

American Cancer Society Awards Medal of Honor For Extraordinary Contributions to Saving More Lives from Cancer

Three volunteer leaders earn the Society's highest honor

Atlanta, GA – January 13, 2017 – Three outstanding individuals have been honored with the American Cancer Society Medal of Honor Award. The Medal of Honor is awarded to those who have made the most valuable contributions and impact in saving more lives from cancer through basic research, clinical research, and cancer control.

The 2016 recipients are **Joan S. Brugge, Ph.D.**, for Basic Research; **Charles L. Sawyers, M.D.**, for Clinical Research; and **Leslie L. Robison, Ph.D.**, for Cancer Control.

“Our Medal of Honor recipients truly embody what the American Cancer Society is all about,” said Gary M. Reedy, chief executive officer of the American Cancer Society. “Each of these individuals have significantly contributed to the advancement and impact of our collective efforts to save more lives from cancer.”

Dr. Joan S. Brugge was awarded the American Cancer Society Medal of Honor for Basic Research for her influential contributions to the identification of the protein encoded by the Src oncogene and to the fundamental understanding of events involved in the initiation and progression of cancer. As a trained virologist and cell biologist, Dr. Brugge continues to have major impact on cancer research, most significantly through the use of 3-D culture systems that enable her group to better model events that control cell growth, cell division, migration and cell survival. She is an American Cancer Society research professor, and was the chair of the Cell Biology Department for ten years before becoming the Director of the Ludwig Center at Harvard Medical School in Boston.

Dr. Charles L. Sawyers was presented with the Medal of Honor for Clinical Research for his contributions to new treatment options for patients with chronic myeloid leukemia and prostate cancer. He has also explored the molecular basis of prostate cancer and mechanisms of resistance to hormone therapy. Throughout his contributions, Dr. Sawyers continues to study first-generation targeted therapies followed by studies of clinical resistance in patients to guide development of second-generation cancer drugs to treat tumors. He has published nearly 200 peer-reviewed publications, and received numerous national awards. Dr. Sawyers is chair and director of the Human Oncology and Pathogenesis Program at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, a Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator, Marie-Josée and Henry R. Kravis chair, and a professor of Cell and Developmental Biology in the Department of Medicine at the Joan & Sanford Weill Graduate School of Medical Sciences at Cornell University in New York.

Dr. Leslie L. Robison received the Medal of Honor for Cancer Control in recognition of his lifetime contributions and dedication to pediatric oncology research. His distinguished career has been dedicated to research on the epidemiology and long-term outcomes of pediatric cancer survivors. He is a world-renowned leader in survivorship research and played key leadership roles in establishing the Childhood Cancer Survivor Study and St. Jude Lifetime Study, two cohorts that follow the health outcomes of more than 40,000 childhood cancer survivors, and influenced clinical consensus guidelines for the treatment and follow up of pediatric cancer survivors. He is an author on over 600 peer-reviewed publications, serves on numerous editorial boards and has received many national awards. Dr. Robison is chair of the Department of Epidemiology and Cancer Control, associate director for Cancer Prevention and Control, co-leader of the Cancer Prevention and Control Program, and is the recipient of the ALSAC Endowed Chair in Epidemiology and Cancer Control at St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital in Memphis.

Past recipients of the Society’s Medal of Honor include former U.S. President and First Lady George H.W. Bush and Barbara Bush; Edward M. Kennedy, senator from Massachusetts; George N. Papanicolaou, M.D., inventor of the Pap test; Robert C. Gallo, M.D., recognized for his achievements in pioneering the field of human retrovirology; Judah Folkman, M.D., a leading researcher in the field of antiangiogenesis; Former U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop, M.D.; and advice columnists Ann Landers and Abigail Van Buren.

