

## THE J. DAVID GLADSTONE INSTITUTES

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in affiliation with the University of California, San Francisco



## GLADSTONE INSTITUTE OF NEUROLOGICAL DISEASE NEWS

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### **GLADSTONE'S DENA DUBAL MD, PhD NAMED 2009 BEESON SCHOLAR** *Scientist recognized for research on protective mechanisms against Alzheimer's disease*

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, August 14, 2009 – The Gladstone Institute of Neurological Disease (GIND) announced that Dena Dubal, MD, PhD has been named a Beeson scholar for her research into Alzheimer's disease. Dubal, who is a physician scientist in the research program of GIND director Lennart Mucke, MD, was one of eight scientists selected for this highly competitive and prestigious award, which seeks to create a cadre of clinically trained faculty who are committed to academic careers in aging research, teaching and practice.

Dr. Dubal's research focuses on protective strategies against diseases of aging such as Alzheimer's. She studies a protein called collagen VI. The collagens are important components in cartilage and muscle. She discovered that collagen VI, which – surprisingly – is also made by neurons in the brain, binds amyloid beta, a toxic protein widely thought to cause Alzheimer's disease. This action appears to protect brain cells from the toxicity of amyloid beta. The results of her studies may reveal key protective mechanisms that could serve as direct targets for the development of treatments for Alzheimer's disease and other diseases of aging.

Since the program's inception in 1995, Beeson Scholars have received more than \$86 million in research grant support and have made their mark with innovative research—from the effects of depression in elderly health outcomes, to the connection between a certain type of cataract and Alzheimer's disease, to the development of new animal models to study the genetic basis of aging, to improving end-of-life care for under-served aging populations.

“With all of the strong and creative research being conducted on Alzheimer's disease, this award recognizes the quality of Dr. Dubal's work and the significance of the results achieved so far,” said Dr. Mucke.

The Beeson Award is granted to scholars who are laying clinically relevant groundwork in many areas related to aging, including the biology of aging and age-related diseases, as well as health outcomes, health services

and clinical management issues, with the goal of enhancing the health and quality of life of older adults. Scholars receive \$600,000 to \$800,000 for a three- to five-year period, allowing them flexible and protected time for innovative research.

Dena Dubal's primary affiliation is with the Gladstone Institute of Neurological Disease where she conducts her research. She also sees patients at the Memory and Aging Center and Department of Neurology of the University of California, San Francisco.

### **About the Gladstone Institutes**

The J. David Gladstone Institutes, an independent, nonprofit biomedical research organization, affiliated with the University of California, San Francisco, is dedicated to the health and welfare of humankind through research into the causes and prevention of some of the world's most devastating diseases.

Gladstone is comprised of the Gladstone Institute of Cardiovascular Disease, the Gladstone Institute of Virology and Immunology and the Gladstone Institute of Neurological Disease. More information can be found at [www.gladstone.ucsf.edu](http://www.gladstone.ucsf.edu).

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