



Congratulations / Félicitations

***Dr. Christopher J. Paige, University of Toronto
The 2010 CSI – Hardy Cinader Award Recipient
Presentation: “Dancing With The Bees”***

*Ronald Buick Chair in Cancer Research, Professor,
Departments of Immunology and Medical Biophysics,
University of Toronto, Vice-President, Research, University
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Christopher Paige earned a Ph.D. in Immunology at the Sloan-Kettering Division of Cornell University in 1979. He was a Member of the Basel Institute for Immunology in Switzerland from 1980 to 1987 after which he joined the Ontario Cancer Institute. In 1990, Chris became the Director of the Arthritis and Autoimmunity Research Centre and the Director of Research at The Wellesley Hospital. Chris returned to the Ontario Cancer Institute in 1998 as Vice-President, Research and, subsequently, became the first Vice-President, Research of the University Health Network. Chris is a Professor in the Departments of Medical Biophysics and Immunology at the University of Toronto.

Chris' research is focused on the development of the immune system, particularly on B lineage cells. In his thesis work he provided definitive evidence that functional pre B cells existed as distinct cells from stem cells, and that they had extensive repopulating abilities. He also provided evidence that Ig heavy and light chains were independently regulated and that heavy chain could appear on the surface prior to the selection of definitive light chains. Over the next two decades, he and his collaborators defined new B cell progenitor stages based on novel single cell assays that allowed primitive progenitors to mature to the Ig secreting stage in vitro. His group has made important contributions to our understanding of the interplay of IL-7R, pre BcR, and other factors in positive and negative selection of B cell progenitors. His lab also cloned a novel hemokinin gene, the first member of the tachykinin family that is not predominantly expressed in the CNS and which plays a role at several points in lymphopoiesis. Currently, Chris' lab is moving into immunotherapy by developing mechanisms to eliminate lymphoid and myeloid leukemias based on autologous cell vaccination with leukemia cells engineered to produce IL-12 and other factors. His work, which has been supported by the CIHR, NCIC, and the Terry Fox Foundation for the last 20 yrs, has resulted in more than 115 original publications. Chris is also proud that his lab has been a training ground for more than 50 students and postdoctoral fellows, including 17 students who were (or soon will be!) awarded PhD degrees from the University of Toronto.

In addition to his own laboratory research, which he points out was undertaken with an extensive list of excellent collaborators, Chris has pursued a parallel career in research administration within research hospitals. The development of the Arthritis and Autoimmunity Research Centre at Wellesley allowed him to recruit a dream team of basic immunologists including Wu, Julius, Poussier, Rottapel and Berger to join the existing clinical researchers at Wellesley. While the growth of the research program was phenomenal, it suffered a set back when the Ontario Government decided to close the hospital! Fortunately, through some complicated negotiations, the entire group moved into the Princess Margaret Hospital, one of the three hospitals of the University Health Network, as it is now named. During his years at UHN, the research programs have thrived with research space expanding by more than 400,000 sq ft, funding exceeding \$270,000,000 per year; and research staff (including > 800 trainees) numbering over 2700 – approximately 20% of the UHN work force. Chris attributes UHN's research success to the excellence of the researchers; the strong support of the hospital leadership who understand what it means to be a Research Hospital; and the financial prowess of its Foundations which have made research funding one of their top priorities.

Chris has also served on the Research Advisory Boards of both the National Cancer Institute and the Arthritis Society of Canada. He is Chairman of BioDiscovery Toronto, a consortium of 12 Toronto based hospitals and universities engaged in the commercialization of research discoveries. He serves on the Boards of the Terry Fox Research Institute, Ontario Institute for Cancer Research, and the Council of Ontario Research Directors. He is the co-Director of the Shanghai-Toronto Institute for Health Science (STI), a partnership between the Shanghai Institute of Health Sciences, Shanghai Institute of Organic Chemistry, and the University Health Network.