



a place of mind



NEWS RELEASE

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Dr. Michael Hayden appointed to Order of Canada

Researcher awarded for contributions to Huntington's disease and other genetic disorders

(Vancouver – January 7, 2011) – Dr. Michael Hayden, Director and Senior Scientist at the Centre for Molecular Medicine and Therapeutics (CMMT) at the Child & Family Research Institute (CFRI) and Professor in the Departments of Medicine and Medical Genetics at UBC the University of British Columbia (UBC), has been named to the Order of Canada for his outstanding contributions as a physician-scientist to the understanding of Huntington disease and other genetic disorders.

Established in 1967, the Order of Canada is granted to Canadians who have made a significant difference to their country in the realm of science, the arts, business or other fields. Recipients are appointed by the Governor General of Canada. It is the highest honour that Canada can give its citizens for exceptional achievement, merit or service.

"I am honoured by this recognition and being acknowledged among this group of outstanding individuals," said Dr. Hayden. "In many ways, I am receiving this honour because of the supportive environment, and the trainees and technicians who have been essential in making it possible to make a connection between my dreams of what could be and what has been achieved."

Among Dr. Hayden's landmark contributions to the understanding of Huntington disease (HD) is the development of a predictive test for HD, which is being used world wide. He has developed insights into the causes of this disease, leading to novel approaches to treatment.

Dr. Hayden and his research group are also recognized worldwide for having identified numerous causal genes for disabling and devastating diseases, including the identification of the major gene underlying high-density lipoprotein (HDL) in humans. This gene, known as ABCA1, has major implications for atherosclerosis and coronary artery disease. Dr. Hayden is also responsible for identifying the first mutations underlying Lipoprotein Lipase (LPL) Deficiency and has developed gene therapy approaches to treat this condition. Dr. Hayden is the most cited author in the world for ABCA1 and Huntington Disease.

"Every day I am driven in my work by my deep desire to alleviate suffering and I believe the pursuit of science is an essential step in that direction," said Dr. Hayden. "This year as we celebrate the 15th anniversary of CMMT, I feel proud of all that we have accomplished and believe that the discoveries that we make here in Vancouver help not only our Canadian families but are felt worldwide."

To date, Dr. Hayden has received many prestigious awards. In 2009, he was the recipient of an Order of British Columbia. In 2008, he was awarded Canada's Health Researcher of the Year from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. Dr. Hayden was awarded the Prix Galien (Canada) in 2007 and holds the Canada Research Chair in Human Genetics and Molecular Medicine. In 2003, Dr. Hayden was appointed University Killam Professor in the Department of Medical Genetics at the University of British Columbia.

Dr. Hayden has initiated and leads an international effort to bring benefit to a community living with HIV/AIDS in South Africa. In collaboration with colleagues around the world, he spearheaded the development of a youth-friendly recreation, counseling, and learning centre in Masiphumelele, a township outside of Cape Town.

On December 30, 2010, His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada, announced 52 new appointments to the Order of Canada, including Dr. Michael Hayden. For details, visit: <http://www.gg.ca/document.aspx?id=13995&lan=eng>

CMMT is a synergistic group of scientists and researchers who share a strong sense of commitment to solve the many genetic questions surrounding human illness and well being. Affiliated with the University of British Columbia and the Child & Family Research Institute, CMMT conducts discovery research and translates that research into effective clinical and therapeutic strategies to promote health. For more information, visit www.cmmt.ubc.ca.

CFRI conducts discovery, clinical and applied research to benefit the health of children and families. It is the largest institute of its kind in Western Canada. CFRI works in close partnership with UBC; BC Children's Hospital and Sunny Hill Health Centre for Children, BC Women's Hospital & Health Centre, agencies of PHSA; and BC Children's Hospital Foundation. CFRI has additional important relationships with British Columbia's (B.C.'s) five regional health authorities and with B.C. academic institutions Simon Fraser University, the University of Victoria, the University of Northern British Columbia, and the British Columbia Institute of Technology. For more information, visit www.cfri.ca.

UBC is one of Canada's largest and most prestigious public research and teaching institutions, and one of only two Canadian institutions to be consistently ranked among the world's 40 best universities. Surrounded by the beauty of the Canadian West, it is a place that inspires bold, new ways of thinking that have helped make it a national leader in areas as diverse as community service learning, sustainability and research commercialization. UBC attracts \$550 million per year in research funding from government, non-profit organizations and industry through 7,000 grants. For more information, visit www.ubc.ca.

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