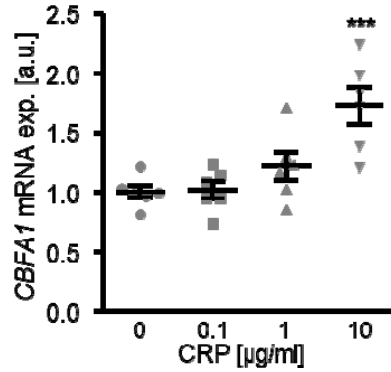
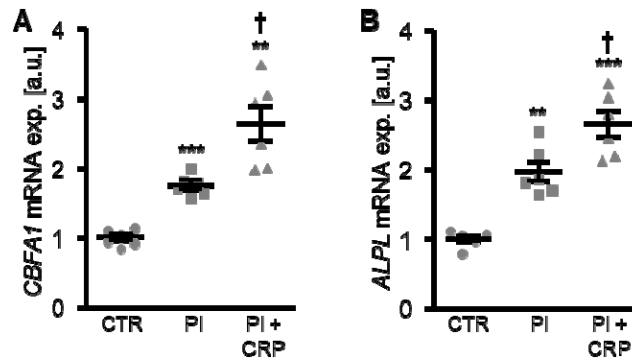


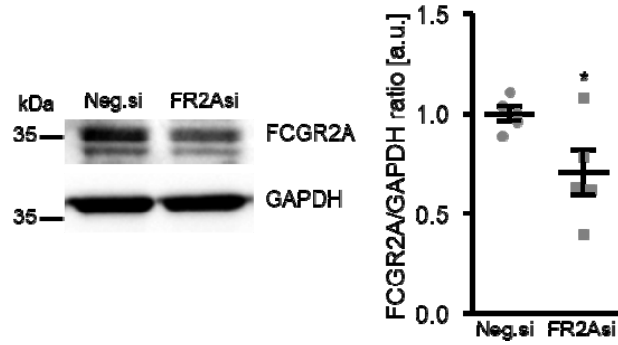
SUPPLEMENTARY FIGURES



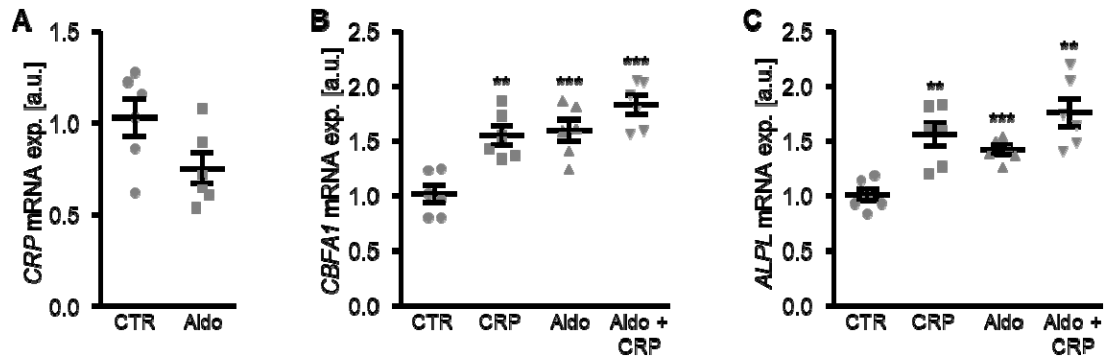
Supplementary Figure 1. CRP up-regulates *CBFA1* expression in HAoSMCs in a dose-dependent manner. Scatter dot plots and arithmetic means \pm SEM (n=6; arbitrary units, a.u.) of *CBFA1* relative mRNA expression in HAoSMCs treated with the indicated concentrations of recombinant human CRP (0 - 10 μ g/ml). ***($p < 0.001$) significant vs. control HAoSMCs.



Supplementary Figure 2. CRP augments phosphate-induced osteo-/chondrogenic transdifferentiation of HAoSMCs. (A, B) Scatter dot plots and arithmetic means \pm SEM (n=6; arbitrary units, a.u.) of *CBFA1* (A) and *ALPL* (B) relative mRNA expression in HAoSMCs treated for 24 hours with control (CTR) or β -glycerophosphate (Pi) prior additional treatment for 24 hours without and with 10 μ g/ml recombinant human CRP. **($p < 0.01$), ***($p < 0.001$) significant vs. control HAoSMCs; †($p < 0.05$) significant vs. HAoSMCs treated with Pi alone.



Supplementary Figure 3. Silencing efficiency of FCGR2A gene in HAoSMCs. Representative original Western blots and scatter dot plots and arithmetic means \pm SEM (n=5; arbitrary units, a.u.) of normalized FCGR2A/GAPDH protein ratio in HAoSMCs silenced with negative control siRNA (Neg.si) or FCGR2A siRNA (FR2Asi). *(p<0.05) significant vs. Neg.si silenced HAoSMCs.



Supplementary Figure 4. CRP expression and CRP-induced osteo-/chondrogenic transdifferentiation of HAoSMCs are not significantly modified by aldosterone. (A) Scatter dot plots and arithmetic means \pm SEM (n=6; arbitrary units, a.u.) of CRP relative mRNA expression in HAoSMCs treated with control (CTR) or 100 nM aldosterone (Aldo). (B, C) Scatter dot plots and arithmetic means \pm SEM (n=6; a.u.) of CBFA1 (B) and ALPL (C) relative mRNA expression in HAoSMCs treated with control (CTR) or 10 μ g/ml recombinant human CRP without and with 100 nM aldosterone (Aldo). ** (p<0.01), *** (p<0.001) significant vs. control HAoSMCs.