

A Success Story in the U.S.: Dr. Hande Özdinler

Associate Prof. Hande Özdinler, Head of the ALS Research Center at Northwestern University, has become one of the ten best scientific inventors.

NEW YORK CITY, NY, USA, October 11, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In a special interview with journalist [Ali Cinar](#), Dr. Özdinler stated that she started this work for her brother, whom she lost to a cerebral hemorrhage.



Özdinler Laboratory was established at [Northwestern University](#) in 2009 as the first laboratory in the world to study upper motor neurons. Since then, Turkish American Dr. Özdinler has been investigating why these neurons are present in the brain and why they show degeneration. She and her team gradually solved the death mechanisms and tried to develop appropriate treatment methods.

Their first project focused on developing medication. They presented their great invention with Dr. Silverman; this was promising for patients with motor neuron diseases and especially for ALS patients, as it would be able to heal the motor neurons in the brain. NU-9 can stop motor neuron deaths more effectively than any other approved medication, and this ability resolves four different mechanisms simultaneously.

Their first steps have given rise to a significant advancement in cell-based and mechanism-focused medication development. They are now in the process of presenting this to patients.

"It is a challenging, costly, and elaborate process. We need financial support and are spending much time looking for that support," said Dr. Özdinler.

Their second project was about finding biomarkers. With this study, they are able to pave the way for drug inventions; they find out which patient requires which drug, and ultimately, they ensure the recovery of more patients.

Their third project concerns gene therapy. In this project, they provide direct gene therapy to motor neurons that have died in the brain, enabling them to reap the benefits of personalized medicine and develop personalized healing methods.

Dr. Ozdinler said that scientists in other countries receive much support from their homelands. Joint projects, investments, student exchange programs, and many brilliant projects. Unfortunately, Türkiye does not benefit enough from scientists who have been successful abroad.

Dr. Ozdinler received the Best Master's Thesis Award from Bogazici University. At that time, she was doing the first gene cloning studies in Türkiye. When she was pursuing her Ph.D., she received the FASEB award, a science award, for a poster she submitted. As a post-associate professor, she received the Harvard Center for Neurodegeneration and Repair (HCNR) Award, which was given to two people at Harvard.

At Northwestern University, she received the NUCATS Translational Innovation and Corner Innovation awards. These prestigious awards are given to individuals who can think outside the box, create new things no one has ever done, and find innovative methods or solutions.

Dr. Ozdinler said that young academicians should be appreciated and valued. 'They are the ones who make inventions, ensure development and make the world a better place. Despite all the challenges they are faced with, young people must be resilient and continue to improve themselves. During COVID-19, many good universities moved their classes online and made them publicly accessible. I advise young people to learn and improve continuously. They will eventually see rewards for their efforts, maybe not today, but tomorrow for sure. They should work with a view to the future and invest in themselves,' she said.

She wants to see her work pay off in five years and see ALS patients start to get better.

'We will finish this fight with ALS, and I would love to celebrate on the day this ends. We should declare that day a holiday for all ALS friends, their children, mothers, and fathers. A festival of the victory of humanity,' she added.

She wants to also open an exhibition for her paintings. She wants to sell her paintings to support students during their studies, and she would like to write, publish books, see the countries she hasn't been to, and have a fantastic time with her dear friends.

Interviewer: Ali Cinar is a journalist based in Washington, DC. He represents Ciner Media US Group (Haberturk TV and Bloomberg HT). Ali Cinar was awarded the Ellis Island Medal of Honor and was the youngest Turkish American to receive this award in over 30 years. He is a Ph.D. candidate in Communication at Liberty University,

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