Molecular Mechanisms of Apoptosis Regulation

January 9-13, 1998
Renaissance Esmeralda Resort
Indian Wells (Palm Springs), CA

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IAP Family Proteins
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Application Deadline: October 20, 1997

Information and Application Forms:
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1998 GERTRUDE B. ELION CANCER RESEARCH AWARD

Supported by an Educational Grant from
Glaxo Wellcome Oncology

- This Award was established in honor of Nobel Laureate Dr. Gertrude B. Elion, Scientist Emeritus at Glaxo Wellcome Co. and Past President and Honorary Member of the AACR.

- The Gertrude B. Elion Cancer Research Award is a one-year, $30,000 grant for a scientist in the U.S. or Canada engaged in meritorious basic, clinical, or translational research in cancer etiology, diagnosis, treatment, or prevention at the level of Assistant Professor (not yet tenured).

- The AACR will reimburse the Awardee for travel to the 1998 Annual Meeting in New Orleans, LA., where Dr. Elion will personally present this Award.

Eligibility
Candidates must have completed postdoctoral studies or clinical fellowships not later than July 1 of the Award year, and ordinarily not more than five years earlier. Tenured faculty in academia, federal government employees, and employees of private industry are not eligible for this award. A Candidate need not be a member of the AACR at the time of application, but must be nominated by a Member of the AACR. Associate Members may not be nominators.

Selection Process/Application Deadline
Applications are evaluated by a Committee consisting of AACR Members who are experts in basic, clinical, and translational cancer research. Complete applications must be submitted by December 15, 1997, to be considered for the 1998 Award.

For Further Information/Application Forms
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The Norwegian Radium Hospital (NRH) in Oslo, pictured on the cover (bottom), is the largest cancer hospital in northern Europe, with 400 beds, an outpatient clinic, and an Institute for Cancer Research. Now constituting a cancer center for diagnosis and treatment, research, and teaching, the NRH was opened in 1932 as a small 80-bed hospital, the first specialized cancer hospital in Norway, built to provide the best radiation treatment available. The funds required to build the hospital and to equip it with the necessary amount of radium were raised through nationwide campaigns. Its last expansion, in 1979, was financed by the government. Today, the hospital includes Departments of Medical Oncology and Radiotherapy, Gynecological Oncology, and Surgical Oncology, together with the necessary service departments. The Institute for Cancer Research was opened in 1954, and it has been integrated with the hospital under a common board and administration since 1975. Departments of Biochemistry, Biophysics, Cell Biology, Environmental Cancer, Genetics, Immunology, Pathology, and Tumor Biology are home to a staff of approximately 100 physicians and scientists, together with technicians and students, who are engaged in basic studies of cancer cells and the mechanisms of growth control, as well as in applied research on cancer diagnosis and treatment.

In 1947, Reidar Eker (top left), a pathologist, became the first Director of this hospital-institute complex. He initiated a highly successful nationwide fund-raising campaign for construction of a new hospital, which was completed in 1957. Also, recognizing the need for a comprehensive cancer center in northern Europe, he devised plans for a research institute and obtained a donation from Norsk-Hydro A/S that made the opening of the Institute for Cancer Research possible. He retired as Director in 1974 and died in 1996 at the age of 92. In recognition of his accomplishments and service to his country, he was made a Knight of the Premier Class of the Royal Norwegian Saint Olav Order.

Dr. Eker had a lifelong interest in genetics. As a medical student, he engaged in genetic studies of Drosophila melanogaster with Professor Otto L. Mohr. In his doctoral thesis, he reported on the genetic effects of ionizing radiation in the male germ cells of the grasshopper. Outside Norway, Dr. Eker is probably best known as father of the "Eker rat" strain. During studies of skin tumors in rats, he observed that numerous kidney tumors occurred in some rats. By systematic breeding of rats, he demonstrated Mendelian dominant inheritance of this predisposition (Nature, 189: 859, 1961). When homozygous, the mutation is lethal during embryogenesis (Diag. Histopath., 4 99, 1981). The rat strain was nearly lost in 1983. A few remaining animals were rushed to the Oslo Airport (to the strains of Grieg's music to give them a Norwegian imprint) and met in New York by Alfred Knudson of the Fox Chase Cancer Center in Philadelphia, where the strain was rescued. The Eker rat is now studied in several institutes in the United States and Japan. Recently, the predisposing gene was shown to be the homologue of the human tuberous sclerosis 2 gene (Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA, 91: 11413-11416, 1994; Nature Genet., 9: 70-75, 1995).

Since 1983, the Director of the NRH and its Institute has been Jan Vincents Johannessen (top right). Under Dr. Johannessen's leadership, the NRH has undergone a profound academization, with the addition of more scientists, the creation of programs that are building a strong bridge between basic research and clinical medicine, and the establishment of a Research Foundation of the NRH to oversee its interaction with industry. In 1990, Dr. Johannessen established the Montebello Center in Lillehammer, a pioneering rehabilitation center designed to help cancer patients and their families cope with their illnesses and fears. In the same vein, he has given the NRH a more open and inviting profile in the public's eye by creating a comfortable atmosphere within which to deal with the frightening prospect of facing and fighting cancer.

Dr. Johannessen is indeed a Renaissance person. He was one of the first pathologists to use electron microscopy as a diagnostic tool, and he has published over 200 scientific papers and edited several books. He is also a successful author in the realm of popular literature, as attested to by his 1993 book The Art of Living, which has sold almost 100,000 copies in a nation of four million people. He has written television film scripts on medicine and science and worked on short films, including an anti-smoking film for teenagers that won an award at Cannes. In addition, he is an accomplished composer, songwriter, and artist. He has been recognized by the royal houses of Sweden, Belgium, and the Netherlands, and like Dr. Eker, he is a Knight of the Premier Class of the Royal Norwegian Saint Olav Order.

We extend our appreciation to Dr. Knudson for his assistance in coordinating the material for this cover feature.

Sidney Weinhouse