Northwestern Medicine®
Feinberg School of Medicine

7th Annual Midwest Aging Consortium

April 16-17, 2026 | 250 E Superior St, Chicago, IL 60611 Conference Room: L

Hosted by Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine

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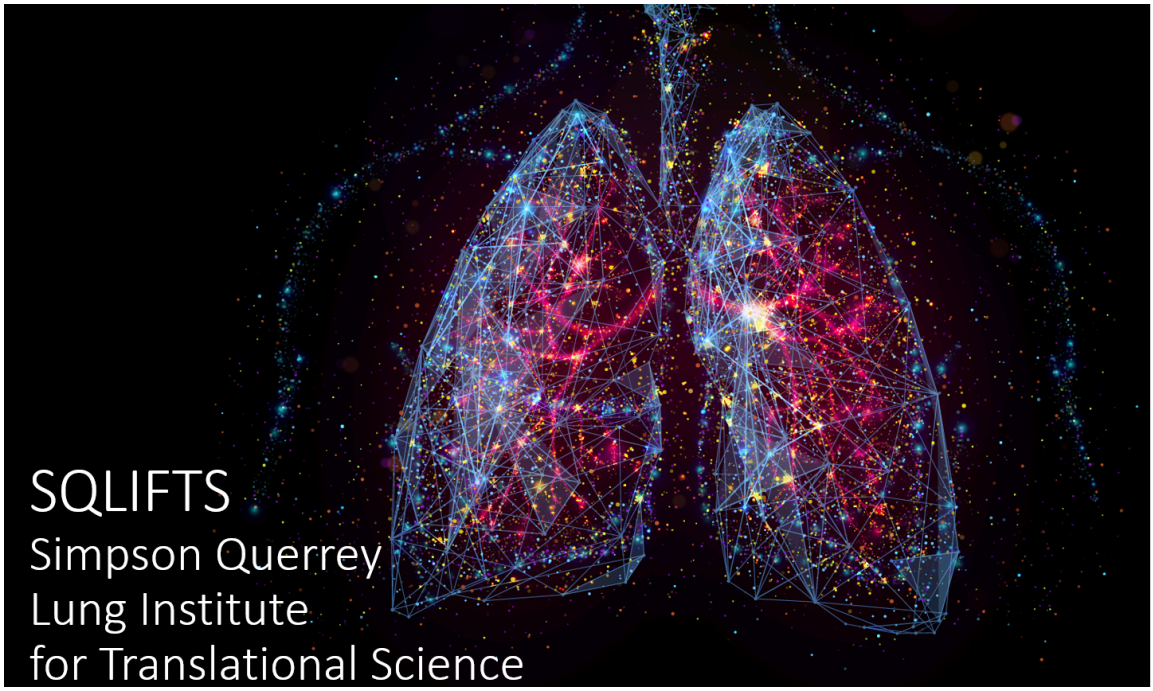
We are grateful to The Hevolution Foundation Scientific Conferences Fund for their support of the 7th Annual Midwest Aging Consortium Research Symposium. You may download a copy of the Hevolution Global Health Report here:



Program Schedule:

April 16, 2026 Thursday

7:00-8:00 AM - **Registration and Welcome Breakfast**

8:15 AM - **Welcome Remarks**: GR Scott Budinger, MD and Luisa Morales-Nebreda, MD (Northwestern University)

8:25-9:00 am - **Keynote Presentation 1**
Key Note Speaker: Carmela Sidrauski, PhD
Presenter affiliation: Calico Labs
Title: The Integrated Stress Response in Health, Disease and Aging

Session 1: Stress Response and Aging

Session Chairs: SeungHye Han, MD, MPH (Northwestern University), Maria M. Mihaylova, PhD (The Ohio State University)

9:00 AM: Invited Speaker: Nathan LeBrasseur, PhD, MS (Mayo Clinic Rochester)
Title: Cellular Senescence and Skeletal Muscle Aging

9:25 AM: Rachel Meyer, PhD (University of Minnesota)
Title: ATGL-mediated lipolysis mitigates DNA damage via a p300-p53 signaling axis

9:40 AM: Lorena Rosas, PhD (The Ohio State University)
Title: BAX Activation by BTSA1.2 Drives Senolysis of CTHRC1-positive Fibroblasts to Alleviate Pulmonary Fibrosis

9:55 AM: Taylor Painter (University of North Dakota)
Title: Delayed Neuromuscular Aging in Female Ames Dwarf Mice

10:10-10:30 AM **Coffee Break**

Session 2: Metabolism and Aging

Session Chairs: Shawn Davidson, PhD (Northwestern University), Ana Mora, MD (The Ohio State University)

10:35 AM: Invited Speaker: Mauricio Rojas, MD, PhD (The Ohio State University)
Title: Interplay of aging, lipid metabolism, and lung diseases

11:00 AM: Chung-Yang Yeh, PhD (University of Wisconsin-Madison)
Title: A diet-drug interaction reveals hepatic mTORC1 to mediate diet-induced FGF21 expression and energy expenditure

11:15 AM: Zachary Sebo, PhD (Northwestern University)
Title: Metformin inhibits mitochondrial complex I in intestinal epithelium to promote glycemic control

Session 3: Poster teasers – Young Investigator Forum
Session Chairs: Laura Dada, PhD (Northwestern University) and Marina Casalino-Matsuda, PhD (Northwestern University)

11:30 AM- 12:00 PM:

- Milica Jovisic, PhD (Northwestern University)
  Title: Immune epithelial self-reinforcing inflammatory niche precludes recovery from viral pneumonia in aged hosts

- Ruihua Ma, PhD (Northwestern University)
  Title: Age-Associated FOXP1 Decline Drives Impaired Lung Repair Following Viral Pneumonia

- Elham Mohebbi, PhD (Southern Illinois University)
  Title: Impact of dietary sodium intake on blood pressure and risk of Cancer and Cardiovascular Disease Risk

- Haylee Hamilton, PhD (University of Wisconsin-Madison)
  Title: Therapeutic potential of targeting astrocyte-mediated neuroinflammation in Alzheimer's disease

- Helene Martini, Pharm D, PhD (Mayo Clinic Rochester)
  Title: Mitochondrial metabolism and epigenetic crosstalk in senescent cells.

- Jiayi Hu, PhD (University of Minnesota)
  Title: Pre-Existing Cellular Senescence Accelerates KRas-Driven Lung Tumorigenesis in a Progeroid ERCC1-Deficient Mouse Model

12:00-1:00 PM - **Lunch Break**

Session 4: Cellular Senescence and Aging
Session Chairs: Marianna Sadagurski, PhD (Wayne State University)
Anderzej Bartke, PhD (Southern Illinois University)

1:00 PM: Invited Speaker: Jonathan Alder, PhD (University of Pittsburgh)
Title: A Natural Solution Premature Aging

1:25 PM: Chathrurika Henpita, PhD (University of Minnesota)
Title: Measures of senescence across four non-human primate tissues

1:40 PM: Pedro Versuti Del Cioppo Vasques, MD, PhD (Mayo Clinic Rochester)
Title: p21 Activation in Endothelial Cells Drives Cardiovascular Dysfunction and Early Death

1:55 PM: Gung Lee, PhD (Mayo Clinic Rochester)
Title: Dynamics of lipid metabolism in cellular senescence: SASP regulation and therapeutic opportunities for aging

2:10-2:30 PM - **Coffee Break**

Session 5: Immune Aging
Session Chairs: Luisa Morales-Nebreda MD (Northwestern University), Rob Hamanaka, PhD (University of Chicago)

2:35 PM: Invited Speaker: Alexander Misharin, MD, PhD (Northwestern University)
Title: Spatial Organization of the Aging Immune System

3:00 PM: Constance Runyan, PhD (Northwestern University)
Title: Tissue-Resident Macrophages as Potential Targets for Preventing Age-Related Skeletal Muscle Loss

3:15 PM: Qiankun Yang, PhD (Mayo Clinic Rochester)
Title: Mechanisms of defective Wnt signaling in T cell differentiation of older adults

3:30 PM: Xinna Li, MD, PhD (University of Michigan)
Title: Lifespan-extending interventions inhibited consistent expression patterns of IL-11 signaling across mouse livers and adipose tissues

3:45 PM: **Announcement from Midwest Nathan Shock Centers**

3:55 PM: **Announcement of the next 8th MAC Annual Symposium at University of Michigan**

Session 6: Poster Session
Session Chairs: Rogan Grant, PhD, Thomas Stoeger, PhD, Lauren Petrovich, PhD, and Elizabeth Steinert, PhD (Northwestern University)

4:15 - 6:00 PM

April 17, 2026, Friday

7:00-8:20 AM - **Breakfast**

8:25– 9:00 AM - **Keynote Presentation 2**
Speaker: Rozalyn Anderson, PhD
Presenter affiliation: University of Wisconsin-Madison
Title: Metabolism of Aging in NHPs

Session 7: Measuring Biological Age and Super Aging
Session Chairs: John Wilkins, MD (Northwestern University), Deependra Kaji Thapa, MSc, MPH, PhD (Baylor College of Medicine)

9:00 AM: Invited Speaker: Tamar Gefen, PhD (Northwestern University)
Title: TBD

9:25 AM: Timothy Rhoads, PhD (University of Wisconsin-Madison)
Title: Splicing factor engagement and regulation of RNA processing during caloric restriction

9:40 AM: Alireza Khoddam, PhD (Northwestern University)
Title: PAI-1 Reduction as a Strategy to Extend Healthspan

9:55-10:15 AM **Coffee Break**

Session 8: Age Related Disease
Session Chairs: GR Scott Budinger, MD (Northwestern University), Holly Brown-Borg, PhD (University of North Dakota)

10:20 AM: Invited Speaker: Christina Camell, PhD (University of Minnesota)
Title: TBD

10:45 AM: Ahmed Ghobashi, PhD (The Ohio State University)
Title: Mapping Epithelial Stability States Reveals Plasticity Shifts in Aging and Fibrosis

11:00 AM: Blake Monroe, PhD (University of Minnesota)
Title: L-carnosine mitigates obesity- and age-driven senescent cell accumulation in visceral adipose: Implications for obesity/age-acquired insulin resistance

11:15 AM: Dulmalika Manchanayake, PhD (Wayne State University)
Title: Astrocyte–microglia metabolic crosstalk underlies SGLT2i neuroprotection in Alzheimer's Disease (AD)

11:30 AM: Catherine Kaczorowski, BA, PhD (University of Michigan)
Title: Genetic Determinants of Brain Response to Caloric Restriction and Intermittent Fasting in Mice and Man

11:45 AM - **Poster Prizes and Travel Awards Recognition**

Closing remarks
12:00 - 12:30 PM - **Business meeting**
Organizing Committees 2026 and 2027

Meeting Adjourned

Keynote Speakers

Dr. Carmela Sidrauski is a leading expert in stress signaling responses in physiology and disease, driving scientific discovery and drug development at Calico. She made a foundational discovery early in her career by elucidating the non-conventional mRNA splicing event in the unfolded protein response (UPR), a conserved cellular signaling pathway, which is mediated by the transmembrane kinase/RNAse IRE1 and tRNA ligase. This work established a key mechanism in the UPR field. Her subsequent research led to the discovery of ISRIB, the first small molecule inhibitor of the integrated stress response (ISR), which restores protein synthesis in stressed cells. She further determined that ISRIB-like molecules attenuate the ISR by activating the translation initiation factor eIF2B. As the scientific leader of the eIF2B drug development program since 2015, she spearheaded the development of fosigotifator. This first-in-class eIF2B activator/ISR inhibitor is now in clinical trials for neurological indications, a direct result of her mechanistic insights. Her current focus involves exploring the systemic effects of stress signaling in tissue homeostasis, aging and various diseases, aiming to expand the therapeutic potential of fosigotifator.

Dr. Rozalyn Anderson is a faculty member of the Division of Geriatrics and Gerontology and the Division of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism in the Department of Medicine. She is affiliated with the Department of Nutritional Sciences and the Institute on Aging. She serves as Health Officer at the Geriatric Research Education and Clinical Center at the William S. Middleton Memorial Veterans Hospital. Her research focuses on the fundamental biology of aging and what creates the age-associated increase in vulnerability to a spectrum of diseases and disorders including cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and neurodegeneration. Dr. Anderson is Director of the Metabolism of Aging program at the UW School of Medicine and Public Health and Associate Director of the Biology of Aging and Age-Related Diseases T32 training program. She is a member of the UW Carbone Cancer Center, the UW Institute for Clinical and Translational Research, the Morgridge Institute for Research, and the Wisconsin Alzheimer's Disease Research Center. She is Co-Editor in Chief for the Journals of Gerontology Biological Sciences and serves on the editorial board for the journals Geroscience, EBioMedicine, and Nutrition and Healthy Aging. She is a Fellow and member of the Executive Committee of the American Aging Association and a Fellow of the Gerontological Society of America. Dr. Anderon's honors and awards include the American Federation for Aging Research Breakthroughs in Gerontology Award, the Glenn Award for Research in Biological Mechanisms of Aging, and the Nathan Shock New Investigator Award for the Gerontological Society of America. Funding sources for her work include the National Institutes of Health – National Institute on Aging (NIH-NIA), Glenn Foundation for Medical Research/American Federation for Aging Research (Glenn/AFAR), and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Dr. Anderson serves on several NIH special interest study sections and is a permanent member of the NIA-B study section. She mentors undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral trainees, and fellows.