



LWR COMMUNITIES, LLC

LAKEWOOD RANCH

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Long-Term Brain Health Study Slated for Lakewood Ranch, Fla.

Award-winning master-planned community will serve as living laboratory for scientists to investigate brain health across lifespan

LAKEWOOD RANCH, FLA. (March 12, 2019) – The Academy for Brain Health and Performance (ABHP) and Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH), a Harvard Medical School teaching hospital, recently selected Lakewood Ranch, Florida for *The Brain Health Initiative at Lakewood Ranch* research study. Located on the west coast of Florida, Lakewood Ranch (LWR) is a 31,000-acre master-planned community that is home to more than 36,000 residents.

This collaborative project will include a longitudinal study of the risks and protective factors that contribute to brain health and performance. The study will position the greater Gulf Coast community, LWR and its CORE (Collaboration Opportunities for Research and Exploration) campus at the epicenter of groundbreaking brain health research. The 305-acre CORE includes 971,000 square feet for STEM-focused academic partners, world-class research facilities, and the collaboration between new and emerging markets that focus on research, health, and education.

A global team of world-renowned experts, including researchers, clinicians, innovators and entrepreneurs, will collaborate on the *The Brain Health Initiative at Lakewood Ranch*. Over time, they expect to discover both positive and negative contributions to brain health and performance across the lifespan at the biological, personal, and social/community levels. From healthcare to technology and business to urban planning, the study will uncover the value of brain health on every aspect of life.

“Brain health is a topic of growing scientific focus,” said neuropsychologist Stephanie Peabody, Psy.D., HSPP, who serves as executive director of ABHP and the *The Brain Health Initiative at Lakewood Ranch*. “We feel Lakewood Ranch will serve as the perfect environment for our group to uncover essential elements of brain health and enhancement, as well as cognitive maintenance across a person’s life.”

After visiting multiple locations, Boston-based ABHP and MGH chose the visionary community of Lakewood Ranch and the surrounding Manatee and Sarasota Counties due to their multi-generational makeup, multi-faceted framework, high level of social engagement, vibrant business community, and strong medical, wellness, educational, and arts and culture infrastructure.

“Community planning takes into account a variety of factors, so why not brain health? Our participation reflects our commitment to building an environment that promotes not just a healthy lifestyle, but a brain healthy lifestyle,” said Kirk Boylston, president of Lakewood Ranch Commercial. “I envision a future in which a brain health checkup is as central to an annual physical as a blood pressure assessment, where our schools are built with brain health in mind, and Lakewood Ranch grocery stores present brain healthy foods alongside heart-healthy and gluten-free options.”

Phase I, already completed, included the collection of initial survey information, identifying LWR community priorities related to brain health as well as the creation of the main research factors for the study. Phase II will build the community's and study's infrastructure necessary to support a culture that focuses on increasing brain health outcomes and a pilot study designed to collect baseline data of LWR residents. Data collected during Phase II will be used during Phase III, the focus of which will be to include testing unique brain health innovations and following participants for decades.

“Our initial survey identified positive and negative brain health factors that are part of daily life for Lakewood Ranch residents,” said Shelley Carson, Ph.D., a Harvard University psychologist and key architect of *The Brain Health Initiative at Lakewood Ranch*. “From neighborhood cleanliness and family-oriented focus to stress overload and elderly cognitive decline, brain health is so ingrained in our existence that it’s hard to imagine what wouldn’t be impacted by the results of our study.”

To support this long-term study, the ABHP and MGH team formed the Lakewood Ranch Brain Health Coalition comprising local civic, business and youth leaders. Together, they recently launched a \$1.6 million community fundraising campaign to support the next two phases of this initiative.

The Brain Health Initiative at Lakewood Ranch is inspired by the long-term, ongoing Framingham Heart Study. Commissioned in 1948 by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute and Boston University, the study is widely credited with uncovering the effects of smoking on the heart, benefits of aspirin and a healthy diet, and the relationships between high cholesterol and heart attacks.

In addition to Drs. Peabody and Carson, the *The Brain Health Initiative at Lakewood Ranch* founding team includes:

- **Erin Dunn, Sc.D.** - Epidemiologist, Massachusetts General Hospital Professor of Psychology, Harvard Medical School; Assistant Professor of Psychology, Harvard Medical School
- **Heidi Hanna, Ph.D.** - Executive Director, American Institute of Stress
- **Ana-Maria Vranceanu, Ph.D.** - Clinical Psychologist, Massachusetts General Hospital; Associate Professor of Psychology, Harvard Medical School; director, Integrated Brain Health Clinical and Research Program, Massachusetts General Hospital

The study team also includes renowned brain health researchers as members of its Scientific Advisory board, including:

- **[Alvaro Pascual-Leone, M.D.](#)** – professor of neurology Harvard Medical School, associate dean for Clinical and Translational Research at Harvard Medical School, chief for the Division of Cognitive Neurology and the director of the Berenson-Allen Center for Noninvasive Brain Stimulation at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center.
- **[Jonathan Rosand, M.D., M.S.C.](#)** - J.P. Kistler neurologist and chief, Division of Neurocritical Care and Emergency Neurology, member, Center for Human Genetic Research Massachusetts General Hospital, professor of neurology Harvard Medical School and co-director of the Henry and Allison McCance Center for Brain Health at Massachusetts General Hospital
- **[Rudolph Tanzi, Ph.D.](#)** - Joseph P. and Rose F. Kennedy professor of neurology at Harvard University, vice-chair of neurology, director of the Genetics and Aging Research Unit, and co-director of the Henry and Allison McCance Center for Brain Health at Massachusetts General Hospital

For more information on *The Brain Health Initiative at Lakewood Ranch* or to support project funding visit www.brainhealthylwr.com. For more information on Lakewood Ranch or CORE at Lakewood Ranch contact Lisa Barnott at lisa.barnott@lakewoodranch.com.

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About Lakewood Ranch

Lakewood Ranch is the 31,000-acre award-winning master-planned community in Sarasota and Manatee counties on the West Coast of Florida. Just minutes from the Gulf Coast beaches and cultural assets in Sarasota, Lakewood Ranch is already home to more than 36,000 residents and features A-rated schools, the Lakewood Ranch Medical Center, the Sarasota Polo Club, the 75-acre Premier Sports Campus, its own Main Street with theaters, shopping and dining, and more than four million square feet of commercial property, including CORE, a life science business campus that focuses on research, health, and education. For more information visit www.lakewoodranch.com.