



Dr. Alan Bernstein, renowned Cancer Biologist and Institutional leader awarded 2017 Henry G. Friesen International Prize in Health Research.

Toronto – March 24, 2017* – Dr. Alan Bernstein is an internationally recognized molecular biologist. His laboratory identified genes that regulate blood stem cell function and that are involved in human cancers, including leukemias, melanomas and sarcomas. They also pioneered and developed techniques for introducing genes into blood stem cells and some of the earliest evidence for the multi-stage nature of cancer.

Dr. Bernstein has been a leader in the Canadian and international scientific communities. Between 1994-2000, he was Director of Research at the Samuel Lunenfeld Research Institute of Mt. Sinai Hospital in Toronto. In 2000, Dr. Bernstein was appointed the inaugural President & CEO of the Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR). During his tenure here, Dr. Bernstein oversaw the implementation of an ambitious vision for health research, bringing together biomedical, clinical and social scientists to work together to advance science and to improve the health of Canadians. During his 7 years as president, CIHR's budget increased almost 3-fold. In 2012, Dr. Bernstein became the president of the Canadian Institute For Advanced Research (CIFAR), Canada's global research institute that brings together some of the world's preeminent researchers to address important questions of our time.

Born in Toronto, Dr. Bernstein received his B.Sc. and Ph.D. from the University of Toronto and was awarded the AAAS James Loudon Gold Medal in Mathematics and Physics. Following postdoctoral research in London (UK), he returned to Canada to join the research staff at the Princess Margaret Hospital before moving to the Lunenfeld in 1985. The many graduate students and post-doctoral fellows that he supervised, now hold senior academic and industry positions in Canada, the U.S., Japan, the UK, Israel, France and Germany. He has published over 220 peer-reviewed highly cited articles in the world's top scientific journals.

Dr. Bernstein has served on numerous boards and advisory committees in Canada and the U.S.; co-chairs Stand Up 2 Cancer Canada; published 60 articles on science issues in the lay press in Canada, the U.S. and Europe, and is much in demand as an advisor to governments, universities and research institutes in Canada, the U.S., Italy, Australia, the UK and Portugal. He serves as chair of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Stem Cell Foundation, and is a member of the Scientific Advisory Committee for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

For his exceptional contributions to science, Dr. Bernstein has received many national and international awards, including 6 honorary degrees, a fellow of both the Royal Society of Canada and the Canadian Academy of Health Science, an Officer of the Order of Canada, received the Award of Merit from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Cancer Research and the Canada Gairdner Wightman Award, and was inducted into the Canadian Medical Hall of Fame in 2015.

The Friesen Prize, established in 2005 by the Friends of Canadian Institutes of Health Research (FCIHR) recognizes exceptional innovation by a visionary health leader of international stature. Dr. Alan Bernstein will deliver a public lecture on October 31, 2017 in Ottawa entitled: *"Health Research in an Age of Borderless Science: How can Canada Best Contribute?"* and will also visit a number of Canadian universities and institutes in the following year. The \$35,000 Friesen Prize is awarded annually. For further information on Friends of CIHR and the Friesen International Prize, please visit: www.fcibr.ca or contact: Cristina S. Castellvi. Tel. #: (416) 506-1597. Email: fcibr@fcibr.ca

*Revised on August 23, 2017.