such as the successful FTD Care to Cure Educational Conference led by Dr. Brad Dickerson, who is another outstanding mentee of Dr. Growdon’s, and a leader in the Frontotemporal Disorders field.

It is noteworthy that Dr. Growdon had the farsightedness to train international medical students and fellows even before globalization became a popular creed in the Internet era, and Dr. Teresa Gomez-Isla’s 2015 MGH Ernesto Gonzalez Award (also on page 7) is a testament to our strength in identifying, training and successfully recruiting gifted clinician-scientists from around the world to care for our diverse patient population. Today, we continue this excellent tradition of ‘widespread impact’ by initiatives such as mentoring recipients of the Weill-Cornell Medical College-Qatar (WCMC-Q)’s Medical Student Research Award during the summer (see pages 12-13). This ‘bridge’ to the Middle East – a region of ancient cultural heritage – started in 2013 when a young WCMC-Q medical student (Mostafa Naguib) from Egypt trained in Dr. Mark Alber’s lab here at MGH, and we look forward to being the custodians of all budding scientists and physicians in the years to come (hint: check out the 6th graders from the Runkle School on their MGH field trip on page 5).

There is no simple algorithm in cultivating the next generation of pioneers who will chart new discoveries on the vast mysteries of the brain; however, the provision of an enriched training environment to allow for the best ones to rise up to the top is fundamental. To that end, we were delighted to announce the Growdon Fellowship for promising junior trainees at our 30th anniversary celebrations in the fall.

I am glad that our KEEP IN MIND newsletters are serving as vehicles for ongoing dialogue with our patients, research participants and all who share our mission of finding cures for diseases that affect us. I know you will enjoy the poignant poem penned by a caregiver (see page 3), and do stay tuned as we include artwork and related creative endeavors from others in upcoming issues. Who knows – you could be featured on our ‘canvas’ next!
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A caregiver’s poem

*Tear down those walls, said by Kennedy to Khrushchev …*

by Anonymous

*Tear down those walls, said by Kennedy to Khrushchev, my darling wife pronounced as we were watching a movie about Berlin in the 60’s.
Long term memory was to be the last to be affected …

And yet, upon sharing with her that a contemporary sale at Christie’s totaled 750m,
she quickly suggested that collectors were bidding up the art to protect their holdings.

Brilliant analysis. Who is she now? Which conversation will she recall. Any?

Is it worth discussing the future, other than to hear myself talk?

Please put the shades up ... why? ... so I can view the animals ... OK

Every request needs an explanation. Holding on to self by standing firm before complying.

Patience on my end, endless patience.
Organization on my end essential

Each day is Groundhog Day ... trying to perfect my ability to not get angry

Mornings tough. Self preservation leads to defensiveness

5/24 Like a delete button is pressed for new memories within 30 seconds. ... getting worse

Old memories, how did we meet, slowly being erased

5/25 Each morning ... I’m not going anywhere ...oh, good. Fear of being left for the day, forever

I’m exhausted ...

BB. Guilty about having her disease be a burden

All I want to do is get on a yacht and sail away

Feel sorry for myself.

B feels so dependent on me she shares. So sad so true

I feel so responsible. What if I die or get hurt

5/26. When I reminded her to keep the bedroom door closed this early in the morning as she likes to sleep longer, she lashed out. I think it offended her that she couldn’t remember

5/27 He is always there, third time we have seen tuna taxi pulling out without signaling Let’s call and complain to the company. Actually, it was the first time.

5/28 He will fix me won’t he? Dr Hyman promised.
ON NOVEMBER 13TH The Frontotemporal Disorders (FTD) Unit presented From Care to Cure: An FTD Education Event for over 80 family and professional caregivers. Conference attendees had the opportunity to hear presentations from FTD Unit staff and industry experts, covering scientific updates, practical tools for caring for your loved one with FTD, and making connections with other caregivers.

Dr. Brad Dickerson, Director of the FTD Unit opened the conference by welcoming attendees and emphasizing the importance of partnership between clinicians and caregivers. He provided an overview of Frontotemporal Disorders that set the stage for a morning of scientific presentations from Megan Quimby, Diane Lucente, Dr. Stephen Haggarty, Dr. Scott McGinnis, and Dr. Anne Young. Topics included communication issues, genetics, stem cell models, and therapeutic trials for FTD. Haggarty remarked “…it was great to see the full spectrum of (the) FTD program on display and to be reminded of the tremendous opportunity we have to try to make a difference in the lives of FTD families by working together.” Dr. Anne Young closed the morning presentation with culminating thoughts about where FTD research began, and where it is going.

The afternoon session began with a presentation from former FTD caregiver, Katie Brandt, about the importance of brain donation and participation in research. Caregivers then moved on to workshops presented by local industry experts. Dr. Paul Raia of the Alzheimer’s Association presented on his program, Habilitation Therapy, and managing behaviors for a loved one with dementia at home. Pamela Greenfield of Oalican Law Group gave attendees an overview of legal and financial considerations associated with an FTD diagnosis and Lindsay Brennan of Life Care Directions of New England shared strategies for navigating through various stages of care management. A special question and answer workshop with FTD Unit Clinicians was arranged for a small number of patients who attended.

Attendees reported an appreciation for the access to so many brilliant, dedicated clinicians and the opportunity to connect with other families. At the end of the day, one caregiver said “Listening to Dr. Young talk about the possibility of therapeutic treatments in our lifetime was incredible. It gives me hope.”

The conference was supported by donations from the Kearney family, the Beecher family, Forum Pharmaceuticals, and Love Is Out There.

To learn more about the FTD Unit go to: www.ftd-boston.org.
Local 6th graders visit the MGH ...

WHEN DR. TERESA GOMEZ-ISLA proposed that we take sixty-five 6th graders to visit the MGH on a science field trip, I said sure why not! ... I did not realize at the time it would turn out to be the best field trip ever ...

“That was cool what they were doing with mice,” “I got to see a real brain!,” and “this trip had the right amount of movement and learning for 6th graders” were just some of the many compliments and praises coming from our 6th grade students, staff, and parents of John D. Runkle School in Brookline, MA. This epic day was organized and run by Dr. Gomez-Isla with help from fellow scientists, doctors, and lab personnel.

Every place we went, and the people that our students interacted with, made our day of learning, exploring, and asking questions much richer. The MGH Paul S. Russell, MD, Museum of Medical History and Innovation allowed the students to get a glimpse of the historic importance of MGH in medicine. The students especially loved the Ether Dome experience in which they were allowed to interact with neurologists and were allowed to view an actual human brain up close.

Finally, the students learned how MRIs worked. The neuroscientists at the MGH’s Navy Yard campus discussed their research and answered student questions. The students felt grateful and proud that they were able to interact in real world settings and learn from people who are really doing amazing research. We truly appreciate all the planning and volunteering of precious time to make our trip so special.

Thank You,
Djems Domerson
6th and 7th Grade Science Teacher
John D Runkle School, Public Schools of Brookline
A fantastic Research Participants Appreciation Day ...

By Dorene M. Rentz, PsyD

ON SEPTEMBER 13, 2014, the Outreach and Recruitment Core of the Massachusetts Alzheimer Disease Research Center (MADRC) and the Harvard Aging Brain Study (HABS) collaborated to hold a Participant Appreciation Day, which attracted over 239 individuals. The purpose was to thank all the study subjects and their partners for participating in numerous research projects over the years.

The highlight of the program were presentations by Brad Hyman, MD the director of the MADRC, Reisa Sperling, MD, the Principal Investigator of HABS, as well as Teresa Gomez-Isla, MD, the Clinical Director of the MADRC and Dorene Rentz, PsyD, the Director of Neuropsychology. The presentations focused on what we have learned from the research conducted over the 30 years of the MADRC and from the innovative imaging in the Harvard Aging Brain Study. The value of brain donation was also highlighted as well as a presentation on why we ask the participants to take all those memory and cognitive tests. It became obvious that the contributions of all the research participants have led to significant advances in understanding and treating Alzheimer’s disease and many other dementing illnesses.

The Participant Appreciation Day was well received and many said they “thoroughly enjoyed it.” One participant actually commented, “It was the only event of its kind that he’s attended where everyone spoke in terms he could understand.” We thank everyone who organized and participated in this event and hope to hold another Appreciation Day soon.
CONGRATULATIONS TO...

DR. REISA SPERLING for receiving the 2015 Potamkin Prize for Research in Pick’s, Alzheimer’s and Related Diseases. This prestigious award is funded through the Potamkin Foundation, and honors world-class researchers for their work in advancing dementia research. The prize is named after Luba Potamkin (www.nytimes.com/1994/04/07/obituaries/luba-potamkin-73-pitchwoman-for-cadillacs.html). Several previous recipients of the Prize are either current Harvard Professors (e.g., Profs Brad Hyman, Dennis Selkoe, Rudy Tanzi) or had worked or trained at Harvard-affiliated institutions in the past (e.g., Profs Ashley Bush, Christian Haass, Peter St. George-Hyslop, Marcel Mesulam, Lennart Mucke, Roger Nitsch).

Read more about the 2015 awardees at www.aan.com/PressRoom/Home/PressRelease/1354

AND TO ...

DR. TERESA GOMEZ-ISLA for being honored with the 2015 Ernesto Gonzalez Award for Outstanding Service to the Latino Community at MGH. Dr. Gomez-Isla was honored for her leadership in establishing a Memory Disorders Unit clinic for Spanish-speaking patients when she re-joined the MGH in 2009, after having served as the Head of the Memory Clinic at Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau in Barcelona, Spain, and prior to that, as the Director of the Memory Clinic at the University of Navarra in Spain.

The award is named after Dr. Ernesto Gonzalez-Martinez (www.massgeneral.org/dermatology/doctors/doctor.aspx?id=16555) of the MGH Department of Dermatology, and is given by the MGH during the annual Latino Heritage Month.

Read more about the 2015 awardees at www.massgeneral.org/doctors/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=4979

Daughter of research participant stops by to thank Dr. Hyman ...

MELAINE E. HALL-PATTERSON stopped in to thank Dr. Bradley Hyman and the Memory Study Team for the care and support of her late mother and his patient, Madeline E. Hall.

“With heart-felt gratitude, I extend my thankfulness to Dr. Hyman and his team. While my mother was a participant in the Memory Study and patient of MGH, Dr. Hyman worked diligently with me in the care of my mother. He made himself available and open to “outside the box” wellness when it came to extreme challenges I often faced within the healthcare system and her many hospitalizations. With an open ear and heart, he listened to my concerns and encouraged me most in the areas of much support.

In today’s medical arena, there is not a lot of support for the caregiver, due to revamping of medical systems, rising medical costs, and overall access, even with adequate insurance coverage – i.e., Medicare etc... The disparities, policies and rules between what is practical and what is decided in infrastructure meetings are as far as the East meets the West. Until we open our minds and thinking to alternatives that do not always fall in line with the practice of traditional western medicine, we all are at risk. More needs to be done to support the wellness of a patient and their caregiver when keeping a loved one at home. Overall costs would be much lower over a lifespan. While this writer is well aware that there is more invested in illness than wellness, the time for realistic change to healthcare is on the horizon. I have become a participant in the Memory Study if it will lead to finding cures through data and research that will put the fire out of dementia and Alzheimer’s. When you are not a part of a solution to a problem, you are very much a part of the problem. Again, kudos to Dr. Bradley Hyman and his research team. My heartfelt appreciation.”

M.E. Hall-Patterson
Boston, MA
April 8, 2015
Dr. Growdon, you founded the Memory Disorders Unit at MGH in 1982 and then went on to establish one of the first Alzheimer’s Disease (AD) Research Centers in the world back in 1983/1984. Please lead us back to when you’d first developed an interest in the neurosciences. Does a vocation in medicine run in your family?

Dr. G: I studied English Literature in college, and didn’t know what neuroscience was until I got to medical school. The University of Pennsylvania Medical School had established the Institute of Neurological Sciences, which was one of the first cross-disciplinary research programs in the country that encompassed neuroanatomy, physiology and psychology. I was fortunate to work with Professor Chambers and Professor Liu in the anatomy department and under their guidance, studied the anatomic and physiologic interactions among the major areas of the brain responsible for motor movements and control. This experience whetted my appetite for research and directed my choice of neurology as a clinical specialty. In becoming a neurologist, I broke with the family tradition of surgery, but my son has since reestablished the Growdon surgical lineage.

What brought you to the MGH, and where else did life lead you up till then?

Dr. G: MGH has a long and distinguished place in the history of medicine; it is widely viewed as an excellent hospital for training young physicians. After serving two years in the Naval Medical Corps during the Vietnam War in Guam, I came to the MGH neurology department because of its world-renowned reputation, and the opportunity to work and learn from Drs. Raymond Adams, C. Miller Fisher and E. P. Richardson. They had established a tradition of excellence in clinical care and research, and I wanted to join that tradition and eventually contribute to it.

How did you actually hear about the federal government’s interest in establishing specialized research centers in AD across the U.S.? What was the process like in submitting that first grant to the National Institutes of Health (NIH)?

Dr. G: Between 1980–1982, I served on a National Institutes of Health (NIH) Scientific Review Committee, and saw first-hand how one branch of the NIH – the National Institute on Aging (NIA) – was increasing interest and funding for research into the cause and treatment of Alzheimer disease and related dementias. As a result of my research in brain chemistry at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology under the direction of Professor Dick Wurtman, I thought that a strategy to increase brain acetylcholine, a transmitter chemical that is important in the formation of new memories, would be an effective treatment of Alzheimer disease. Together with colleagues who shared this vision, we assembled a broad neuroscience research team that had a strong clinical orientation and began work. When the request for proposals came from the NIA to establish Centers of Excellence in 1984, we were already up and running.

The Massachusetts Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center recently celebrated its 30th anniversary with an outstanding scientific symposium on September 19, 2014. Who were invited to speak at the symposium, and why were they chosen?

Dr. G: The topics were based on the major areas of research that hold promise for understanding and treating Alzheimer disease and related dementias. The speaker selection followed naturally:
Invite those who are most prominent in the respective fields. Many of the speakers were from the Massachusetts ADRC such as Professors Keith Johnson, Randy Buckner, Rudolph Tanzi and Reisa Sperling. Several were former fellows who have gone on to international success: Professors Peter St. George-Hyslop, Roger Nitsch and Christian Haass. A third group of speakers represented young talent (Drs. Jasmeer Chhatwal, Doo Yeon Kim, Teresa Gomez-Isla, Mark Albers, Eloise Hudry) within the Massachusetts ADRC, who represent the best science and the most promising lines of investigation and treatment. To top it off, we also invited a few distinguished individuals to present remarks or chair a session at the event: Drs. Anne Young (former Chair, MGH Neurology); Joseph Martin (Former Dean, Harvard Medical School); Tony Phelps (Director, NIA Alzheimer’s Disease Centers Program), Cliff Jack (Professor of Radiology, Mayo Clinic); Bruce Rosen (Director, MGH-MIT Martinos Center for Biomedical Imaging), and Zaven Khachaturian (former Director, NIH/NIA Office of Alzheimer’s Research).

Many world-class clinicians and researchers would attribute their professional successes to your mentorship (“standing on the shoulders of giants”), but whose shoulders would you say that you stand on?

Dr. G: At the University of Pennsylvania Medical School: Professors William Chambers and C. N. Liu. At MGH: Professors Raymond Adams, E. P. Richardson and Joseph Martin. At MIT: Professor Richard Wurtman.

What do you see when you’re asked to look back on in terms of the development in the field of neuroscience, and what is your view of the horizon?

Dr. G: The Society for Neuroscience was founded about the same time as I began my medical career. The initial membership of the Society was in the hundreds; today, the annual meeting draws ~30,000 investigators. This amazing growth is testament to the explosive growth and enduring impact of neuroscience. This is a field that encompasses the traditional fields of anatomy, biochemistry and physiology and adds genetics and molecular biology. This is a field with investigators whose experimental systems range from cells in a Petri dish to insects to the complexity of the human. I don’t mean to denigrate individual major neuroscience discoveries, but to me, this enormous enterprise is the most impressive story of the past 50 years.

In closing, please tell us what a young “John H. Growdon, MD” might say if he were to know how remarkable his professional life had turned out.

Dr. G: He would give thanks to his parents for their support, big hugs to his wife and children for their love and encouragement, and grateful acknowledgement to the many mentors, colleagues and students who taught him along the way.
Some Thoughts from Our Participants ...

*Marilyn Marion’s reflection on the A4 (‘Anti-Amyloid Treatment in Asymptomatic Alzheimer’s’) Clinical Trial*

**AS A RESULT OF** Tamy-Fee’s powerful presentation at the meeting of the Seniors on the Move, I became interested in being part of and finding a solution to the cause of this devastating disease. My aunt (not a blood relative) was suffering at the time from the “disease” for several years; her condition also inspired me to participate.

The experience heightened my awareness of my own possible frailties. I became aware of my “learning” disability or perhaps my decline especially during the telephone portion of the study. Negative moments were some of the frustrations of my inability to remember some of the items/playing card figures, etc. However, it did not discourage me from continuing with the study. A positive moment came when the results of the PET scan showed no plaque ... needless to say, the anxiety of not knowing the results bothered me as I don’t think I would have handled the news of my having plaque very well. I know that does not mean that I will never get Alzheimer’s disease and that I could possibly get it in the future; it just means that I would be opened to my having an intravenous drug to remove plaque from my brain. The team made me feel comfortable; they answered my questions and concerns especially around my getting the PET scan.

I would definitely recommend the A4 Trial to my peers. The lack of information about Alzheimer’s disease available in the African American community is concerning. There is (and rightfully so) some paranoia associated with experiments and forthrightfulness from the medical community. On a positive note, however, there are now more African American physicians and other high level associates in the study of Alzheimer’s disease. I am proud that I was the first African American woman to participate in the A4 study in the Boston area.

Marilyn Marion
3/11/2015

For more information on the A4 study, please visit [http://a4study.org/](http://a4study.org/)

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**Should you volunteer – to be a participant in a medical study**

**THE FOLLOWING** is a conversation between Dr. Jonathan Jackson, a Cognitive Neuroscientist at the Harvard Aging Brain Study and Robert St.Germain, a fifth year volunteer study participant, regarding the HABS’s quest to find a treatment for Alzheimer’s Disease and the need for volunteer study participants.

**JONATHAN:** “We in the research community sometimes hear that people are reluctant to become a medical study volunteer because they don’t want to feel like a guinea pig or lab rat. Rob, you have been a participant for five years. What would you say to that comment?”

**ROB:** “I would say that I feel it’s a privilege to be a part of this study. I don’t feel like a lab rat at all, in fact, just the opposite. I feel more like a VIP. Over the last five years I have interacted with perhaps 40 or so of your staff. Every single one of them has treated me with more than respect. I was a management consultant in my career so by nature I ask a lot of questions. Everyone has been patient and careful to insure that my questions are answered including follow-up if need be. One of your senior doctors even sent me a follow-up email at around 9:30pm. I call that dedication.

**JONATHAN:** “Yes Rob, for me and all the staff, you are our treasure, our heroes. Each of us has spent years in training. We have the technical skills and
Greetings from the Clinical Coordinator

TO ALL OUR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS:

Hope springs eternal! This past long winter we had to dig deep and find the hope that spring would eventually come. The snow piles became higher and higher as the record-breaking snowfall continued week after week. The brutally cold days were never-ending. Driving and using the T were exhausting and tried our patience. It seemed like winter would never end! But we stuck together, helped each other out, and came through it ... to spring! All that white has finally turned to green!

Hope also springs eternal that we will continue to understand more about Alzheimer’s disease and other neurodegenerative illnesses. As you know, there’s much cutting-edge research going on here, including novel imaging studies and exciting clinical trials. But the research can only happen with your participation in it. You are the ones who will push us along to a time when we can hopefully treat and prevent these illnesses that take so much away from us. Together, we can do this!

Here’s hoping we have a delightful spring and summer with lots of promise and growth. We deserve it, after the long, hard winter!

Jeanette Gunther, MS
Clinical Coordinator

A centralized telephone number for inquiries about our studies!

INTERESTED IN LEARNING more about research studies and how you can get involved? Patients, caregivers, family members, and healthy volunteers can call Sehily Jaimes at 617-643-5200 to learn about all of the exciting research opportunities we have going on at the MADRC!
HELLO, MY NAME IS AYA EL JERBI. I was born in Damascus, Syria and raised in Athens, Greece. I received my middle school education in Australia, of which I’m a citizen, and graduated high school from Qatar Academy in Qatar. I’m currently in my second year of Medical School at Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar. In 2014, I worked in Dr. Gomperts’ lab at MGH MIND (MassGeneral Institute for Neurodegenerative Disease) on a project that aims to allow better understanding of how the molecular cascades in the hippocampus affect its function and its coordination with the rest of the brain to cause memory deficits in Alzheimer’s disease (AD). My involvement was in forming histological slides and quantifying plaques in AD mouse model brains to determine whether the degree of functional degradation in the hippocampus and its coherence with cortical regions is correlated with the burden of amyloid plaques. MGH MIND provided me with the opportunity to explore my field of interest through research and challenge myself to learn new procedures I hadn’t previously been exposed to. I aspire to continue pursuing my Medical Degree and undergo residency in Neurology to ultimately contribute further to this growing area of research.

Warm regards,

Aya El Jerbi
WCMC-Q, Class of 2017

MARHABA! (A BIG HELLO IN ARABIC)

My name is Joud Abu Odeh, I was originally born in Jordan, but I was raised in Doha, Qatar (hosts of Fifa World Cup 2022!) – or better known as the little Arabian Peninsula, near Dubai.

I attended school in Qatar and after graduating from high school, my dream of becoming a doctor started coming true when I was accepted to Weill Cornell Medical College campus in Qatar. (Yes it exists! Along with many other universities such as Carnegie Mellon and Georgetown!)

In the summer of 2014, I had the honor of working in the MIND labs with Dr. Oksana Berezovska and her team. I was put to work straight away on two projects to find out more about ps1-syt1 interactions and their potential role in the pathogenic process of Alzheimer’s disease.

My time at the lab was filled with endless opportunities to learn. I carried out experimental investigations that I had never done before, for example: transfection ps70 cells with DNA, running a western blot, and most importantly, learning how to use Fluorescent lifetime imaging microscopy (which taught me the importance of patience and trial and error!)

Joud Abu Odeh
WCMC-Q, Class of 2017
HELLO! I’M OMAR. I was born in Damascus, Syria, to Syrian parents. However, I spent most of my childhood in Saudi Arabia. After graduating from high school, I moved to Toledo, Ohio, where I completed my bachelor’s degree in Chemistry. I then decided to pursue my medical education at yet a new destination: Qatar, where I am currently studying at the WCMC-Q. During the summer of 2014, I was given the great opportunity to work in Dr. Hyman’s lab, where I was mentored by Dr. Susanne Wegmann. My research focused on investigating the ability of tau aggregates in a neuronal culture to induce aggregation in otherwise normal neuronal cells. From day one until the last day of my involvement, I continued to learn an immense amount of information, including setting up neuronal cultures, confocal imaging, live imaging, immunohistochemistry, viral transfections and much more!

I am an aspiring physician, and neurology is certainly at the top of my list for specialties that interest me! I am thankful to Dr. Hyman, Susanne, and all the wonderful people at the Hyman lab for giving me the opportunity to work with them last summer.

M. Omar Subei
WCMC-Q, Class of 2017
**WE’RE CURRENTLY RECRUITING!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDY TITLE</th>
<th>WE’RE LOOKING FOR</th>
<th>BRIEF STUDY DESCRIPTION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dominantly-Inherited Alzheimer Network (DIAN)</td>
<td>Adults (age 18 + ) with a biological parent who has Dominantly-Inherited Alzheimer’s Disease (DIAD)</td>
<td>The purpose of the study is to try to understand the changes that occur in patients with genetic mutations causing DIAD over time. The DIAN research volunteers are members of families in which AD is dominantly-inherited, meaning that about 50% of the individuals in each generation of a family develop AD, generally before age 60. Over time, participants will have MRIs, PET scans, Lumbar Punctures, and memory testing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evolution of Memory-Related fMRI Activation Over the Course of MCI and AD</td>
<td>Healthy adults, age 65-90, and adults with MCI and mild AD dementia, age 55-90</td>
<td>The purpose of this research study is to find out if functional MRI images of the brain can be used to diagnose and monitor the course and treatment of Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) and AD (Mild Alzheimer’s Disease). Subjects must have a study partner and be willing to come for six to eight clinic and imaging visits over the course of two to three years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connectome Imaging in Aging and Dementia</td>
<td>Adults with AD, FTD, MCI or cognitive complaints, age 50-90</td>
<td>The purpose of this research study is to look at brain connectivity in a variety of people with memory problems, including people with complaints about their memory and people diagnosed with a neurodegenerative disease. The study involves one 3-hour visit to the Charlestown Navy Yard where participants watch a movie during a one-hour brain scan (MRI) and complete some questionnaires. This study is led by Dr. Julius (Trey) Hedden. Look for an interview with Dr. Hedden in the next newsletter!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Placebo-Controlled, Double-Blind, Parallel-Group, Bayesian Adaptive Randomization Design and Dose Regimen-Finding Study to Evaluate Safety, Tolerability, and Efficacy of BAN2401 in Subjects with Early Alzheimer’s Disease (BAN2401-G000-201)</td>
<td>Adults with AD, age 50 - 90</td>
<td>79 week clinical trial to evaluate the efficacy and safety of BAN2401 in reducing abnormally high levels of a protein called amyloid that is found in Alzheimer’s Disease (AD). We are looking for participants between the age of 50 and 90 in stable medical condition and with a reliable study partner able to accompany them to visits. Must have been diagnosed with Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) or mild AD and are willing to undergo MRI and PET scans. Compensation is provided for participation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Amyloid Treatment in Asymptomatic Alzheimer’s Study (‘A4’)</td>
<td>Adults with normal thinking and memory function, ages 65-85</td>
<td>The purpose of the study is to investigate a new drug intervention that may reduce the impact of a protein known as ‘beta amyloid’-forming plaques in the brain. It may take 3 years to complete the study. During the study, you may be given the test drug or a placebo (‘substance without active medication designed to mimic the appearance of a drug’), be asked to have 4 MRI scans, at least 2 PET scans, routine blood tests, memory tests and physical exams. You may also participate in an optional sub-study for lumbar puncture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disentangling the Contribution of Tau to Aging, Dementia, and Neurodegeneration</td>
<td>Healthy Adults and adults with AD, MCI, CTE, and FTD, ages 20-90</td>
<td>The purpose of this study is to determine the presence of the protein Tau in the brain in a variety of populations, ranging from healthy adults to those diagnosed with a neurodegenerative disease. It will take up to 6 visits to complete this study. Over the course of these visits, you will be asked to have 1 MRI scan, 1 T807 PET scan, 1 PIB PET scan, 1 fasting blood draw, and 2 cognitive testing sessions. You may also participate in an optional sub-study for lumbar puncture.</td>
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For information on these or additional studies, contact our Outreach & Recruitment Coordinator, Sehily Jaimes, at 617-643-5200
Engaging Hispanic and Latino individuals in research ...
by Sehily Y. Jaimes, BS

A NEW DOOR has opened for older Latinos in our memory studies; for the first time, we are offering them the opportunity to join and participate in some of our observational research studies and clinical trials. One of these studies is the A4 trial, led by Dr. Reisa Sperling. It is a trial for older individuals who may be at risk for Alzheimer’s disease, and aims to prevent the memory loss associated with Alzheimer’s.

We are thrilled to have all relevant information and documents from this study available in Spanish, and the bilingual staff to make Latino enrollment a reality.

Educating the Latino community about memory disorders and dementias should be a priority. To this end, Dr. Yakeel Quiroz and I have joined local community efforts that focus on dispelling myths about Alzheimer’s, as well as promoting healthy aging habits. Through presentations at several Hispanic Elderly centers, we are holding small-group discussions about the meaning of Alzheimer’s, and how it is different from normal aging. We have already received a wonderful response from the community and are witnessing how their curiosity spikes when we explain amyloid and tau pathology in the brain. Community members keep amazing us with their insightful questions. They are motivated to learn more about their own memory through memory screening session that we also offer after our presentations.

In addition to these discussions, we are involved with other community outreach efforts. We recently had the pleasure of visiting the Alberto Vasallo’s TV program, Revista Hispana, on Channel 7 to talk about Alzheimer’s disease and our ongoing research studies. We are partnering with the East Boston Health Medical Center, the local chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association, and “Latinos Against Alzheimer’s” to offer workshops on dementias and cultural competence in Primary Care. Physicians in this specialty are in a privileged position to educate and guide their patients about these topics.

Through one-on-one efforts by presenting to community centers, our local ongoing collaborations, and our physician’s connections, we hope to continue educating the Latino community and encouraging them to join research. We are excited to continue our pursuit and plan to further expand outreach efforts.

For more information on study participation, please contact Sehily Jaimes at 617-643-5200.
Our team at the 2014 Greater Boston Walk to End Alzheimer's

A bouquet of thanks to our research subjects and patients