



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Madeleine Smith, 202-757-0811, madeleinesmith@rational360.com

WHAM! Announces \$100,000 from BrightFocus Foundation to Support Women's Brain Health Research

Greenwich, CT (October 13, 2020) – The WHAM! (Women's Health Access Matters!) Investigators Fund today announced \$100,000 in support from BrightFocus Foundation for sex and gender-specific research to advance women's brain health. The WHAM! Investigator's Fund is addressing the huge gap in research that focuses on women's health by providing critical private funding to sex- and gender-based studies for diseases that disproportionately affect women. WHAM! will leverage this funding in consultation with its scientific advisors and research collaborative to advance new research focused on women and Alzheimer's.

"The data on disparities between men and women in Alzheimer's disease is astonishing," said Carolee Lee, founder and CEO of WHAM! "Of the 5.7 million people in America living with Alzheimer's disease, two thirds are women. Additionally, a woman's risk of developing Alzheimer's disease is two times that of a man, and not just because women live longer. Investing in research that examines the root causes of these disparities brings us one step closer to understanding Alzheimer's disease in both men and women. We are grateful to BrightFocus for their generous contribution and strong leadership."

"We are proud to partner with WHAM! to support research seeking an answer to the question of why women are disproportionately affected by Alzheimer's disease," said BrightFocus President and CEO Stacy Pagos Haller. "Now more than ever, the need for bold, innovative science is abundantly clear. Working together with WHAM!, we can better the quality of life for women now and for future generations."

Through strategic funding of sex- and gender-based research in four clinical focus areas – brain health, autoimmune disease, cardiovascular disease, and cancer – WHAM! invests in the forefront of clinical and technological developments that will lead to precision medicine for everyone. Since its founding in 2018, WHAM! has funded three innovative studies. Dr. Michelle O'Donoghue from the Mary Horrigan Connors Center for Women's Health and Gender Biology at Brigham and Women's Hospital, a teaching affiliate of Harvard University received funding for her work to build a new cardiovascular risk algorithm that accurately reflects risks for women. Dr. Hilary Blumberg from the Blumberg Lab at Yale University received a grant to examine whether sleep improvements in women lead to lower Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (ADRD) risk biomarkers. Dr. Nicole Weitowich from Northwestern University recently received WHAM! funding to quantify the number of COVID-19 research studies that include both men and women and analyze findings through sex and gender.

About WHAM!

WHAM! is a donor-funded, non-profit organization, dedicated to improving and elevating the health of women to 21st century standards by showcasing the economic imperative of women's health research in prevention, diagnosis, treatment and outcomes. WHAM! aims to expand the scientific and clinical knowledge about health conditions that occur exclusively, predominantly and differentially in women and to translate these findings into solutions that optimize women's health. In collaboration with the RAND Corporation, WHAM! is releasing a detailed study to examine the economic consequences of the disparity in women's health research. WHAM! has four disease focus areas: autoimmune disease, brain health, cancer, and cardiovascular disease. Additional information can be found at <https://whamnow.org/>.

About BrightFocus

BrightFocus Foundation is a premier source of private research funding to defeat Alzheimer's, macular degeneration, and glaucoma. The organization currently manages a global portfolio of over 220 projects, including 133 Alzheimer's projects, a nearly \$50 million investment in the bold science that will find the cures for diseases of mind and sight. We share the latest research findings and best practices to empower families impacted by these diseases. Learn more at www.brightfocus.org.

###