

PRESS RELEASE

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INNOVATION TO
IMPROVE THE
HUMAN CONDITION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Committee of prominent health researchers and Nobel laureates renames the Prix Galien Pro Bono Humanum Award to recognize the global health leadership of Dr. Roy Vagelos

ROY VAGELOS
PRO BONO HUMANUM
AWARD

FOR GLOBAL HEALTH EQUITY



The Prix Galien USA Committee announced today that the Prix Galien Pro Bono Humanum Award for individual service to improve the state of human health will be renamed in honor of Dr. P. Roy Vagelos, Retired Chairman and CEO, Merck & Co., Inc. Chairman of the Board, Regeneron Pharmaceuticals. The Roy Vagelos Pro Bono Humanum Award for Global Health Equity will be presented at the annual Prix Galien USA Awards ceremony recognizing outstanding achievement in innovative medicines discovery on Thursday, October 25, at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City.

Dr. Vagelos, who chaired the Prix Galien USA Awards Committee of senior medical researchers and four Nobel prize winners until December 2017,

was also the first recipient of the original Pro Bono Humanum Award, established in 2007 under the sponsorship of the late Foundation Honorary President and 1986 Nobel Peace Prize recipient, Pr. Elie Wiesel. That first award cited Dr. Vagelos for his unprecedented decision as CEO of a major global pharmaceutical company to donate the drug Mectizan to patients in 34 countries to treat and prevent river blindness (onchocerciasis), a parasitic disease that ranks as a leading cause of preventable blindness in developing countries, for “as much and as long as necessary.”

As result of this historic act of moral leadership, more than two billion treatments for 250 million people in affected areas of the globe have been donated by Merck & Co. over the past 30 years, resulting in the eradication of the parasite in numerous countries in Africa and Latin America.

“The Awards Committee’s decision to rename this award in honor of Roy Vagelos highlights how one man can apply the tools of innovation to improve the human condition, donating a life-saving medicine to the millions who needed it.

That decision helped transform the mission of today's multinational health care enterprise to include a commitment to opportunity and equity for all," said Prix Galien USA Awards Committee Chair and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation CEO, Dr. Sue Desmond-Hellmann.

"Through this award, the Prix Galien community worldwide will be able to recognize a still wider circle of contributors around our common goal of fostering progress in health. No one better embodies the spirit of this award -- improving humanity -- more than Dr. Vagelos." said Galien Foundation Chairman Bruno Cohen.

"I look forward to working with my eleven other distinguished members of the Committee to make this award a recurring feature of our work and to promote Dr. Vagelos' legacy -- that medicines innovation and health equity are both essential to raise the quality of care and improve patient health." added Dr. Sue Desmond-Hellmann.

Other recipients of the Pro Bono Humanum Award since 2007 include two US Presidents -- Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton -- for their work in increasing access to medicines and other life-saving health interventions for the world's poorest citizens. Leaders of humanitarian NGOs like Dr. Bernard Kouchner, co-founder of Doctors Without Borders, and Dr. Paul Farmer, co-founder of Partners in Health, have been recognized, along with distinguished scientists with experience in government, including Dr. Francis Collins and Dr. Anthony Fauci from the National Institutes of Health. In 2015, the Galien Foundation honored its first female Pro Bono Humanum recipient, Dr. Mary-Claire King, Professor of Genetics at the University of Washington, for her discovery of the gene responsible for inherited susceptibility to breast cancer, resulting in improved treatments for this major contributor to cancer mortality among women.

**MEMBERS OF THE 2018
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Chief Executive Officer, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Seattle, WA

Pr Richard AXEL, M.D.

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Co-director, the Kavli Institute for Brain Science
Columbia University Medical Center, New York*

Pr Michael S. BROWN, M.D.

*Nobel Laureate
Professor of Molecular Genetics and Internal Medicine
UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas*

Pr Laurie GLIMCHER, M.D.

*CEO and President, Dana Farber Cancer Institute
Professor of Medicine
Harvard Medical School*

Pr Joseph GOLDSTEIN, M.D.

*Nobel Laureate
Professor of Molecular Genetics and Internal Medicine
UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas*

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Professor, University of Connecticut

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*Laboratory Head of Cell Biology
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, New-York
President, Emeritus, MSKCC*

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Chief Medical Officer of Flagship Pioneering, Cambridge, MA

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Pr Roy VAGELOS, M.D.

*Retired Chairman and CEO, Merck & Co., Inc.
Chairman of the Board, Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Inc.*

To learn more about the Prix Galien Awards and the Galien USA Foundation and its work, visit www.galienfoundation.org

For media inquiries on the Prix Galien 2018 USA and International Awards program, please contact:

Giana Gregga at Finn Partners
giana.gregga@finnpartners.com