



5th Annual Szent-Györgyi Prize for Progress in Cancer Research Awarded to Peter K. Vogt, Ph.D., The Scripps Research Institute

(March 16, 2010--Bethesda, MD) – The National Foundation for Cancer Research announced today that renowned scientist Peter K. Vogt, Ph.D., Professor in the Department of Molecular and Experimental Medicine at The Scripps Research Institute, La Jolla, California, is the recipient of the 5th Annual Szent-Györgyi Prize for Progress in Cancer Research.

Dr. Vogt's research, which began on a humble chicken virus in the early 1960s, has profoundly changed biology and medicine. His groundbreaking discovery of src, the first cancer-causing gene, or oncogene, launched a new era for cancer research and made seminal contributions to our present understanding of the role of oncogenes, proto-oncogenes and many other critical molecular mechanisms of cancer. Today, Dr. Vogt continues to be a leader in multiple aspects of cancer research, including initiatives that use some of the most important oncogenes as therapeutic targets — initiatives that are bringing renewed hope to cancer patients.



“Dr. Vogt's fundamental basic science discovery of cancer-causing genes in retroviruses shed the first light on the genetic paradigm that now dominates our understanding of cancer development in humans,” said Ronald A. DePinho, M.D., Chair of the Szent-Györgyi Prize Selection Committee and last year's recipient. “His groundbreaking work has yielded several of the most important targets in cancer therapy. We are honored to present this coveted award to an individual of iconic stature.”

“The significance of Dr. Vogt's remarkable research cannot be overstated. The impact of his discoveries on our understanding of tumor formation is immense,” said Sujuan Ba, Ph.D., Co-Chair of the 5th Annual Szent-Györgyi Prize Selection Committee and Chief Operating Officer of NFCR. “We are quite pleased to honor him and celebrate his role in advancing cancer research.”

Named in memory of 1937 Nobel Prize-winning scientist and NFCR Co-Founder Albert Szent-Györgyi, the Prize is awarded annually to a scientist, nominated by colleagues or peers, who has contributed outstanding, substantial research to the fight against cancer and whose accomplishments have helped improve treatment options for cancer patients. The Prize includes a \$25,000 cash award and will be presented to Dr. Vogt on March 16, 2010 at the Hilton New York at an award ceremony featuring a keynote address by John Lechleiter, Ph.D., Chairman, President, and Chief Executive Officer, Eli Lilly and Company.



“I am immensely grateful and delighted to be awarded the 2010 Albert Szent-Györgyi Prize for Progress in Cancer Research,” said Dr. Vogt. “This award marks a milestone in my scientific career and gives me both encouragement and inspiration. Albert Szent-Györgyi's consuming interest during the last two decades of his life was cancer. Being a fiercely independent man, he chose an unusual path to support his research: the establishment of a private foundation. By the power of his personality and his scientific stature, he succeeded in creating the National Foundation for Cancer Research. For almost 40 years, the unique focus of NFCR on research has provided

critical support to innovative scientists and has advanced the translation of basic knowledge into successful therapy.”

Dr. Peter Vogt’s revolutionary research on src has led to the discovery of additional oncogenes, including *myc*, *jun*, and PI 3-kinase, that play a key role in human cancer and have become household names in the world of cellular signaling research. His current work on cancer-specific mutations in p110, the catalytic subunit of PI 3-kinase, has demonstrated that these mutations confer oncogenic activity on the protein, making them highly specific cancer targets. Pursuing these targets, Dr. Vogt is now generating small molecule inhibitors that can interfere with their role in cancer causation. Dr. Vogt’s iconic career may have begun with oncogene discovery but it has expanded in scope and now includes translational studies aimed at developing novel therapeutic approaches for cancer patients.

Currently, Dr. Vogt is a Professor in the Department of Molecular and Experimental Medicine at The Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla, California. He has received many awards and honors, including the Gregor Johann Mendel Medal, Charles S. Mott Prize, Ernst Jung Prize for Medicine, Bristol Meyers Award, and ICN International Prize in Virology. Dr. Vogt has been invited as a distinguished lecturer by more than twenty leading research institutions in the US, Europe, and Asia, among them the German Cancer Research Center in Heidelberg for the Meyenburg Foundation Lecture, the Princess Takamatsu Foundation, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Agency for Science, Technology and Research of Singapore. He was also elected an Honorary Member of the Japanese Cancer Association and received an honorary doctorate from the University of Würzburg. Dr. Vogt is an elected member of many prestigious academies, including the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the National Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies, and the American Academy of Microbiology. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Tübingen, Germany, and trained as a virologist at the Max Planck Institute of Virology in Germany and at the University of California in Berkeley.

The 5th Annual Szent-Györgyi Prize Selection Committee was Chaired by Ronald A. DePinho, M.D., and Co-Chaired by Sujuan Ba, Ph.D. Other selection committee members included leaders in cancer research and drug development from academic institutes, the pharmaceutical industry, and government agencies: Lewis C. Cantley, Ph.D.; Webster K. Cavenee, Ph.D.; Carlo M. Croce, M.D.; Paul B. Fisher, M.Ph., Ph.D.; Richard Gaynor, M.D.; Curtis C. Harris, M.D.; Michael Karin, Ph.D.; Mary-Claire King, Ph.D.; Perry D. Nisen, M.D., Ph.D.; Jennifer A. Pietsenpol, Ph.D.; Wai-Kwan Alfred Yung, M.D.; and General Secretary Yi Michael Wang, M.D., Ph.D.

[About the National Foundation for Cancer Research](#)

The National Foundation for Cancer Research (NFCR) is a leading cancer research charity dedicated to funding cancer research and public education relating to cancer prevention, earlier diagnosis, better treatments and, ultimately, a cure for cancer. NFCR promotes and facilitates collaboration among scientists to accelerate the pace of discovery from bench to bedside.

Since 1973, NFCR has provided over \$260 million in support of discovery-oriented cancer research focused on understanding how and why cells become cancerous, and on public education relating to cancer prevention, detection, and treatment. NFCR’s scientists are discovering cancer’s molecular mysteries and translating these discoveries into therapies that hold the hope for curing cancer. NFCR is about *Research for a Cure*—cures for all types of cancer. For more information, please visit www.NFCR.org.

[Media Contact:](#)

Silas Deane
(615) 319-6007
sdeane@nfcrr.org