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BAZAN AWARDED INTERNATIONAL HONOR

New Orleans, LA – Haydee Bazan, PhD, Professor of Neuroscience, Ophthalmology, and Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at LSU Health New Orleans School of Medicine, will be inducted into the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) Fellows Class of 2019 as a Gold Fellow in the spring. With about 12,000 members from more than 75 countries, the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology is the largest and most respected eye and vision research organization in the world.

According to the Association, the title of ARVO Fellow is an honor established to recognize current ARVO members for their individual accomplishments, leadership and contributions to the Association. ARVO Fellows serve as role models and mentors for individuals pursuing careers in vision and ophthalmology research and help further ARVO's vision "...to advance research worldwide into understanding the visual system and preventing, treating and curing its disorders," which includes advancing basic and clinical knowledge and serving as the leading international forum for vision research and the primary advocate for vision science worldwide.

Dr. Bazan's laboratory has been a leader in uncovering mechanisms to restore alterations in corneal nerves and the significance of innervation to regulate impaired corneal sensation that can lead to corneal ulcers, melting and perforation. These alterations frequently occur after refractive surgery, cornea transplant, herpes viral infection, chemical burns, keratoconus, multiple sclerosis, Sjogren's syndrome, and can result from aging, severe dry eye and diabetes mellitus. Although there are treatments to alleviate severe dry eye, there are no therapies to compensate for the loss of innervation. Bazan's research builds upon her discovery that a key protein, pigment epithelium-derived factor (PEDF), plus the fatty acid docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) or the docosanoid derivative Neuroprotectin D1 (NPD1) stimulate nerve regeneration after corneal surgery that damages the stromal nerves.

The cornea is densely innervated to sustain the integrity of the ocular surface, and her

laboratory was the first to show the entire architecture of human corneal nerves. Corneal nerve damage produced by aging, diabetes, refractive surgeries, and viral or bacterial infections impairs tear production, the blinking reflex, and epithelial wound healing, resulting in loss of transparency and vision. Her innovative studies target new molecular mechanisms leading to treatment advances for complications due to corneal nerve damage.

Bazan's research has been competitively funded by NIH for the last 35 years.

Her recognitions and awards include being elected to the Board of Sigma Xi's LSU Health New Orleans Chapter, being chosen as a 2003 Role Model by the Young Leadership Council, as a 2008 Honorary Alumnus by LSU Health New Orleans School of Medicine, as well as the recipient of its 2008 Excellence in Mentoring Award.

Bazan has also participated in organizing national and international meetings. She has been appointed Co-Chair of the Scientific Program and overall organization of the forthcoming Congress of the International Society for Eye Research (ISER) in 2020.

Bazan was born in Argentina and received her PhD in Biochemistry from the University of the South, Argentina. She was a research fellow at the College of Physicians & Surgeons at Columbia University in New York before completing a fellowship at Harvard Medical School.

LSU Health Sciences Center New Orleans educates Louisiana's health care professionals. The state's flagship health sciences university, LSU Health New Orleans includes a School of Medicine, the state's only School of Dentistry, Louisiana's only public School of Public Health, and Schools of Allied Health Professions, Nursing, and Graduate Studies. LSU Health New Orleans faculty take care of patients in public and private hospitals and clinics throughout the region. In the vanguard of biosciences research in a number of areas in a worldwide arena, the LSU Health New Orleans research enterprise generates jobs and enormous economic impact. LSU Health New Orleans faculty have made lifesaving discoveries and continue to work to prevent, advance treatment, or cure disease. To learn more, visit <http://www.lsuhscc.edu>, <http://www.twitter.com/LSUHealthNO>, or <http://www.facebook.com/LSUHSC>.

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