

The President's Lecture

In October 2004, the International Council created a new distinguished lecture, named The President's Lecture, which will be a highlight of ISHR World Congresses and Section meetings.

The President's Lecture will be held at each World Congress of the ISHR and, in non-Congress years, at the meeting of the Section to which the selected speaker belongs. This lecture is intended to be a high profile event and will be scheduled as a keynote plenary lecture. The International Council will select the speaker. **The topic of the lecture will be in the field of molecular biology, genetics, genomics or proteomics, but the content should be chosen to be of broad interest to the cardiovascular community.** The speaker will be reimbursed for travel expenses, and will receive a plaque and a \$1,000 honorarium. A photograph and biosketch of the speaker will be published in *JMCC*, and in *Heart News and Views*, and will be posted in the ISHR website.

The President's Lecture will enhance the content of the ISHR scientific meetings by providing a high-quality presentation in a topical area that is not covered by other distinguished lecture awards, and reflects the continuing growth of the ISHR as a professional Society.

This award is funded by a generous donation from **Roberto Bolli, MD**, Winner of the ISHR 2004 Research Achievement Award, who declined to collect the monetary prize associated with the Award and requested that it be used for this purpose.



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The President's Lecture 2006



Honored Speaker

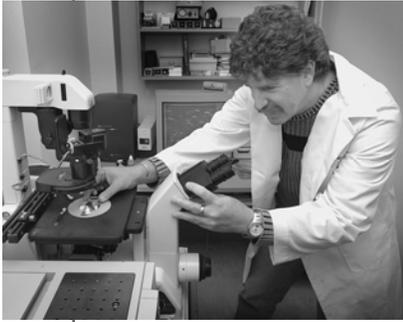
Mark Sussman, Ph.D.

**"Akt/PKB and me:
our nuclear relationship"**

Mark Sussman, Ph.D.

2006 Honored Speaker

Toronto, Canada



Dr. Mark Sussman is a tenured Professor of Biology at San Diego State University and key investiga-

tor at the San Diego State University Heart Research Institute. Upon completing his doctoral thesis at the University of Southern California where he studied viral immunology in 1989, Dr. Sussman entered myocardial research through postdoctoral studies in cytoskeletal biology characterizing the role of the actin filament capping protein tropomodulin in heart under the mentorship of Dr. Larry Kedes. In 1995, Dr. Sussman accepted a position as Assistant Professor in the Division of Molecular and Cardiovascular Biology at Children's Hospital Medical Center in Cincinnati, Ohio. Building upon his postdoctoral work, Dr. Sussman created the first mouse model of dilated cardiomyopathy, which exhibited myofibril organizational defects resulting from cardiac-specific transgenic overexpression of tropomodulin. Over his ensuing eight year tenure at Children's Hospital, his lab completed more than a dozen pub-

lished studies examining the multiple facets of the pathogenesis of dilation in the tropomodulin mouse model including calcium handling abnormalities, cytoskeletal defects, and altered signal transduction. Additional studies on myocardial signal transduction involving the small GTPase *rac1* produced another murine model of cardiomyopathy and prompted Dr. Sussman to examine molecular interventional strategies to inhibit the progression of dilation and heart failure. Intrigued by prevailing paradoxical observations in published literature linking the cardioprotective kinase Akt/PKB to heart failure in transgenic mouse models, Dr. Sussman found nuclear accumulation of Akt/PKB in response to anti-apoptotic stimuli. These seminal observations led to Dr. Sussman's pioneering studies relating Akt/PKB and gender as he demonstrated myocardial differences between the sexes in Akt/PKB nuclear accumulation that stem from estrogenic stimuli. This finding was the genesis of his pivotal contribution to survival signaling networks in heart: targeting of Akt/PKB to the cardiomyocyte nucleus affords cardioprotection without deleterious hypertrophic consequences. Fusing his ongoing studies of cardioprotection together with his background in cytoskeletal biology, Dr. Sussman expanded his studies of nuclear Akt/PKB biology to include novel associations with LIM domain proteins that shuttle through the nucleus. His current Akt/PKB-related research involves the surprising effects of nuclear Akt/PKB signaling for cardiomyocytes including anti-hypertrophic signaling, induced downstream mediators of cell survival including Pim-1 kinase, and the potentiation of survival and regenerative capacity for cardiac stem cells.

Dr. Sussman's research has been supported by grant awards from the National Institutes of Health and the American Heart Association since establishing his independent laboratory in 1995. He was recognized as an Established Investigator of the National American Heart Association in 2000. Currently, Dr. Sussman serves on multiple leadership and review committees for the American Heart Association at both affiliate and national organization levels. He has authored over 65 peer-review articles and is a popular speaker at national and international venues with over 85 invited presentations in the last 15 years. Dr. Sussman also serves as a reviewer for the National Institutes of Health as well as a member of editorial boards for several journals including *Circulation Research*, the *Journal of Biological Chemistry*, the *American Journal of Physiology (Heart and Circulatory Physiology)*, and the *Journal of Molecular and Cellular Cardiology*. His laboratory at San Diego State University serves as a training ground for undergraduate, masters and doctoral students, and postdoctoral trainees who are now mentored under Dr. Sussman's guidance. Recently, he has championed efforts to bring together cardiovascular researchers in the San Diego academic community with a collaborative research program project that will pool knowledge and resources to further studies on the molecular and cellular basis of heart failure.