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Kyoto Prize Laureate and Cell Biologist Yoshinori Ohsumi to Speak at UC San Diego March 13

Talk is free and open to the public; students from underrepresented high schools to attend and meet the leading scientist

World-renowned molecular cell biologist and 2012 Kyoto Prize laureate Yoshinori Ohsumi, Ph.D., will speak at the University of California, San Diego, March 13 at 3:30 p.m., as part of the annual Kyoto Prize Symposium. To register for the free talk, which is open to the public, please visit: kyotoprizeusa.com.

Ohsumi is the latest recipient of the esteemed Kyoto Prize—Japan’s highest private award for global achievement—in “Basic Sciences.” He received the award in recognition of his contributions to the understanding of autophagy, a vital cell-recycling system. As part of the Kyoto Prize Symposium, which is underwritten by the Inamori Foundation of Japan, Ohsumi will visit UC San Diego to share his work with the campus and San Diego community members, as well as high school students from underserved areas in the region.

“UC San Diego is once again honored to participate in the Kyoto Prize Symposium, which forges global ties with the San Diego community,” said Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla. “As we work to teach and encourage our future leaders and innovators, we draw inspiration from the Inamori Foundation, which promotes international understanding and recognizes scientific progress, cultural advancement and human betterment with the Kyoto Prize.”



Kyoto Prize laureate Yoshinori Ohsumi, Ph.D.

One of the mysteries of life science is the way a living organism grows, heals and responds to a changing environment. Ohsumi has spent decades studying how cells degrade their own proteins in adapting to nutritional deficiency or environmental influence. The subject of his research, known as

autophagy, was virtually unknown before the 1960s, but is now recognized as a cell-recycling system with potential to aid future treatments for conditions such as Alzheimer’s disease, cancer and age-related ailments of the heart and liver. Ohsumi currently serves as professor at the Tokyo Institute of Technology.

The presentation is one in the three-part Kyoto Prize Symposium hosted jointly by UC San Diego, the University of San Diego, San Diego State University and Point Loma Nazarene University. Suresh Subramani, executive vice chancellor of Academic Affairs and a distinguished professor of molecular biology at UC San Diego, will welcome Ohsumi and an audience including faculty, staff and community members, as well as an estimated 250 students from local high schools.



Thanks to the generosity of the [Inamori Foundation](#) and the Kyoto Symposium Organization, UC San Diego is able to facilitate bringing the high school students—many from underserved areas—to campus, helping introduce a diverse student body to the university and the possibility of a career in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) fields.

“The annual Kyoto Prize Symposium provides a tremendous opportunity for UC San Diego to host top scientists from around the world,” said Subramani. “In addition, these visionary scholars engage with promising high school students from diverse backgrounds to share their experiences, inspiring students to consider careers in science.”

The presentation, in English, will be followed by a question and answer session. Students will also have an opportunity to meet Ohsumi immediately following the presentation.

In addition to Ohsumi, this year’s Kyoto Prize laureates include:

- In “Advanced Technology,” **Ivan Edward Sutherland**, Ph.D., a computer scientist dubbed the “Father of Computer Graphics” who redefined how humans could interact with computers. He will speak at San Diego State University on March 13 at 10 a.m.
- In “Arts and Philosophy,” Professor **Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak**, Ph.D., an educator and champion of those around the world—especially women, minorities, the working class and new immigrants—who have been deprived of their voice and their history through unseen structures of oppression. She will speak at the University of San Diego on March 14 at 10:30 a.m.

The Kyoto Prize was established by the Inamori Foundation in 1985 with the goal of honoring significant contributions to the scientific, cultural and spiritual betterment of humankind. The president of the nonprofit organization is Kazuo Inamori, founder and chairman emeritus (retired) of

Kyocera and KDDI Corporation.

The March 13 talk with Ohsumi will take place in UC San Diego's Price Center East Ballroom at 3:30-5 p.m. Light refreshments will follow the talk. For information and to register for the free symposium, please visit kyotoprizeusa.com.

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