



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Monday, November 7, 2011

Contact: Jennifer Warren (jwarren@sitcancer.org)

Ph: (414) 271-2456

Researchers honored at the SITC 26th Annual Meeting Awards Ceremony

Ralph M. Steinman, MD Honored with Richard V. Smalley Memorial Award

MILWAUKEE (Monday, November 7, 2011) – The Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC) honored the late Ralph M. Steinman, MD for his outstanding research, work and achievements in cancer therapy, with the Richard V. Smalley Memorial Award at the SITC 26th Annual Meeting & Associated Programs Awards Ceremony on Saturday, November 5.

Sadly, Dr. Steinman passed away on September 30, 2011 from pancreatic cancer which he had been diagnosed with four years earlier. His life was extended using a combination of surgery, standard chemotherapy and experimental dendritic-cell based immunotherapy of his own design.

On October 3, 2011 Dr. Steinman was one of three immunologists to be awarded the 2011 Nobel Prize in Medicine. Dr. Steinman shared this award with Bruce A. Beutler, MD, Scripps Research Institute, and Jules A. Hoffmann, PhD, Strasbourg University. The three scientists were honored for their pioneering research which led to breakthroughs in understanding key principles of activation of the immune system.

Dr. Steinman co-discovered dendritic cells (DCs). His research characterized DCs as important and unique accessory cells in the onset of several immune responses, including graft rejection, resistance to tumors, autoimmune disease and infections. Dr. Steinman's work led to a new understanding of the control of tolerance and immunity and it was the genesis for a new field of study within immunology: the role of DCs in immune regulation, their potential for discovering new vaccines and treatments of autoimmune disorders. Dr. Steinman's group is currently investigating active antigen-specific, suppressor or regulatory T cell mechanisms that allow DCs to induce tolerance.

SITC established the annual Richard V. Smalley, MD Memorial Award in 2005 in memory of one of its charter members, Dr. Richard V. Smalley, who was an integral part of the Society's fabric since its inception. The Smalley Award serves as recognition of excellence in the field of therapeutic research with biological agents and is accompanied by an honorarium of \$5,000. In association with the award, Dr. Steinman had been scheduled to deliver a Keynote Address on vaccines that target dendritic cells at the SITC 26th Annual Meeting.

Outstanding Young Investigators Honored

MILWAUKEE (Monday, November 7, 2011) – The Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC) honored ten young investigators for scientific excellence in abstract and/or oral presentation in the field of cancer immunotherapy and biological therapy during the SITC 26th Annual Meeting Awards Ceremony on Saturday, November 5.

Qualified investigators were designated through the SITC abstract submission process and judged by a committee of SITC leadership. To qualify for a SITC Young Investigator Award, the primary/presenting author must be a student,

post doctoral research fellow, clinical fellow, junior faculty (instructor or assistant professor) with three or less years on staff and be listed as both the primary author and the presenting author on the abstract submitted.

Four abstracts submitted in any category and authored by young investigators were selected for 20 minute oral presentations during the Presidential Session on Saturday, November 5. Of those abstract presenters, all four received Presidential Travel Awards and one was selected as the 2011 Presidential Award winner. Recipients of these awards include:

SITC Presidential Award

- Joshua Brody, MD – *Stanford University Medical Center*

SITC Presidential Travel Awards

- Lenka V. Hurton – *MD Anderson Cancer Center*
- Lorenzo Uccellini, PhD – *National Institutes of Health*
- Yan Zheng, PhD – *University of Chicago*

Six young investigators were also selected to receive SITC Travel Awards for presenting a poster at the SITC 26th Annual Meeting. Recipients of these awards include:

SITC Travel Awards

- Jessica A. Chacon – *University of Texas, MD Anderson Cancer Center*
- Drew Deniger – *University of Texas, MD Anderson Cancer Center*
- Evripidis Lanitis – *University of Pennsylvania, School of Medicine*
- Petra Prinz, PhD – *Institute of Molecular Immunology*
- Emanuela Romano, MD – *University of Lausanne*
- Seng-Ryong Woo, PhD – *University of Chicago*

Founded in 1984, the Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (formerly the International Society for Biological Therapy of Cancer; iSBTc) is a non-profit organization of clinicians, researchers, students, post-doctoral fellows, and allied health professionals dedicated to improving cancer patient outcomes by advancing the development and application of cancer immunotherapy through interaction, innovation and leadership. For more information about SITC, please visit the Society website at www.sitcancer.org.