

Schwaiger Honored with 2011 Aebersold Award

Markus Schwaiger, MD, director of nuclear medicine at the Klinikum rechts der Isar of the Technical University of Munich (Germany), was named on June 5 as the recipient of the 2011 SNM Paul C. Aebersold Award. The award was presented during a plenary session at the 2011 SNM Annual Meeting in San Antonio, TX. The Paul C. Aebersold Award recognizes outstanding achievement in basic science applied to nuclear medicine and was first awarded in 1973. Aebersold, a pioneer in the biologic and medical application of radioactive materials, was the first director of the Atomic Energy Commission's Division of Isotope Development. "Dr. Schwaiger was selected because of his extraordinary accomplishments in nuclear medicine, particularly in nuclear cardiology but also in nuclear oncology," said Michael Graham, MD, PhD, chair of the SNM Awards Committee and past president of SNM.

Schwaiger, who has been a faculty member at the Technical University of Munich since 1993, has focused his research efforts on nuclear cardiology and played a pivotal role in the validation of numerous target-specific molecular probes. In addition to his work in cardiology, Schwaiger has made significant contributions to the field of oncology, developing cancer research programs on the use of ^{18}F -FDG PET to monitor treatment response.

Among his many accomplishments was the conception, development, validation, and clinical application of ^{18}F -labeled galacto-RGD for assessing integrin expression as a marker of angiogenesis and collagen formation. Investigations with these techniques in small animals and humans enhanced scientific understanding of angiogenesis and aggressiveness of tumors and helped to define new therapy targets as well as measures of therapy response. The novel probe has proven equally important in ischemic/reperfused myocardium and in inflammatory atherosclerotic vascular disease. This research, performed in Schwaiger's laboratory, has stimulated new broad research activities on the role of integrins in vessel and collagen formation. At the same time, it has led to the design of probes of integrin subtypes and probes with different single positron-emitting radionuclides.

Schwaiger completed his medical training at the Medical School of the Free University in Berlin and the Medical School of the University of Freiburg, both in Germany. He has held academic appointments at the University of California at



Schwaiger receives Aebersold Award from Heinrich Schelbert, MD, PhD (center), with Scientific Program Committee Chair Peter Herscovitch, MD (left)

Los Angeles School of Medicine and the University of Michigan, as well as at the Julius-Maximilians University at Würzburg, Germany, and the German Heart Center at Munich. In addition to his tenure as dean of the Technical University of Munich School of Medicine from 2003 to 2010, Schwaiger also serves as director of nuclear medicine for the university, as well as adjunct professor of internal medicine at the University of Michigan. He has authored or coauthored more than 740 journal articles and book chapters and has given more than 500 scientific presentations.

Schwaiger has received numerous honors and recognitions, including the Hevesy Award of the Hungarian Society of Nuclear Medicine, the Henry N. Wagner, Jr., Lectureship of SNM, the Distinguished Scientist Award of the Academy of Molecular Imaging, the German Federal Cross of Merit, and an honorary doctorate from the University of Varna in Bulgaria.

"I am very honored to have been selected as the 2011 recipient for the Paul C. Aebersold Award," Schwaiger said. "As always, the work that I am awarded for is the result of many contributors. I consider myself as very lucky to have met and collaborated with so many outstanding scientists from around the world."

SNM