

KIRK KERKORIAN SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AT UNLV

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Dear Finance Committee:

I am writing a letter of support for Dr. Mario Gaspar de Alba, Associate Professor of Developmental Behavioral Pediatrics at the Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine at UNLV who has applied for ARPA funding to sustain the only center for Autism in Southern Las Vegas, Nevada. There has been an increase need and access to care for Neurodevelopment illnesses in Las Vegas, Nevada. The GGAF Ackerman Center for Autism has ensured that all families regardless of funding source have access to State of the Art medical care with highly qualified and trained specialists. More importantly having access will reduce the need for families to leave out of state each year for medical care.

Currently there is a 5000-person waiting list, which can be reduce if we have more Developmental Behavioral Pediatricians including Pediatric Neurologists. This center has provided services such as diagnosing, providing on-going medical care and therapy to children and young adults with neurodevelopmental conditions as early as 12-14months of age. We estimate that nearly 12,000 children in Southern Nevada will require some form of neurodevelopmental assessment. Conditions such as Autism Spectrum Disorder 1:44, Attention Deficit Disorder 9.4% prevalence, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder 3-5% prevalence and growing, Special learning disorders 5-9% and fetal drug effect where 1 in 5 infants exposed to nicotine or 1 in 20 exposed to illegal drugs will require neurodevelopmental assessment and treatment in Southern Nevada.

We have a shortage of Developmental Behavioral Pediatricians and Pediatric Neurologists in our State of Nevada. We need more physicians to help these families with Neurodevelopmental disorder with special healthcare needs. As Chair of Pediatrics at the Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine, we have seen long waiting lists (9-18months) for families to get an appointment in order to receive a diagnosis and therapy. The stress is very high for these families resulting in poor quality of life.

In addition, we would like to expand our vocational programming for young adults with a diagnosis and increase the number of employed individuals with neurodevelopmental conditions in order for them to succeed in society. The GGAF Ackerman Center provides family centered case management at no cost to these families. They assist these families to navigate the healthcare system easing the stress of getting care. Our goal is to not only provide the needed services but also reduce the wait times for initial diagnosis from the current 9-18months down to 2 weeks if possible to ensure that children will receive the medical care they need.

This ARPA funding will allow the GGAF Ackerman Center to not only reach more families in Southern Nevada, but across the state and afford the opportunity to participate in national research to gain a better understanding of the possible etiologies of these Neurodevelopmental conditions, receive new and improved therapy and more resources.

I would ask to support the GGAF Ackerman Center and Dr. Mario Gaspar de Alba who had devoted his medical career in providing excellent medical care, support, and therapy for these children. Please consider funding the GGAF Ackerman center.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Evelyn Montalvo Stanton, MD'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping initial 'E'.

Evelyn Montalvo Stanton, MD, FAAP, FCCP