



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Media Contact:

Jane Ransom, executive director, ABF  
612-928-6317, [jransom@americanbrainfoundation.org](mailto:jransom@americanbrainfoundation.org)

## Susan Schneider Williams Named Vice Chair of the American Brain Foundation

(MINNEAPOLIS, Jan. 22) – Today, the American Brain Foundation (ABF) announced the appointment of Susan Schneider Williams as Vice Chair of its board of directors. She joined the board in 2016.

Schneider Williams is a professional fine artist, author, and advocate for brain disease research. A northern California native, Schneider Williams' love of art began in childhood, led to a career in graphic design, and gave way to painting full-time.

In 2013, Schneider Williams' late husband, actor and comedian Robin Williams, began to suffer the debilitating symptoms of the brain disease Lewy body dementia (LBD). Undiagnosed until after his death in August 2014, LBD destroyed Williams' life and caused him to experience unbearable anxiety, delusions, insomnia, and hallucinations. Often undiagnosed or misdiagnosed, LBD affects an estimated 1.4 million individuals and their families in the United States.

Since her husband's death, Schneider Williams has made it her mission to raise awareness about LBD and advocate on behalf of brain disease research. She authored the editorial, "The terrorist inside my husband's brain," for the American Academy of Neurology's (AAN) *Neurology* journal and has presented at many conferences, academic institutions, and private research corporations. In 2016, Schneider Williams was presented with the ABF's Commitment to Cures Award in recognition of her advocacy for better treatments, prevention, and cures for brain diseases. She has lobbied in Washington, DC with the AAN, Michael J. Fox Foundation, and others for better diagnostics, increased funding, and support for researchers, doctors, and clinicians.

"The American Brain Foundation's focus—*when we cure one brain disease, we will cure many*—is exactly what we need to make advancements in brain disease research. Robin was diagnosed with both Parkinson's Disease and Lewy body dementia, and these two diseases have very closely related pathology—that is, they both have Lewy bodies in the brain. In the search to understand the common mechanisms by which Lewy bodies are produced and neurons subsequently degenerate, researchers could end up unlocking a cure for multiple diseases," said Schneider Williams. "As Vice Chair, I will help advance the ABF's mission to ensure researchers are getting the funds they need to go after these brain diseases."

Schneider Williams is one of four incoming ABF board officers, including Chair, David W. Dodick, MD, FAAN, Mayo Clinic Arizona; Treasurer, James Essey, TemPositions Group; and Secretary, Shafali Jeste, MD, FAAN, UCLA Semel Institute.

>> Learn more about [Susan Schneider Williams](#) and the [ABF Lewy Body Dementia Fund](#).

- 0 -

2020

### About the American Brain Foundation:

The American Brain Foundation brings researchers and donors together to cure brain diseases and disorders. To learn more, visit [our website](#) and find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).