

# William Dameshek Prize Awarded to William P. Vainchenker, MD, PhD

This year's William Dameshek Prize, one of the American Society of Hematology's highest honors, will be awarded to William P. Vainchenker, MD, PhD, in recognition of his research into the genetic basis for myeloproliferative diseases, and his highly accomplished career.

Named after the late Dr. William Dameshek, a renowned hematologist, past president of ASH, and first editor of *Blood*, the prize is awarded to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to hematology during the preceding years. Dr. Vainchenker's work particularly stood out for its impact on the study of normal and neoplastic hematopoiesis.

Dr. Vainchenker was among the first investigators to grow megakaryocyte colonies *in vitro*. He participated in the characterization of the *c-Mpl* proto-oncogene, contributed to the understanding of the These and other contributions to the field have earned Dr. Vainchenker the admiration and respect of his peers and colleagues. In addition to the Dameshek Prize, Dr. Vainchenker has been honored with awards from la Ligue Nationale Contre le Cancer, the city of Paris, the European Hematology Association, and several other organizations in his native France.

A graduate of the University of Paris, Dr. Vainchenker has conducted his research under the auspices of INSERM, the French National Institute for Health and Medical Research, since 1978. He currently holds the title of Directeur de Recherche Exceptionnel at INSERM, where he has worked diligently to maintain the organization's "commitment to study all diseases, whether common or rare, through research in the fields of biology, medicine, and public health." His lab, at l'Institut Gustave-Roussy in Villejuif, France, focuses on hematopoiesis and normal and leukemic stem cells, and his work has been published and cited frequently in *Blood* and other respected journals.

In a 2005 paper, "Hope and limits in cell therapies," he and coauthor Dr. Bennaceur-Griscelli wrote, "Characterization of human adult pluripotent stem cells and the generation of human ES cells capable to differentiate towards several tissues have led to new hopes but the road to their use in therapies may be long," a statement that holds true for most scientific research. However, thanks to the efforts of hematologists like Dr. Vainchenker, the road seems less insurmountable, and hopes more tangible.

The William Dameshek Prize will be presented to Dr. William Vainchenker during the Presidential Symposium today at 9:30 a.m.