



## Seattle Institute for Biomedical and Clinical Research

October - December 2021

### Spotlight Feature

#### NICOLE LIACHKO, PHD



**Nicole Liachko, PhD**, is a Research Scientist and Core Investigator in the Geriatric Research Education and Clinical Center (GRECC) at the VA Puget Sound Health Care System (VA Puget Sound), and a Research Assistant Professor in the Department of Medicine, Division of Gerontology and Geriatric Medicine at the University of Washington. She received her PhD in Genetics from Cornell University in 2009, and completed her postdoctoral training at the VA Puget Sound in 2014. Dr. Liachko was awarded two VA Career Development Awards (CDA1 and CDA2) under the mentorship of Drs. Brian Kraemer and Tom Bird from 2011-2018. She is the principal investigator on a VA Merit investigating the neuroprotective functions of the phosphatase calcineurin in amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), and on a recently funded National Institute of Aging (NIA) R01 to study the role of the neurodegenerative disease-linked protein TDP-43 in Alzheimer's disease.

Dr. Liachko's research program centers on understanding the biology underlying neurodegenerative diseases of aging, with a focus on TDP-43 and/or tau proteinopathies such as ALS, frontotemporal lobar degeneration (FTLD), and Alzheimer's disease. Her research has identified kinase and phosphatase regulation of TDP-43 phosphorylation in ALS and FTLD, and shown that reduced kinase or increased phosphatase activities are neuroprotective. She has also found that tau and TDP-43 synergize resulting in worsened neurotoxicity and neurodegeneration in models of Alzheimer's disease. Her lab is actively investigating the cellular mechanisms controlling this process using a variety of genetic, biochemical, transcriptomic, and imaging paradigms. Her long-term continuing goal is to leverage a deeper understanding of disease biology towards developing new therapeutic targets and interventions for neurodegenerative proteinopathies including ALS, FTLD, and Alzheimer's disease.

#### COVID-19 VACCINATION REQUIREMENT

SIBCR employees are required to comply with COVID-19 federal vaccine mandates and VA Puget Sound policy. Information about the requirement has been being sent to staff via email and more information is on our website at

<https://sibcr.org/covid-19-coronavirus.html>

If you have any questions, please contact SIBCR HR at 206-764-2130 or by email at [hr@sibcr.org](mailto:hr@sibcr.org).

#### WASHINGTON CARES FUND EXEMPTION

On October 1, 2021, the window to apply for a permanent exemption from the Washington long-term care program opened. For more information about the program and exemption process please visit:

WA Cares Fund Program Overview: <http://www.wacaresfund.wa.gov/>

Exemption process: <http://www.wacaresfund.wa.gov/private-insurance/>

#### MANN-GRANDSTAFF VA MEDICAL CENTER

On September 26, 2021, SIBCR was officially approved by VA's Office of Research and Development to be a Multi-Medical Center Research Corporation (Multi-NPC) serving the Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center (MGVAMC) in Spokane, Washington. We are excited to add MGVAMC as a site and look forward to this new partnership!