

Harvard Biologist Named Recipient of 2007 UCSD/Merck Life Sciences Achievement Award

March 27, 2007

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Credit: Harvard U.

A Harvard biologist who is one of the world's experts on proteins will receive the 2007 UCSD/Merck Life Sciences Achievement Award from the University of California, San Diego's Division of Biological Sciences in recognition of his discoveries and groundbreaking work in protein research.

Stephen C. Harrison, a professor of biological chemistry and molecular pharmacology and of pediatrics at the Harvard Medical School and an Investigator in the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, will receive the prestigious \$25,000 award on April 6 at a dinner on the UCSD campus honoring his lifetime achievements as a scientist.

He will also be the keynote speaker at a symposium at UCSD on the same day that will bring together the world's experts to discuss the future directions of protein research. This third biennial Dean's Symposium, "Proteins: 2007," will be held from 8 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. at UCSD's Mandell Weiss Theatre.

"Dr. Harrison has been a pioneer in using structural insights regarding proteins and protein assemblies to unravel how they function," said Suresh Subramani, Interim Dean of the Division of Biological Sciences at UCSD, who will present the award. "His work has impacted our knowledge of how viruses enter cells, how transcriptional activators work and how vesicular coats assemble and function during intracellular protein trafficking."

"We are honored to acknowledge Dr Harrison's extraordinary accomplishments and contributions to science with the UCSD/Merck Life Sciences Achievement Award," said James Schaeffer, Ph.D, Executive Director of Licensing and External Research at Merck Research Laboratories in San Diego, which provided \$50,000 for the award and for the Proteins: 2007 symposium.

Harrison is the third person to have his life's work recognized with a UCSD/Merck Life Sciences Achievement Award. Originated in 2003 with the inaugural Dean's Symposium, the award recognizes a scientist for exceptional accomplishment and renown across the span of his or her career. The first recipient of the UCSD/Merck award, in 2003, was the late Sir Francis Crick of the Salk Institute in 2003, who received the award at a UCSD symposium that brought together the world's experts on DNA. In 2005, the second recipient recognized with this honor was Sydney Brenner, also of the Salk Institute, who received the award at a UCSD symposium that gathered the world's experts on RNA biology. Harrison, who will be honored in the presence of the world's foremost experts in protein research, has made important contributions to structural biology, most notably by determining and analyzing the structures of viruses and viral proteins, by crystallographic analysis of protein/DNA complexes, and by structural studies of protein-kinase switching mechanisms.

He obtained both his B.A. in 1963 and his Ph.D., in biophysics, in 1968 from Harvard and has served on the Harvard faculty since 1971. He is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a member of the American Philosophical Society and a foreign member of EMBO. The numerous scientific awards he has received include the Louisa Gross Horwitz Prize (with Don Wiley and

Michael Rossmann) in 1990, the ICN International Prize in Virology in 1998 and the Paul Ehrlich and Ludwig Darmstaedter Prize (with Michael Rossmann) in 2001.

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