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Association of American Cancer Institutes to Recognize NCI Acting Director for Scientific Achievements

Douglas R. Lowy, MD, acting director of the National Cancer Institute (NCI), will receive the AACI Distinguished Scientist Award on October 21, during the 2019 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting in Washington, DC.

The Association of American Cancer Institutes (AACI) is recognizing Dr. Lowy for his long-term research on the molecular biology of tumor viruses and growth regulation, his role in enabling the development of human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccines, and his exploration of oncogenes and tumor suppressor genes and their signaling pathways.

“The AACI board and national membership is honored to have this opportunity to recognize Dr. Lowy’s scientific achievements,” said AACI President Roy A. Jensen, MD. “Doug has been a champion of AACI cancer centers throughout his tenure at the NCI, and his breakthrough laboratory discoveries have been an invaluable resource for the cancer research community.”

Dr. Lowy was named NCI’s acting director in April 2019 following the appointment of then-NCI Director Norman Sharpless, MD, as acting commissioner of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Dr. Lowy also served as acting director from April 2015 to October 2017. Prior to these appointments, Dr. Lowy had held the NCI deputy director position since 2010, helping to lead NCI’s key scientific initiatives.

Dr. Lowy’s current research is examining the DLC1 tumor suppressor, which encodes a Rho-GAP that is down-regulated in a wide variety of cancers, leading to the high Rho activity seen in many advanced cancers. This work has identified important scaffold functions for DLC1, including protein-protein interactions that contribute to the regulation of its activity and its role



as a tumor suppressor, and identified kinases that activate and inactivate the functions of DLC1 and the mechanisms by which they do so. Dr. Lowy also continues to pursue research on HPV.

In addition to serving as NCI acting director, Dr. Lowy is chief of the Laboratory of Cellular Oncology in NCI's Center for Cancer Research. In 2014, Dr. Lowy, with his colleague John Schiller, MD, were honored by President Obama with the National Medal of Technology and Innovation. In 2017, the scientists received the Lasker-DeBakey Clinical Medical Research Award, the country's most prestigious honor for biomedical research, for their significant research leading to the development of HPV vaccines. They were also recognized for their contributions toward the development of HPV vaccines with the 2018 Szent-Györgyi Prize for Progress in Cancer Research.

"At a time when AACI members are striving to eliminate cervical cancer and other HPV-related cancers, Dr. Lowy's contributions to science are especially significant," said AACI Executive Director Jennifer W. Pegher. "AACI is proud to honor Dr. Lowy for his positive impact on cancer research and prevention."

Previous AACI distinguished scientist honorees are Drs. Charles Perou, Carl June, James Allison, Lewis Cantley, Tim Ley, Brian Druker, Lee Hartwell, Mary-Claire King, Janet Rowley, Stuart Schreiber, Bert Vogelstein, Robert Weinberg, and Irving Weissman.

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Representing 98 of North America's premier academic and freestanding cancer centers, the [Association of American Cancer Institutes](#) is dedicated to reducing the burden of cancer by enhancing the impact of leading cancer centers.