Avrum I. Gotlieb, MD CM FRCPC Receives the 2011 ASIP Robbins Distinguished Educator Award

The Robbins Distinguished Educator Award is named in honor of Dr. Stanley Robbins (1915-2003), formerly of Boston University and Brigham and Women's Hospital. Dr. Robbins was a pioneer of pathology education and a member of ASIP for over 50 years. This award, partially supported by an unrestricted educational grant from Elsevier, an ASIP Corporate Partner, recognizes individuals whose contributions to education in pathology have had a manifest impact at a regional, national, or international level. Dr. Avrum Gotlieb, former Chair of the Department of Laboratory Medicine and Pathobiology at University of Toronto (1997-2008), is the 2011 recipient of this award.

Dr. Gotlieb's research focuses on in vitro studies on endothelial injury and repair directed at understanding how the cell cytoskeleton regulates cell migration, and how various growth factors and cytokines modulate both migration and proliferation related to repair. Studies include the pathogenesis of intimal hyperplasia, a lesion that predisposes to fibrofatty plaque formation; and the role of growth factors, cytokines, and proteinases on intimal hyperplasia. Separate studies on the cell biology of cardiac valve focused on the role of interstitial valvular cells in maintaining the structure and function of heart valves, and interstitial cell function related to repair and cell heterogeneity.

As stated by Dr. D.S.R. Sarma of University of Toronto, Dr. Gotlieb has served the Department of Laboratory Medicine and Pathobiology with an intense passion for education, and has nurtured and developed one of the strongest graduate programs in North America, designed innovative educational platforms for undergraduates, and has dedicated himself to excellence in teaching and administrative leadership.

According to Dr. Harry Elsholtz of University of Toronto, “Given the size and complexity of education programs in LMP (Laboratory Medicine and Pathobiology), their success depends on a Chair who fully understands and appreciates education at multiple levels, whether basic, clinical, undergraduate or post-doctoral.” Also important is a Chair who implements recruitment of top students, appoints outstanding faculty, and ensures “that the quality of education at each level is second to none.” Dr. Elsholtz states that Dr. Gotlieb “has exceeded expectations in each of these requirements” by “demonstrating leadership and vision.”

Dr. Myron Cybulsky of University of Toronto applauds Dr. Gotlieb for being “dedicated to excellence in teaching in the field of pathobiology and laboratory medicine. His initiatives in education at the undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate levels have and will continue to have a significant positive impact in this field.”

Dr. Gotlieb received his MDCM (MD equivalent) from McGill University in 1971. He completed his postgraduate medical and research training at Royal Victoria Hospital-Montreal, McGill University, and University of California-San Diego. He became a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada in 1975 and a Diplomate of the American Board of
Pathology in 1976. Dr. Gotlieb became Assistant Professor at University of Toronto in 1978, and then rose through the ranks to become Chair of the Department of Laboratory Medicine and Pathobiology from 1997-2008.

Dr. Gotlieb has received several Teaching Awards, including the J.B. Walter Award (1991 and 2004), the W.T. Aikins Award (1992 and 2004), the Excellence in Teaching Award (1994) during his tenure at the University of Toronto/Toronto Hospital. He authored the widely-disseminated informative career guide booklet, “The Road to Becoming a Biomedical Physician Scientist in Pathology and Laboratory Medicine,” sponsored by the American Society of Investigative Pathology and the Department of Laboratory Medicine & Pathobiology, University of Toronto, and in 2009 co-authored (with Dr. Tara Sander) a second career guide booklet for ASIP, “Journey to Success: Career Pathways for Biomedical Scientists in Pathology and Laboratory Medicine.”

Among his many accomplishments, Dr. Gotlieb was President of the American Society of Investigative Pathology (2001-2002) and President of the Society for Cardiovascular Pathology (1997-1999) and was the Vice President for Science Policy of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) from 2008-2009. He was elected as a Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences in 2006. He has been the Co-Editor-in-Chief of The American Journal of Cardiovascular Pathology since 2002 and has served as Associate Editor of The American Journal of Pathology. Dr. Gotlieb also edited the comprehensive textbook, "Cardiovascular Pathology."

Dr. Gotlieb received the Robbins Distinguished Educator Award at the ASIP Annual Meeting in Washington, DC on Monday, April 11, 2011 during the ASIP Awards Presentation and Membership Business Meeting.