



Foundation for the NIH Awards 5th Annual Lurie Prize in Biomedical Sciences to Dr. David M. Sabatini

Prize bestowed for discovery of the mTOR pathway's impact on age-related diseases

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BETHESDA, MD, April 4, 2017 -- The Foundation for the National Institutes of Health (FNIH) has selected [David M. Sabatini, M.D., Ph.D.](#), to receive its fifth annual [Lurie Prize in Biomedical Sciences](#) for discovery of the mTOR (mechanistic target of rapamycin) cellular pathway as a key regulator of growth and metabolism in response to nutrients. Dr. Sabatini is a pioneer in the study of nutrient sensing and the impact of caloric restriction on health and lifespan. The Lurie Prize in Biomedical Sciences will be presented to Dr. Sabatini at the FNIH Award Ceremony hosted by CNN's Wolf Blitzer on May 17 in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Sabatini is a Member of the Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research, a Professor of Biology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and an Investigator of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. His research identified the specific protein components of the mTOR pathway, including mTOR and two large complexes that contain it called mTOR Complex 1 (mTORC1) and Complex 2 (mTORC2), and documented how mTOR regulation and dysregulation affects normal and diseased physiology. As caloric restriction is associated with the slowing of cellular aging, Dr. Sabatini's research suggests that one day, the mTOR pathway could be manipulated to trick the body into mimicking a fasting state even under nutrient replete conditions, and thereby protect against age-related diseases, such as cancer and diabetes.

"We are delighted to honor Dr. Sabatini with the 2017 Lurie Prize in Biomedical Sciences for discoveries related to the mTOR nutrient sensing pathway," said Maria C. Freire, Ph.D., President and Executive Director of the FNIH. "Dr. Sabatini's research is seminal, innovative and impactful – attributes that are the hallmark of all Lurie Prize awardees."

The Lurie Prize in Biomedical Sciences recognizes outstanding achievement by a promising scientist aged 52 or younger. Dr. Sabatini was selected by a jury of six distinguished biomedical researchers, chaired by Solomon H. Snyder, M.D., Distinguished Service Professor of Neuroscience, Pharmacology & Psychiatry, The Solomon H. Snyder Department of Neuroscience at Johns Hopkins University and Vice Chairman for Science of the FNIH.

The prize includes a \$100,000 honorarium, donated by philanthropist and FNIH Board Member Ann Lurie. Ms. Lurie is President of the Ann and Robert H. Lurie Foundation, which she founded with her late husband Robert, and the President of Lurie Holdings, Inc.

“We are proud to recognize Dr. Sabatini for his discovery of the mTOR pathway’s role in disease and aging,” said Ms. Lurie. “The Lurie Prize in Biomedical Sciences was designed to empower young biomedical researchers so they can make further advancements that lead to life changing discoveries. Dr. Sabatini’s work has the potential to do just that, by revolutionizing how we treat age-related diseases.”

Dr. Sabatini earned an M.D., Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and completed undergraduate work in Biological Sciences at Brown University. He is a Member of the National Academy of Sciences.

“I am truly honored to receive the 2017 Lurie Prize in Biomedical Sciences and to be recognized for our discovery of mTOR and its roles in growth control and nutrient sensing. Inhibitors of mTOR are already used in the clinic for various reasons, including to treat cancer and block organ rejection, and my hope is that our work will lead to new generations of drugs with wider impacts, such as in treating age-related diseases,” said Dr. Sabatini. “I am very grateful to all my lab members whose dedication, creativity and perseverance has led to our discoveries and this award is a recognition of our accomplishments.”

Previous recipients of the Lurie Prize in Biomedical Sciences are Jeannie T. Lee, M.D., Ph.D., from Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Medical School (2016), Karl Deisseroth, M.D., Ph.D., from Stanford University (2015), Jennifer Doudna, Ph.D., from the University of California, Berkeley (2014) and Ruslan M. Medzhitov, Ph.D., from Yale University School of Medicine (2013).

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