

SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

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SCIENTIST RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS RESEARCH AWARD

DALLAS — June 22, 1998 - A prestigious foundation devoted to furthering biomedical research recently honored a UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas scientist for discovering a hormone that plays an important role in cardiovascular disease.

Dr. Masashi Yanagisawa, professor of molecular genetics and Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator, received a \$35,000 prize and delivered a lecture at the University of Southern California as part of the 1998 Robert J. and Claire Pasarow Foundation Award for outstanding cardiovascular research.

Yanagisawa discovered and cloned endothelin, a blood pressure-raising hormone secreted by cells in the inner lining of blood vessels. He showed that it controls the tone of vascular smooth muscle integral to cardiovascular function. This discovery has spurred further research to develop drugs to block the hormone's action, and clinical trials are now under way.

"We try to identify individuals who show clear signs of brilliant careers, with the hope that this kind of recognition will drive them to even greater heights," said Dr. Brian Henderson, Pasarow Foundation board member and USC professor of preventive medicine. "The awards reflect the Pasarow family's strong belief in the importance of medical research."

This is the 11th year the foundation has honored cancer, cardiovascular and neuropsychiatric researchers. The winner this year for cancer research is Dr. Eric Lander, Massachusetts Institute of Technology professor of biology and director of the Whitehead Institute/MIT Center for Genome Research. Dr. Eric Nestler, Yale University School of Medicine professor of psychiatry, pharmacology and neurobiology and director of the Yale Center for Genes and Behavior, received the award for neuropsychiatry.

"It is humbling that the Pasarow Foundation chose me for such an important honor, especially in the company of Drs. Lander and Nestler, two scientists held in high regard by researchers worldwide," Yanagisawa said. "The Pasarow Foundation is making a significant contribution to biomedical research by encouraging and supporting our work and enabling us to expand our investigations."

Robert Pasarow is founder and former president, chief executive officer and chairman of the board of CHB Foods.

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