

Lubert Stryer to give the 6th annual William D. McElroy Distinguished Lectureship in Biology

April 4, 1986

NOTED STANFORD BIOLOGIST TO SPEAK AT UCSD

A Stanford University cell biologist who is internationally recognized for his work on the molecular basis of biological functions and biochemical mechanisms of vision will deliver the sixth annual William D. McElroy Distinguished Lectureship in Biology on April 9 at the University of California, San Diego.

Dr. Lubert Stryer, the Winzor Professor of cell biology at Stanford, is the author of "Biochemistry," a widely used university textbook. His lecture, entitled the "Molecular Basis of Visual Excitation," will begin at 4 p.m. in Garren Auditorium in the Basic Science Building at the School of Medicine.

Stryer will discuss a major area of his research, visual excitation. He is investigating the biochemical process by which receptor cells in the retina of the eye absorb and convert light into the electrical impulses that convey information to the brain centers where visual patterns are discerned.

He contributed to the understanding of how single photons of light absorbed by receptor cells are chemically amplified over 100,000fold in order to electrically stimulate a nerve and provide extreme sensitivity to light. His work, as well as that of others, has revealed striking biochemical similarities between the way visual receptors amplify light responses and cells respond to hormones.

In his early endeavors, Stryer introduced the use of fluorescent probes in biological research to measure structural properties of macromolecules such as protein and DNA. Among these properties are a molecule's flexibility and shape, which are two important factors in determining the molecule's function and response to environmental stimuli. His work helped identify the role of molecules in the initial stages of biological processes.

Stryer received his medical degree from Harvard University in 1961. An associate professor of biochemistry at the Stanford School of Medicine for six years, he was a professor of molecular biophysics and biochemistry at Yale University from 1969 to 1976 before returning to Stanford's medical school to become chairman of the Department of Structural Biology.

He was elected a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and a member of the National Academy of Science. He is presently on the scientific advisory boards of the Jane Coffin Childs Memorial Fund and Research to Prevent Blindness and on the editorial boards of two professional journals.

The McElroy lectures are supported by contributions to the UCSD Foundation in the name of professor of biology and former UCSD Chancellor William D. McElroy. McElroy resigned his post as chancellor in 1980 to return to research and teaching.

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