
10 YEARS OF SUPPORTING CANCER RESEARCH

1997

- 2007

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MAIN ACTIVITIES — The **SWISS BRIDGE AWARD 2007** was announced with a maximum of CHF 1,000,000 price monies. 141 applications have been submitted. The evaluation of such a large number of projects was a special challenge to the scientific jury.

Three projects will be funded with CHF 850,000 as described on the back page.

The award ceremony on 25th October 2007 at the Hotel Savoy in Zurich was again the highlight of the year. Prof. Dr. Gordon McVie introduced the three award winners to the 60 guests in his usual humorous speech. The presentation of three projects by the award winners were much applauded.

The **STAMMBACH CHAPTER** — The Stambach Foundation, as in previous years, has made a substantial financial contribution to the awarded projects.

Biobank Suisse, which will accept tissue, blood and serum from a network of pathological institutes in Switzerland, has been founded last year by Swiss Cancer Research and SWISS BRIDGE.

Instituto Nacional de Câncer (INCA) in Rio de Janeiro is in the 4th year of running four projects with annual funds of approx. CHF 1,250,000. A workshop between researchers of the Istituto Europeo di Oncologia, Milan and INCA, Rio de Janeiro has produced astonishing results. All parties involved appreciated the opportunity to exchange know-how and findings across continents.

10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

IN LUGANO — On 24th October 2007, Prof. Umberto Veronesi, Scientific Director of the Istituto Europeo di Oncologia in Milano, and member of our Patrons Committee,

honored us with an interesting speech at the Grand Hotel Villa Castagnola in Lugano. With a full page report in the Corriere del Ticino, including an interview with Prof. Veronesi and the history, the SWISS BRIDGE foundation was highly visible in southern Switzerland.

SUPPORTERS AND FRIENDS OF THE FOUNDATION — We are proud to inform you, that all costs for administration and public relation have been born in the past years by this group of friends. This allows us to transfer the full amount of donations, designated for cancer research, to the research organizations approved by the scientific committee.

In order to sustain this principle, we count on new and continued support. To register, please contact thomas.hoepli@swissbridge.ch.

GOLF DAY — On 21st September 2007 the 10th Golf Day of the Supporters and Friends of the Foundation was held at the Golf Club Hittnau. 60 golfers participated in the competition for “The Triumvirate” Trophy. Beautiful autumn weather, many attractive prizes and delicious food at the golf restaurant helped this traditional event again to a great success.

The venue of the next Golf Day will be the Golf Club Sempachersee: Friday, 3rd October 2008.

WE WILL LEAVE OUR DESCENDANTS A PRECIOUS LEGACY — If you know anyone, who may want to become a donor or a supporter and friend of the foundation SWISS BRIDGE, please contact us at info@swissbridge.ch.

One of our prime objectives is to encourage individuals to bequeath legacies, to secure the long-term success of SWISS BRIDGE. Please do not hesitate to speak to us, or contact your solicitor.

SWISS BRIDGE AWARD 2007 – WINNERS

Ariel Ruiz i Altaba (Prof., PhD, 45 yo) of the Department of Genetic Medicine and Development at the University of Geneva, Switzerland receives CHF 350,000 for the project:

Glioma cancer stem cell self-renewal: Regulation of stemness by HEDGEHOG-GLI signaling.

The project focuses on the elucidation of the self-renewal mechanisms utilized by brain cancer stem cells. Such cells have been shown to exist in gliomas and other human tumors and to be responsible for tumor initiation. They are thought to cause tumor growth, recurrence and metastases. Understanding how these cells persist (self-renew) is thus a key to design therapies that will be efficient in eradicating cancer.

Ruiz i Altaba will study the molecular mechanisms that are activated by HEDGEHOG-GLI signaling and control in glioma cancer stem cell self-renewal.

Pier Giuseppe Pelicci (Prof., MD, PhD, 50 yo) of the Department of Experimental Oncology at the Istituto Europeo di Oncologia, Milano, Italy receives CHF 300,000 for the project:

Biological and molecular characterization of Cancer Stem Cells.

This project is based on the hypothesis that breast cancer is a “stem cell” disease. In this context breast cancer may be viewed as an abnormal “tissue” driven by a Cancer Stem Cell population that is resistant to current therapeutic regimens. These Breast Cancer Stem Cells, if not eradicated, have the potential to regenerate metastatic tumor even after years of apparent remission.

In this project, the applicant will use *in vitro* and *in vivo* model systems to study the biology and genetics of Breast Cancer Stem Cells, the molecular basis underlying their genesis from normal epithelial Breast Stem Cells, and their susceptibility to either existing or newly developed therapeutic challenges.

Furthermore, genomic approaches will be used to identify molecular markers that specifically identify these cells.

Matteo Cesari (Assistant Prof., MD, PhD, 32 yo) of the Department of Gerontological, Geriatric and Psychiatric Sciences at the Catholic University of Sacred Heart in Roma, Italy receives CHF 200,000 for the project:

Onco-Geriatric approach for the management of oncological older patients.

Patients older than 65 years present an 11-fold increased risk of cancer incidence and 16-fold increase in cancer mortality compared to younger patients. The population at risk is growing rapidly. Despite this emerging need due to the demographic shift, oncologists still choose the best treatment intervention for older cancer patients adopting an approach designed for physically fit younger subjects. Elderly people with cancer are less likely to tolerate treatments optimized for younger patients.

This innovative and original project evaluates for the first time, if a comprehensive and coherent geriatric assessment will improve the treatment of elderly cancer patients (higher survival and less adverse events). Furthermore, there are numerous additional benefits of this study, such as the creation of a research database, translation of clinical hypotheses into research and research data into clinical practice as well as identification of biological and psychosocial markers for outcome prediction.

Please do not hesitate to request more information on the projects supported from info@swissbridge.ch.
