

Guest Editors

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Dr Antonio Giordano

Director of the Sbarro Institute for Cancer Research and Molecular Medicine, Director of the Center for Biotechnology, Temple University, Philadelphia

Dr Antonio Giordano has been an internationally recognized researcher specializing in the genetics of cancer and gene therapy for over 20 years. Dr Giordano is best known for his discovery of Rb2/p130, a tumor-suppressor gene, which has been found to be active in lung, endometrial, brain, breast, liver and ovarian cancers. In addition to this cancer suppressing gene, Dr Giordano discovered the protein p60, later named cyclin A, a substance that regulates growth in the cell cycle; CDK9 and CDK10, guardians of the human genome; as well as another cancer-related gene called NSP. Research has subsequently shown that CDK9 plays a critical role in cell differentiation, particularly in muscles; HIV transcription; and the inception of tumors. Through pursuit of basic research in molecular cancer biology, cancer progression, and novel therapies, his hope is to develop new molecular therapeutics and better diagnostic approaches for a variety of cancers and other diseases. Dr Giordano's work has received a number of international awards and he has published over 250 papers on his work in the fields of the cell cycle, gene therapy and the genetics of cancer.

A native of Naples, Italy, Dr Giordano earned his medical degree from the University of Naples in 1986 and his doctorate in pathology from the University of Trieste Medical School in 1990. He was a post-doctoral fellow in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at New York Medical College in Valhalla (NY) from 1987 to 1988. From 1988 to 1992, he was a post-doctoral fellow at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory (NY). In 1993, while at Thomas Jefferson University, he founded the Sbarro Institute for Cancer Research and Molecular Medicine (www.shro.org) with the help of Sbarro Inc., an internationally successful restaurant chain. In 2002, the Institute forged an alliance with Temple University, forming the Sbarro Health Research Organization (SHRO). SHRO funds the Sbarro Institute for Cancer Research and Molecular Medicine at Temple, where promising researchers from around the globe pursue groundbreaking research on the molecular mechanisms of cancer and other diseases. The agreement with Temple was renewed in 2005, with the addition of two new research programs in molecular therapeutics and the study of the connections between obesity and cancer. In addition to his position at Temple, Dr Giordano has also been appointed *chiara fama* Professor of Pathology at the University of Siena, Italy.



Dr Wen-Hwa Lee

Donald Bren Professor and Chair, Department of Biological Chemistry, University of California, Irvine

Dr Wen-Hwa Lee is, among his many accomplishments, renowned for identifying the first human tumor-suppressor gene, retinoblastoma susceptibility gene (RB), which plays a vital role in the cellular battle against cancer. In the late 1980s, his lab and others cloned the RB gene and demonstrated that the reconstitution of the wild-type RB suppressed tumor growth. RB represented a new class of gene that suppressed the growth of tumors, and since then, it has rapidly become a focus of major interest among cancer researchers. In addition to this pioneering research, his laboratory has linked two breast cancer susceptibility genes, *BRCA-1* and *BRCA-2*, to the process of DNA repair. Dr Lee then proceeded to investigate the mechanism of these tumor suppressors in the maintenance of cell homeostasis and genomic stability. Via this research, he has further discovered and characterized more than a dozen of new genes. Today, Dr Lee's work continues to be primarily in the areas of molecular cancer genetics, mainly specializing in the mechanism of tumor suppressor gene functions,

cancer progression and novel therapy. Through his basic research, innovative methods of clinical intervention of cancer can be developed.

Dr Lee graduated from the University of California, Berkeley in 1981 in Molecular Biology. In 1984, Dr Lee accepted a position as an assistant professor at the University of California, San Diego. It was at San Diego where he did his seminal work, and in a relative short period of time, he ascended to being a full professor. San Antonio, Texas enticed him with the opportunity to literally build an Institute from the ground up. For the next 12 years between 1991 and 2003, Dr Lee managed to initiate and accomplish from concept to institute the establishment of a premiere scientific center in Texas – the Institute of Biotechnology at the University of Texas Health Science Center, San Antonio (UTHSCSA). In 2003, Dr Lee accepted his current position as Donald Bren Professor of Biomedicine at the University of California, Irvine; and in 2005, he became Chair of the Department of Biological Chemistry, where he continues his research today.