



SCOTTISH RITE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION  
VALLEY LIAISON COMMITTEE



November 2016

Dear Scottish Rite Brethren,

Most of you know that the Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation exists but not everyone knows what it does with the funds it collects. As an informational aid, and to keep our brethren aware of those programs the Foundation supports, we will be providing you with brief summaries of some of those activities two or three times a year. These will be very brief statements that we ask you to read at your subsequent lodge, chapter or consistory meeting. Each will only take a couple of minutes to read but in so doing, our brethren will have a better idea of some of the research that is ongoing as well as hear snippets of stories from the children benefitting from the various Learning Centres across the country.

Included with this letter is the first of these planned summaries. This one provides a simplified statement of one research project into causes of Alzheimer's Disease.

For more information about the research projects being funded, to learn more about the researchers themselves, or to make an on-line donation, check out the Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation website at: [www.srcf.ca](http://www.srcf.ca).

Best fraternal regards,

Ronald L. Findlater, 33°  
Chairman  
Valley Liaison Committee



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Most members of Scottish Rite in Canada are aware of the fact that, through the Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation, we have been helping to “Solve the Puzzles of the Mind.” But how many have wondered, beyond raising money, what does that help look like? Here is one of the ways the Foundation assists.

The Foundation donates more than \$420,000 each year in research grants to universities and research hospitals across the country. The recipients, who are selected from among the many who have submitted requests for assistance, are chosen by a panel of judges from the bio-medical research community chaired by a member of the Foundation’s Board of Directors. One of those recipients was Dr. David Vocadlo.

Dr. Vocadlo is a chemist in the Department of Chemistry at the University of British Columbia. While completing a post-doctoral fellowship at the University of California at Berkeley, he became interested in one type of sugar that is found inside of cells where it is attached onto certain proteins. With funding from the SRCF, he focused on the possibility that these sugars, which are found on a protein known as “tau”, could play a role in Alzheimer’s Disease (AD). At the risk of over-simplifying his research, it is known that AD, and a number of related conditions involving the tau protein, are characterized, in part, by the development of clumps, called “neurofibrillary tangles”, composed of an abnormal form of the tau protein. In AD patients, as a result of the tau becoming heavily decorated with phosphate groups, the tau becomes clumped together, disrupting its normal function. By identifying what causes the phosphate grouping leading to clumping, or the malfunctions in the mechanisms regulating tau, it is hoped that the clumping can be controlled, potentially leading to advances in treating and possibly preventing AD.

This is just one of many researchers working to solve the puzzles of the mind which we in Scottish Rite can be proud to support. For more information on the research being carried out, check out the Foundation website at [www.srcf.ca](http://www.srcf.ca) and remember to use the blue envelope to make your donation!