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Donald and Darlene Shiley Fund Alzheimer's Research in San Diego

San Diego based scientists awarded funding for promising new research initiatives

(San Diego) – San Diego based researchers Dr. Mark Jacobson, UCSD; and Dr. Lisa Marie Delano-Wood, Veterans Medical Research Foundation were awarded \$280,000 in funding for multi-year Alzheimer's disease research today through the Shiley Research Award, funded by San Diego philanthropists Donald and Darlene Shiley.

A formal presentation of the funding was made to Dr. Jacobson and Dr. Delano-Wood at the February 25 meeting of the Alzheimer's Association San Diego/Imperial Chapter board of directors following brief lectures about the proposed research.

Shiley Research Awards are given to researchers at San Diego-based facilities working on promising treatments leading toward a cure for Alzheimer's disease. Eligible projects are assessed through a rigorous nationwide peer review process through the national Alzheimer's Association before becoming eligible for this award. A total of \$500,000 in Shiley Research Awards has been distributed since 2007.

The Shileys have generously supported Alzheimer's disease research and treatment with millions of dollars in support for many years. They know all too well the devastating effects of this growing epidemic. Darlene Shiley has lost a mother, uncle and aunt to Alzheimer's disease, and her husband Donald now suffers the effects of dementia.

"The Shileys are remarkable partners for our organization, helping us carry out our vision to create a world without Alzheimer's disease," said John Daly, MD, chairperson of the Association's medical advisory board. "Through the Shiley Research Awards, they've made a commitment to funding San Diego based researchers working on projects leading to treatment and someday a cure."

"Watching someone you love suffer the effects of Alzheimer's disease can leave you feeling very helpless," said Darlene Shiley. "I was determined that I would do whatever I could through funding promising research and personal advocacy to make a difference for other families, today and in the future."

Dr. Mark Jacobson's research will use data gathered by the Alzheimer's Disease Neuroimaging Initiative to research better methods of early detection of Alzheimer's disease, the identification of risk factors, and the biological basis for dementia. The outcomes could help guide future treatments by identifying brain regions most susceptible to aging and dementia.

"It (the funding) means a great deal at a very important time," said Dr. Jacobson. "It represents an exciting opportunity. A lot of people aren't in a situation to make extra contributions. They are very much appreciated."

Dr. Lisa Marie Delano-Wood's research will focus on the study of brain changes in "white matter" which may have a role in the early development of dementia. If more is learned about early brain changes, earlier detection of Alzheimer's disease may lead to better treatments and a cure.

"We're both really excited to embark upon our research," said Dr. Delano-Wood.

Darlene Shiley has been a national Alzheimer's Association board member since 2005. She has been named the recipient of the 2010 Reagan/Thal Legacy Award, from the San Diego/Imperial Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association. This award recognizes an individual who has made an extraordinary contribution to those living with Alzheimer's disease.

Alzheimer's is one of the fastest growing diseases in the United States. **Fifty thousand San Diegans and their families like the Shileys are affected by Alzheimer's disease.**

Watch this interview with Darlene Shiley about her commitment to Alzheimer's disease research and advocacy: http://www.alz.org/join_the_cause_whygotinvolved_Shiley.asp

Photos of the presentation may be viewed and downloaded for publication at this link: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/falconvalleygroup/sets/72157623511657424/> Both high resolution and web friendly versions are available. Please give photo credit to the Alzheimer's Association, San Diego/Imperial Chapter.

The mission of the Alzheimer's Association San Diego/Imperial Chapter is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health. The Chapter provides free services, including support groups, educational seminars, 24-hour Helpline, a library, Care Consultations, MedicAlert™ + Safe Return™ and Memories in the Making™ art program. For more information, visit www.sanalz.org or call 1-800-272-3900.

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