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Florida's Largest Brain Bank Receives Funding for Modernization Program

The Alzheimer's Association Florida Gulf Coast Chapter provides \$150,000 for Mayo Clinic Brain Bank to further educational outreach and research

JACKSONVILLE, October 15, 2024 — The Alzheimer's Association Florida Gulf Coast Chapter announces funding for the Florida Autopsied Multi-Ethnic (FLAME) brain bank cohort at Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville. This initiative aims to enhance understanding of the impact of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias on the brain, with a particular focus on Black and Hispanic individuals.

The Mayo Clinic Brain Bank provides samples from donors with neurodegenerative disorders, like Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, to qualified researchers to learn more about the diseases underlying the devastating consequences to those impacted and their families. Florida currently represents the largest collection of brains in the bank, with more than 3,000 past donors through The State of Florida Alzheimer's Disease Initiative and NIH-sponsored Alzheimer's Disease Research Center. Additional brain bank donors studied in the FLAME cohort include self-identified Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latin American, Native American, and Pacific Islander descendants from any state.

While the exact causes of Alzheimer's disease remain unclear, ongoing research through resources such as the Mayo Clinic brain bank has led to significant breakthroughs. Recently, in July 2024, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved new treatments that slow the progression of the disease.

"Thanks to efforts by the Mayo Clinic Brain Bank, our understanding of Alzheimer's continues to grow, resulting in better treatments, management practices and risk-reduction strategies," said Angela McAuley, regional vice president for the Alzheimer's Association Florida chapters. "We are proud to support Florida institutions that have made our state a leader in Alzheimer's and dementia care, support and research."

Florida has more than 580,000 individuals living with Alzheimer's, making it the state with the second-largest number of cases. Research indicates that Hispanic Americans are 1.5 times more likely, and African Americans are twice as likely, to develop dementia compared to non-Hispanic white Americans. Further research is needed to uncover the reasons behind these disparities.

The Alzheimer's and Dementia Resource Center coordinates brain donations for the State of Florida Brain Bank program in 22 counties throughout the state. Registration can take six to eight weeks. Participants must be registered prior to time of death and must reside in the state of Florida at time of enrollment and of death. To learn more about donating your brain to the Florida Brain Bank, call the Alzheimer's and Dementia Resource Center at 407-436-7750.

About the Alzheimer's Association

The Alzheimer's Association is a worldwide voluntary health organization dedicated to Alzheimer's care, support and research. Our mission is to lead the way to end Alzheimer's and all other dementia — by accelerating global research, driving risk reduction and early detection, and maximizing quality care and support. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer's and all other dementia®. Visit alz.org or call 800.272.3900.