

PRESS RELEASE

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Prominent UCLA Stem Cell Researcher Inducted into Cancer Research Academy

- UCLA Broad Stem Cell Research Center Director Dr. Owen Witte inducted into American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) Academy.
- Witte's research was key to the development of the targeted cancer drugs Gleevec[®] and Imbruvica[™].
- AACR Academy fellows inducted by peer review.

Dr. Owen Witte, director of UCLA's Eli and Edythe Broad Center of Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research is a 2014 inductee into the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) Academy.

Witte's research laid the foundation for the development of the drug Imatinib (Gleevec[®]), the first targeted therapy for chronic myeloid leukemia.

"Our 2014 class of fellows includes a number of the most prestigious laboratory researchers and physician-scientists who have contributed enormously to the cancer field," said Dr. Margaret Forti, chief executive officer of the AACR.

The Academy was created to recognize and honor distinguished scientists whose important research has significantly advanced the fight against cancer. The fellows of the Academy are selected by a rigorous peer-review process that evaluates them based on their scientific achievements in cancer research.

"I am honored to be recognized by the AACR with induction into the Academy," Witte said. "The fact that fellows of the AACR Academy are selected by their peers based on their research achievements gives inclusion a much richer meaning than one might feel for an award based on one discovery. This honor acknowledges more than my career, it highlights the achievements of the many people who have worked and trained in my laboratory and all my colleagues over the years as well."

Witte's work also defined Bruton's tyrosine kinase, which has become a target therapy of several types of leukemia and lymphoma with drugs like ibrutinib. His research has focused on the interrelated problems of how cell growth is regulated, how cells differentiate, and understanding the function of cancer-causing genes in human leukemia and epithelial cancers (cancers of the lining of glands or organs such as the prostate or ovaries).

Witte is an active scientist currently working on defining the stem cells for epithelial cancers of the prostate and other organs to help define new and more effective therapies.

Witte graduated from Cornell University and earned his medical degree at Stanford. He completed his postdoctoral research at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and later joined the UCLA faculty where he is a distinguished professor of microbiology, immunology and molecular genetics and a Howard Hughes Medical Institute Investigator. He currently holds the UCLA President's Chair in Developmental Immunology.

The stem cell center was launched in 2005 with a UCLA commitment of \$20 million over five years. A \$20 million gift from the Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation in 2007 resulted in the renaming of the center. With more than 200 members, the Eli and Edythe Broad Center of Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research is committed to a multi-disciplinary, integrated collaboration of scientific, academic and medical disciplines for the purpose of



UCLA ELI and EDYTHE BROAD

Center Of Regenerative Medicine
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understanding adult and human embryonic stem cells. The center supports innovation, excellence and the highest ethical standards focused on stem cell research with the intent of facilitating basic scientific inquiry directed towards future clinical applications to treat disease. The center is a collaboration of the David Geffen School of Medicine, UCLA's Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center, the Henry Samueli School of Engineering and Applied Science and the UCLA College of Letters and Science. To learn more about the center, visit our web site at <http://www.stemcell.ucla.edu>.