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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Xavier University of Louisiana elevates diversity in neuroscience with donation for scholarship support from Biogen

New Orleans, La - Xavier University of Louisiana has received a \$100,000 donation from Biogen to fund the creation of the Biogen Sharp-Verret Award. The Biogen Sharp-Verret Award is a scholarship developed to support Xavier and Biogen's commitment to diversity and inclusion. The donation will provide students with the support and guidance necessary to successfully pursue neurological and neuroscience careers.

The scholarship funding will benefit four students, each to receive \$25,000 in assistance split between their Junior and Senior year. To be eligible for the scholarship, applicants must be a rising junior at Xavier and a minority student studying pre-medicine, neuroscience, pharmacy, in Xavier's physician assistant program, or other related disciplines. The student must also plan to pursue a focus in neurology or neuroscience.

Two Xavier students, Myhea Hollingsworth and Daniel Webster, have been selected as recipients of the inaugural Biogen Sharp-Verret Award for the 2022-2023 year.

"As a neuroscience major, it is an honor to receive the Biogen Sharp-Verret Award. This scholarship will benefit my Xavier experience as it supports not only my academic opportunities but my career opportunities as well," **said Hollingsworth, a neuroscience major and junior at Xavier.**

Xavier University of Louisiana has long been a proponent of health equity, educating groups of students historically underrepresented in the bio-medical and neuroscience industries to lessen the representational gap. The nation's only Catholic HBCU, Xavier is known worldwide for its history of graduating more African American students to complete medical school than any other institution in the country.

"We are grateful for this award. It is a gift to the future, honoring a mentor and scientist of great imagination and accomplishment, Dr. Phillip A. Sharp, through the education of the great minds who must follow," **said Dr. Reynold Verret, President of Xavier University of Louisiana.**

"The scholarship is greatly beneficial as it enables my neuroscience and biology research interests," **explained Webster, a junior studying neuroscience and biology pre-med.** "It

allows me to pursue my passion for science and will be beneficial in supporting my career journey.”

Over the past decade, Biogen has been a pioneer in neuroscience through innovative scientific research with the goal to defeat devastating neurological diseases. Embedded within their work is a dedication to developing more equitable career opportunities in biotechnology.

“Diversity, equity and inclusion are essential to improving health equity and patient outcomes,” **said Maha Radhakrishnan, Chief Medical Officer, Biogen.** “By providing minority students with educational opportunities, we are building a diverse talent pool to help tackle the most challenging neurological diseases of our time.”

This partnership between Xavier and Biogen advances their shared mission to create opportunities for students that build a more just and equitable society.

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About Xavier University of Louisiana

Xavier University of Louisiana, America’s only historically Black and Catholic University, is ranked among the top three HBCUs (historically Black colleges and universities) in the nation. Recognized as a national leader in STEM and health sciences, Xavier produces more African American students who graduate from medical schools each year than any other university in the United States. Additionally, Xavier’s College of Pharmacy is also among the top producers of African American pharmacists in the country.

Established in 1925, by Saint Katharine Drexel and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament as a place for African American and Native Americans to receive quality education, Xavier has since expanded its programs in art, business, education, biological sciences, chemistry, pharmacy and political science. More recent additions in robotics, bioinformatics, engineering, data science, neuroscience and genetics, in addition to new STEM-based master’s programs, have provided Xavier students (2815 undergraduates and 787 graduates) an unbeatable combination of traditional classroom study, hands-on research, service-learning opportunities and life experiences. Xavier students collaborate with world-renowned faculty, who are experts in their fields, to produce award-winning research and notable work. The winning Xavier formula is to provide students with a well-balanced curriculum and an environment that nurtures their intellect and feeds their souls, thereby facilitating a more just and humane society for all. For more information about Xavier University of Louisiana, visit us online at www.xula.edu or contact Regi Reyes at (504) 520-5240 or rreyes@xula.edu.