Dear Einstein Community:

While our success in securing NIH funding is well-known on and off campus, I’m pleased to share news of three sizeable grants recently awarded to Einstein faculty members. They are by no means the only awards worthy of recognition, but they represent important renewals or extensions of long-term studies based at Einstein. You can learn more about these and other major NIH grants through news releases and research briefs posted on our website.

**Progress with Alzheimer’s Disease**
For more than 40 years, the Einstein Aging Study (EAS) has sought to understand both normal aging and the special challenges of Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias. The study, established in 1980, has enjoyed continuous funding from the NIH for four decades. Most recently, our EAS team, in collaboration with faculty at Pennsylvania State University and other institutions, has received a five-year, $32 million NIH grant to help address the rising tide of Alzheimer’s disease nationwide. The lead scientists on this grant include principal investigators Richard Lipton, M.D., who has led or co-led the study since 1992, and Carol Derby, Ph.D., and project coordinator Mindy Joy Katz, M.P.H. Dr. Lipton noted, “We are well-positioned to build on our earlier findings to identify ways to delay the onset and progression of Alzheimer’s disease.” That is, indeed, a most hopeful goal to work toward.

**New Inroads in HIV/AIDS**
The Einstein-Rockefeller-CUNY Center for AIDS Research (ERC-CFAR), directed by Harris Goldstein, M.D., has received a five-year, $11.3 million NIH grant to renew the center and expand its efforts to prevent, treat, and cure HIV infection, and thereby reduce the burden of HIV, locally, nationally, and internationally. The ERC-CFAR—the only such center in New York and one of 19 current NIH-funded CFARs nationwide—brings together researchers at Albert Einstein College of
Medicine, The Rockefeller University, and The City University of New York Graduate School of Public Health and Health Policy. The current joint center was established in 2017, although a CFAR has existed in some form at Einstein since early in the HIV epidemic. ERC-CFAR investigators seek to realize the ultimate goal of living in a world without AIDS. For this purpose, our CFAR supports studies involving more than 150 independent investigators focused on four areas: lowering the incidence of HIV; developing next-generation HIV therapies; discovering a cure for HIV; and treating HIV-related comorbidities, coinfections, and complications.

**Post-Traumatic Epilepsy**
Aristea Galanopoulou, M.D., Ph.D., professor of neurology and neuroscience at Einstein, was awarded a five-year, $11 million grant from the NIH to investigate novel treatments and biomarkers for post-traumatic epilepsy (PTE). Approximately 1 in 50 people who suffer a traumatic brain injury (TBI) will develop PTE, which is characterized by recurring seizures that begin a week or more after the brain injury. There is currently no way to identify those who will develop PTE and no treatments to prevent its onset. The investigators will first conduct preclinical studies, with the goal of future clinical trials to evaluate promising diagnostics and interventions. The ultimate goal is to develop a biomarker panel that can validly identify people at high risk for PTE and predict their response to treatment. Based on the biomarker findings, qualifying patients will then receive a drug that the researchers will be studying.

**New Clinical Research Tool**
Each of the three grants I’ve noted share something in common: they involve clinical research with the goal of developing new diagnostics, preventions, and treatments. For those involved in such work, I want to remind you about our new Human Subject Research Project Navigation Tool, available to facilitate your efforts. This recently launched, interactive webpage was developed by our Institute for Clinical and Translational Research in collaboration with our department of medicine’s office of clinical trials and our interactive media team in communications and public affairs.

**Saluting Our Nurses**
Also relevant to much of the clinical research at Einstein and Montefiore are our nurses. This being National Nurses Week, it seems fitting to remember the role that nurses play in many of our studies and clinical trials, which could not function
without them. Moreover, we could not have endured the COVID-19 pandemic as we have without support from our nurses in the occupational health service, nor could our students have their immediate healthcare needs addressed. Please join me in offering thanks to these nurses and all nurses who you may know. They are the heart and soul of our healthcare system and indispensable teammates in the success of our clinical research efforts.

Sincerely,

Gordon F. Tomaselli, M.D.
The Marilyn and Stanley M. Katz Dean

*Albert Einstein College of Medicine*
*Executive Vice President and Chief Academic Officer*

*Montefiore Medicine*