

Kilbourn Receives Aebersold Award

Michael R. Kilbourn, PhD, a professor of radiology at the University of Michigan Medical School (Ann Arbor) was named as the recipient of the SNM 2009 Paul C. Aebersold Award in Basic Science Applied to Nuclear Medicine on June 14 at the society's 56th Annual Meeting in Toronto, Canada. The award, first presented in 1973, is named for a pioneer in the biologic and medical applications of radioactive materials and the first director of the Atomic Energy Commission Division of Isotope Development at Oak Ridge (TN). "Dr. Kilbourn joins a small group of distinguished, highly qualified researchers who have received the Aebersold Award," said Alexander J.B. McEwan, MD, chair of the SNM Awards Committee. "Dr. Kilbourn's contributions to molecular imaging and nuclear medicine have greatly advanced research efforts in a range of areas, making him a clear choice to receive the award."

Kilbourn received the award at the plenary session of SNM's Annual Meeting. "This award recognizes Dr. Kilbourn's outstanding accomplishments in advancing the basic science of radiochemistry and radiopharmaceutical development," said McEwan. "Because of Dr. Kilbourn's research, our profession and our patients can benefit from a whole range of new PET radiopharmaceuticals for imaging biochemical and neurochemical processes."

Kilbourn received a doctorate in organic chemistry from the University of Illinois, Urbana, followed by postdoctoral training in radiochemistry at Brookhaven National Laboratory (Upton, NY). Before joining the faculty of the University of Michigan in 1987, Kilbourn held academic appointments at the Washington University School of Medicine (St. Louis). He has authored or coauthored more than 200 journal articles and book chapters and serves as a reviewer for numerous scientific journals.

His many accomplishments include the development of key radiotracers now in routine use, including agents used to image steroid receptors and numerous enzymes and transporters for neurotransmitters such as dopamine and acetylcholine. He developed a new class of radiotracers by moving beyond commonly targeted membrane receptors to intracellular components in radiotracer design. He also developed automation of radiopharmaceutical production.



Frederic H. Fahey, DSc, scientific program chair (left), Michael J. Welch, PhD, Kilbourn, and SNM President Robert W. Atcher, PhD, MBA.

His longstanding interest in the radionuclide ^{18}F and comprehensive review of its radiochemistry contributed to its successful incorporation in many radiopharmaceuticals and now-common imaging applications.

Kilbourn's current research interests focus on radiochemical synthesis using short-lived positron-emitting radionuclides. In addition, he works on the design, synthesis, and evaluation in animals of new PET radiopharmaceuticals for imaging of biochemical and neurochemical processes, the use of *in vivo* radiotracer techniques for the study of pharmacologic and pathophysiologic alterations of tissue biochemistry, and automation in PET radiopharmaceutical chemistry, including robotics.

In addition to his contributions to research, Kilbourn has demonstrated a commitment to educating the next generation of radiochemists. Many graduates of his research program at the University of Michigan have become distinguished scientists and now direct PET programs or research groups at other institutions.

"It is a great honor to be selected for this award," said Kilbourn. "It's exciting to be recognized by my colleagues for my work and gratifying to know that other researchers can build upon these efforts and continue to advance nuclear medicine and molecular imaging."

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