

**Optimizing brain and cognitive health:
Now: What works?
Future: What's on the horizon?**

April 8-10, 2026
University of Arizona

Wednesday, April 8, 2026

Location:	Westward Look Wyndham Grand Resort 245 East Ina Road Tucson, Arizona 520-297-1151
	Pre-meetings
9:00 – 12:00	Precision Aging -Moderators: Ron Lazar, Carol Barnes (Desert Room) Neuromodulation -Moderators: Keith McGregor, John Williamson (Palm Room)
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch all Pre-meeting groups (Palm Room)
12:00 – 5:00 PM	MBRF Board Meeting (Cholla Room)
1:00 – 4:00pm	Artificial Intelligence -Moderators: Ihtsham Haq, Arne Ekstrom (Desert Room)
5:30 – 7:30pm	Reception (Palm Room and Terrace)
6:00 – 6:15pm	Introduction of Speakers: Dr. Carol Barnes, Director, Evelyn F. McKnight Institute, University of Arizona Remarks from: Dr. Jason A Wertheim, Vice Dean for Research and Partnerships – Health Research, University of Arizona Dr. Mike Dockery, Chair, McKnight Brain Research Foundation

Thursday April 9, 2026

7:00 - 8:00	Breakfast (Sonoran Rooftop)
8:00 - 8:30	Welcome and Introduction (Sonoran Ballroom) Dr. Mike Dockery, MBRF Dr. Carol A. Barnes, Director, Tucson EMBI Dean Carmala Garziona, College of Science, UA, Tucson

Topic: What works with respect to nutrition? How do we implement what we know?

Moderator: Bonnie Levin (UM)

8:30– 9:00	Keynote Speaker Dr. Sarah L. Booth Tufts University Title: <i>Aging and Nutrition: what advice arises from fact, what is myth?</i>
9:00 - 9:10	Discussion
9:10 – 9:25	Dr. Sara Burke (UF) Title: <i>Who is a ketogenic diet good for?</i>
9:25 - 9:30	Discussion
9:30 – 9:45	Dr. Hannah Gardener (UM) Title: <i>Artificial sweeteners, real risks?</i>
9:45 – 9:50	Discussion
9:50 – 10:15	Break
10:15 -10:30	Dr. Suzanne Judd (UAB) Title: <i>Dietary Patterns in the REGARDS Study – 20 years of data demonstrating the important role of diet as a mediators and drivers of brain health</i>
10:30 – 10:35	Discussion
10:35 -10:55	Dr. Sarah Booth Precision Nutrition: <i>The future – and how do we implement better dietary habits to promote brain health</i>
10:55 -11:15	Panel discussion – all speakers, Moderator: Sara Burke (UF)
11:15 – 12:15pm	Lunch (Sonoran Rooftop)

Topics to watch for in the future

Peripheral Inflammation and the Brain: Exploring Senolytics as an Intervention

Moderator: Ron Lazar (UAB)

12:15 – 12:45	Keynote Speaker Dr. Miranda Orr Washington University School of Medicine Title: <i>Systemic inflammation: Exploring senolytics as an intervention.</i>
12:45 – 12:55	Discussion
12:55 – 1:10	Dr. Tom Foster (UF) Title: <i>Cell senescence, sex and senolytics</i>
1:10 – 1:15	Discussion
1:15 – 1:30	Dr. Pablo de Rivero Vaccari (UM) Title: <i>Contribution of the Inflammasome to Inflammaging</i>
1:30 – 1:35	Discussion
1:35 – 1:50	Dr. Davis Englund (UAB) Title: <i>Targeting senescent cells to reduce systemic inflammation and promote healthy aging</i>
1:50 – 1:55	Discussion

1:55 – 2:15 **Panel discussion** – all speakers, **Moderator:** Tom Foster (UF)

2:15 – 2:30 Break

Neurostimulation and Brain Clearance Pathways: A New Frontier in Cognitive Health

Moderator: Ihtsham Haq (UM)

2:30 - 3:00 **Keynote Speaker**

Dr. Qiuting Wen
Indiana University School of Medicine
Title: *MR Imaging of CSF Dynamics*

3:00- 3:10 Discussion

3:10 – 3:25 Dr. Keith McGregor (UAB)

Title *Training the Brain's Brakes: Neuromodulation for Inhibitory Control in Aging?*

3:25 – 3:30 Discussion

3:30 – 3:45 Dr. Ying-Hui Chou (UA)

Title: *Neuromodulation of the Glymphatic System*

3:45 – 3:50 Discussion

3:50 – 4:10 **Panel discussion** – all speakers, **Moderator:** Lee Ryan (UA)

Collaborative Pilot Projects Highlights

Moderator: Jen Bizon (UF)

4:10 – 4:20 Dr. Arne Ekstrom (UA)

Title: *Training new navigation skills in older adults using virtual reality and peripheral target detection: A preliminary update*

4:20 – 4:25 Discussion

4:25 – 4:35 Dr. Caesar Hernandez (UAB)

Title: *Effects of age and sex on fear generalization.*

4:50 – 4:55 Discussion

4:40 – 4:50 Dr. Eric Porges (UF)

Title: *Effect of Alcohol Reduction and Probiotic Interventions on Cognition and Brain Glucose Metabolism in Normal Aging Adults who are High-Risk Alcohol Drinkers*

4:50 – 4:55 Discussion

5:15 Board buses for Tohono Chul Gardens

5:45 Reception, remarks by Dr. Lee Ryan, Dr. Mike Dockery

Visit museum and gardens

Dinner

8:00 Buses leave for Westward Look

Friday April 10, 2026

6:30 – 8:00 Breakfast, Hotel checkout if not participating in post-meeting activities

7:00 – 8:00 Leadership breakfast with MBRF Trustees (by invitation)

8:15 Board buses to go to the University of Arizona campus

9:15 Remarks by Dr. Mike Dockery

- 9:30 Morning Sessions in the Planetarium
- 9:30-11:00 **Data Blitz Session 1**
Moderator: Tanja Rundek (UM)
- 9:30-9:35 Dr. Virendra Mishra (UAB)
Title: *Unimodal and Multimodal Neuroimaging Approaches to Map Glymphatic Function*
- 9:35 –9:40 Discussion
- 9:40-9:45 Dr. Mark Sundman (UA)
Title: *Can TMS Enhance Cerebral Waste Clearance? Evidence of Glymphatic Modulation with DTI-ALP*
- 9:45-9:50 Discussion
- 9:50- 9:55 Dr. Lilah M. Besser (UM)
Title: *Neighborhood social and built environments that support healthy brain aging*
- 9:55-10:00 Discussion
- 10:00 - 10:15 Break
- 10:15 – 11:15 **Data Blitz Session 2/ Pre-meeting report outs**
Moderator: Dr. Kristina Visscher (UAB)
- 11:15 – 11:20 Dr. Barry Setlow (UF)
Title: *APOE genotype and intertemporal Ichoice: relevance for trajectories of cognitive aging*
- 11:20 – 11:25 Discussion
- 11:25 – 11:30 Dr. Nan-Kuei Chen (UA)
Title: *Multi-Contrast Brain MRI for the Study of Aging*
- 11:30 – 11:35 Discussion
- 11:35 – 11:40 Dr. Mohammad (Momo) Nafeli Shahrestani (UM)
Title: *Serum Immune Markers as Contributors to Age-Related Cognitive Impairment*
- 11:40 – 11:45 Discussion
- 11:45 – 11:50 Pre-meeting report out topic: **Precision Aging**
Moderators: Ron Lazar, Carol Barnes
- 11:50 – 11:55 Pre-meeting report out topic **Neuromodulation**
Moderators: Keith McGregor, John Williamson
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- 11:55 – 12:00 Pre-meeting report out topic: **Artificial Intelligence**
Moderators: Ihtsham Haq, Arne Ekstrom
- 12:00 Meeting Adjourns
Pick up Lunch
- 12:15 Leave for Airport
- Or
- 12:15 walk to Psychology to eat lunch (Psy 323)
- 1:00 back to Planetarium for lecture

Professor Marcia Rieke

Professor of Astronomy

Title: "Using the James Webb Space Telescope to Find the Most Distant Galaxies"

1:30 Walk to the **Richard F. Caris Mirror Lab** on campus

2:00 – 3:30 Mirror lab 90 min tour

5:00 Dinner at Lee Ryan's house

For those staying over, Friday night to leave Saturday morning or later –back to Westward Look.