Announcement

Dr. Brenda Andrews

Friends of CIHR is pleased to announce that Dr. Brenda Andrews, C.C., PhD, FRSC, pioneer in systems biology & Founding Director of Donnelly Centre, a leading multidisciplinary systems biology institute, is the recipient of the 2025 Henry G. Friesen International Prize in Health Research.

Toronto – March 29, 2025 – **Dr Brenda Andrews**, C.C., PhD, FRSC, is an internationally renowned geneticist recognized for her functional genomics work in the budding yeast model system. She is known particularly for her studies on cell cycle-regulated transcription and protein kinase function in yeast and for pioneering work with Charles Boone on genetic networks. This fundamental research established the power of systematic genetics for illuminating the roles of genes and their corresponding pathways and the importance of genetic interactions in cellular function, both in health and disease. Dr. Andrews' leadership skills, as the inaugural Director of the Donnelly Centre for Cellular and Biomolecular Research at the University of Toronto (2004-2020), established the Donnelly Centre as a premiere institute internationally for interdisciplinary biomedical research and has helped solidify Canada's reputation as a leader in post-genome biology and the emerging field of personalized medicine. In parallel with her service as Donnelly Director, Dr Andrews held an appointment as Chair of the Banting and Best Department of Medical Research (BBDMR), which was integrated with the Donnelly Centre as part of a vision to create a collaborative environment to catalyze foundational biomedical research, technological innovation and clinical impact.

Born in Clinton, Ontario (Canada), Dr Andrews obtained a BSc and PhD at the University of Toronto, then pursued postdoctoral training in genetics with the late Dr. Ira Herskowitz at the University of California San Francisco. In 1991, Dr. Andrews was recruited to the Department of Medical Genetics (now Molecular Genetics) at the University of Toronto. She became Chair of the Department in 1999, a position she held for 5 years before assuming her positions as Chair of the BBDMR and as Director of the Donnelly Centre. She continued as Director of the Donnelly Centre and Charles H Best Chair of Medical Research until 2020 and was named a University Professor in 2017.

Dr. Andrews is a passionate mentor, who developed a merged molecular genetics and microbiology undergraduate curriculum as Chair of the Molecular Genetics Department, and has supervised dozens of graduate and postgraduate students, who now hold positions in academia, industry, education and research administration. Together with her collaborators and lab members, she has published over 236 peer-reviewed articles in top journals and has presented her work at many institutions and meetings worldwide. She has also served on numerous advisory boards and review panels, including as founding editor-in-chief of Genes|Genomes|Genetics (G3), an open access journal of the Genetics Society of America, Chair of the Scientific Advisory Board of the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL), Chair of the Burroughs Wellcome Fund Board of Directors, and Member of the Governing Council of the Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR).

Dr. Andrews is a Companion of the Order of Canada, an elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the American Academy of Microbiology, and an International Member of the National Academy of Sciences (USA).

The Henry G. Friesen International Prize in Health Research, established in 2005 by the Friends of Canadian Institutes of Health Research (FCIHR), recognizes exceptional innovation by a visionary health leader of international stature. The $35,000 Friesen Prize is awarded annually. Dr. Brenda Andrews will deliver public talks in 2025 in conjunction with the Friesen Prize Program. For further information on Friends of CIHR and the Friesen International Prize, please visit: www.fcihr.ca or contact: Cristina S. Castellvi.

Tel. #: (416) 978-6759. Email: FriendsofCIHR@gmail.com