



3rd Annual Albert Szent-Györgyi Prize for Progress in Cancer Research
Awarded to
Carlo M. Croce, M.D.

(March 11, 2008 – BETHESDA, MD) -- The National Foundation for Cancer Research (NFCR) announced today that Carlo M. Croce, M.D. has been awarded the 3rd Annual *Albert Szent-Györgyi Prize for Progress in Cancer Research*. Dr. Croce, Director of the Human Cancer Genetics Program and Director of the Institute of Genetics at The Ohio State University, won the prize for his groundbreaking discoveries regarding the direct and causative association of chromosomal translocations with the molecular mechanisms of oncogene activation. Dr. Croce's research paved the way for entirely new avenues in the development of a variety of therapies to target cancer.

The annual *Albert Szent-Györgyi Prize for Progress in Cancer Research* was established to recognize outstanding scientific achievement in the war against cancer and to honor pioneering scientists who have made extraordinary contributions in the field of cancer research. The Prize is designed to draw attention to the continued need to support basic cancer research and the role that it plays in new cancer therapies. The Prize includes a \$25,000 honorarium.

"I am particularly delighted to recognize Dr. Carlo Croce, as his research epitomizes the very essence of the Albert Szent-Györgyi Prize. His work has provided several monumental advances in our understanding of the nature of cancer and has also led to new approaches to diagnosis, prognosis and treatment of cancer that exploits its essential genetic makeup," said Webster K. Cavenee, Ph.D., Chair, 3rd Annual Albert Szent-Györgyi Prize Selection Committee.

"Dr. Croce's discoveries have led to new ways for life scientists to better break down cancer's complicated molecular structures and better understand the role that genetics and RNA plays in cancer growth and development," said Dr. Yi Michael Wang, Chief Science Officer for NFCR. "We are quite pleased to honor him and celebrate his work in advancing cancer research."

Marking one of the cornerstones in genetic research, Dr. Croce established the direct and causative impacts that chromosomal translocations with the molecular mechanisms of oncogene activation have. He was the first to use specific chromosomal translocations as genetic hallmarks to identify and isolate important oncogenes and tumor suppressor genes such as BCL2, ALL1,

and LZTS1, each of which revealed novel and critical signaling pathways for cancer initiation and progression.

Most recently, Dr. Croce made breakthrough discoveries in microRNA research. He provided the first evidence that these small, non-protein-coding RNAs do play a role in human cancer. As a result, he developed a gene chip that enables the assessment of the genome-wide expression of microRNAs in normal cells and tumor tissue, and identified microRNA signatures that correlate with diagnosis and prognosis of leukemia, lung cancer, and many other types of tumors, key indicators in the role of mutating genetic expression.

Today, Dr. Croce is the Director of the Human Cancer Genetics Program and Director of the Institute of Genetics at The Ohio State University. He is also a Professor of Molecular Virology, Immunology and Medical Genetics at OSU. Dr. Croce has received numerous awards including the General Motors Cancer Research Foundation Charles S. Mott Prize, the Italian Gold Medal for Public Health and the G.H.A. Clowes Memorial Award of the American Association for Cancer Research. He is a member of the National Academy of Sciences. He was Editor-in-Chief of *Cancer Research* and continues to be the Subject Editor for the *British Journal of Cancer*. Dr. Croce received his M.D. from the University of Rome in Rome, Italy.

“Dr. Szent-Györgyi was an inspiration to so many of us in the cancer research field for his belief in the role of basic science in breaking apart cancer’s mysteries,” said Dr. Croce. “Winning this Prize, named in his honor, means a great deal to me personally and I am humbled to have been selected by my peers to receive it. It is my hope that the discoveries I have advanced will make a significant long-term impact on those patients who suffer from cancer. The support of the National Foundation for Cancer Research over the years both for this Prize and for basic cancer research has been a vital part of many significant research discoveries.”

The *Albert Szent-Györgyi Prize for Progress in Cancer Research* was established by the National Foundation for Cancer Research in honor of its co-founder, Dr. Albert Szent-Györgyi, recipient of the 1937 Nobel Prize for Physiology and Medicine for his study on Vitamin C and cell respiration. Dr. Szent-Györgyi was a leading advocate for developing resources to provide scientists with the financial support necessary to pursue novel cancer research ideas.

The 3rd Annual Albert Szent-Györgyi Prize selection committee was chaired by the most recent prize recipient: Webster K. Cavenee, Ph.D. Committee members were Sujuan Ba, Ph.D.; Stanley Cohen, M.D., Stanford University; Ronald A. DePinho, M.D., Dana-Farber Cancer Institute; Paul B. Fisher, Ph.D., Columbia University; Richard Gaynor, M.D., Eli Lilly; Thea Tlsty, Ph.D., University of California, San Francisco; Peter K. Vogt, Ph.D., The Scripps Research Institute; Daniel Von Hoff, M.D., FACS, TGen; and Bruce Zetter, Ph.D., Children’s Hospital Boston.