

About Ochsner

2000 Ochsner Award Relating Smoking and Health



*Jill Marie Siegfried, PhD
Professor and Vice Chairperson of the Department of
Pharmacology and Co-Director of the Lung Cancer Program at
the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute.*

Official Announcement of the Award Selection Committee

The Selection Committee of the Alton Ochsner Award Relating Smoking and Health is pleased to announce that Jill Marie Siegfried, PhD, Professor and Vice Chairperson of the Department of Pharmacology at the University of Pittsburgh and Co-Director of the Lung Cancer Program at the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute, has been selected to receive its 15th Annual Award.

Dr. Siegfried has focused her undivided research interests over the past 18 years on the cellular and molecular biological aspects of human lung cancer and on the development of models to study the alterations of lung tumors, comparing these changes to those in the cells that line the human bronchial wall. Initially, she produced cell lines from tissue of human lung cancers and demonstrated specific changes in the chromosome p3 that are identical to the small cell tumors in patients. Her studies, using tissue culture of bronchial epithelial cells originally obtained from biopsies of patients, demonstrated responses of this tissue, grown under careful laboratory conditions, to specific carcinogens,

biologically active hormones and growth factors, and smoking. In this series of studies, she demonstrated the importance of several growth factors and cellular receptor pathways that control cell growth in non-small cell lung tumors.

More recently, she and her colleagues uncovered a major mechanism whereby women may be more susceptible to the adverse effects of tobacco exposure because of the more frequent expression in women of the X-chromosome-linked gene, gastrin-releasing peptide receptor. These findings, at this time, are of particular relevance since the female population is the largest population currently becoming addicted to cigarette smoking. Thus, her findings translate practically, and in a very timely fashion, into a very rational explanation of why these newer smokers are at even greater risk of developing lung cancer than other smokers.

Prior recipients of the Ochsner Award have been honored for their work demonstrating important relationships relating cigarette smoking and lung cancer, emphysema, abnormal lung function, and other diseases including atherosclerosis and nicotine addiction.

The Alton Ochsner Award recognizes outstanding and exemplary scientific research achievements that provide major insights into the biological mechanisms that relate smoking and human disease. The award, in the amount of \$15,000, and a special medallion and scroll will be presented at the Annual Convocation ceremonies of the American College of Chest Physicians during its scientific sessions to be held in San Francisco on October 22, 2000.

The Selection Committee is comprised of a blue ribbon panel of academicians, clinicians, and investigators who reviewed a large number of nominations during the selection process. The Award is named for the late Alton Ochsner, MD, one of the founders of the Ochsner Clinic and the Alton Ochsner Medical Foundation in New Orleans. Doctor Ochsner was the first person to recognize that cigarette smoking is the major causative factor underlying lung cancer. These seminal findings led to a succession of scientific studies in the United States and worldwide resulting in the identification of mechanisms involved with addiction and diseases related to smoking, and the currently accepted efforts aimed at reducing cigarette smoking, as well as the more recent actions by the federal and state governments aimed at reducing illnesses and deaths from this major devastating scourge.