

Press Release

SOURCE: Mesothelioma Applied Research Foundation

Mesothelioma Research Team Recognized With Prestigious AACR Award – Huge Boost for Rare, Overlooked Cancer

April, 15, 2008 - The Mesothelioma Applied Research Foundation (Meso Foundation) congratulates lead researcher, Dr. Michael Carbone, upon his receipt this Sunday of the prestigious Landon Foundation-AACR INNOVATOR Award for International Collaboration in Cancer Research.

Dr. Michael Carbone and his team of international collaborators discovered that a mesothelioma (meso) epidemic in three Turkish villages is caused by a genetic predisposition to mineral fiber carcinogenesis and an environmental factor – exposure to erionite, an asbestos-like mineral fiber – within those villages.

As described by Dr. Carbone in receiving the award, his team's discovery is having immediate life-saving benefits in the villages. The work also holds promise for all current and future meso patients. Elucidating the genetic underpinnings of the disease will help lead to better screening and early detection methods, and to development of targeted therapies to reverse the genetic damage and so treat the disease.

Among Dr. Carbone's team members are Dr. Harvey Pass and Dr. Joseph Testa, Ph.D. Dr. Pass is pursuing the study of proteins (proteomics) and gene expression profiles in mesothelioma to develop new early detection strategies. Dr. Testa is a cancer geneticist, whose research focuses on understanding the biological and molecular implications of chromosome abnormalities in human malignant mesothelioma. Doctor Pass is the original Chairman of the Meso Foundation's Scientific Advisory Board and now serves on its Board of Directors. Dr. Testa is a member of the Foundation's Scientific Advisory Board.

"This research is an important sign of hope for all meso patients," said Chris Hahn, Executive Director of the Meso Foundation. "It has the potential to translate directly to better treatment and that is very exciting. Also very exciting is the fact that the AACR selected a mesothelioma study to receive this prestigious award. Among all the much more prevalent and generously funded cancers, AACR's recognition of a meso study demonstrates how rapidly the field of meso research is progressing and what a serious scientific field it has become."

The Meso Foundation is the not-for-profit collaboration of patients and families, physicians, advocates, and researchers dedicated to eradicating the life-ending and vicious effects of mesothelioma. The Foundation provides patients and families with information on mesothelioma treatments, clinical trials and medical referrals through its full time mesothelioma nurse practitioner and its website, www.curemeso.org. The Meso Foundation hosts an annual symposium to educate patients and families on the latest advances in meso research and treatment. This year, the Symposium will be in Washington, D.C. on June 26-28.