



European Federation for Medicinal Chemistry

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Nauta Award for Pharmacochemistry

The "Nauta Award for Pharmacochemistry" was established to honour the memory of Prof. Dr. W. Th. Nauta, whose activities have been very important for the advancement of Medicinal Chemistry in general, and for the development of international organisational structures for this discipline. The recipient is Professor Philip Portoghese from the Department of Medicinal Chemistry, University of Minnesota, USA

Professor Portoghese receives this award for his many contributions to the field of GPCR science. His research caused a paradigm shift in the GPCR arena by combining the apparently unrelated concepts of multivalency and membrane receptors. His impressive work, starting with homobivalent ligands for opioid receptors, has opened the way to a genuine understanding of hetero- and homobivalency as a physiologically relevant concept, observed from both the ligand and the receptor perspective. His scientific efforts on GPCR function led to the concept that these receptors were not being regulated only by ligand and G-protein binding events, but involved a delicate interplay of similar or distinct GPCRs, ligands and G-proteins, thus inducing a particular cellular signalling pathway and concomitant physiological events. Professor Portoghese also made a huge contribution to the scientific community as editor-in-chief of one of the top-ranked journals, The Journal of Medicinal Chemistry, have greatly influenced the current medicinal chemistry landscape. His knowledge and experience have, beyond any doubt, shaped the journal into what it is today. He is therefore a worthy recipient of the 2006 Nauta Award.

The prize which consists of a diploma and a cheque for 7500 Euros will be presented on 29th August 2006 at the XIXth International Symposium of Medicinal Chemistry in Istanbul, Turkey.

Professor Portoghese received a BS degree in pharmacy from Columbia University and, following army service in the Korean War, returned to Columbia to get a MS degree in pharmaceutical chemistry. Following a PhD at the University of Wisconsin in medicinal chemistry, which he was awarded in 1961, he joined the faculty of the college of pharmacy at the University of Minnesota where he is currently Distinguished Professor in the Department of Medicinal Chemistry.

During a 45 year research career, Professor Portoghese has trained around 100 graduate students and postdoctoral researchers and has published over 340 scientific papers. His previous awards include the ACS Medicinal Chemistry Award and Smissman Bristol-Myers Squibb Award for Medicinal Chemistry, the Ernest H Volwiler Prize and, most recently, the Alfred Burger Award in Medicinal Chemistry. He has also been recognized by several awards from the University of Minnesota, and NIH and Research Achievement Awards from the American Pharmaceutical Association, as well as an NIH Merit Award. He also holds honorary degrees from the University of Catania and the Royal Danish School of Pharmacy.

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