

Yale Scientist Ruslan Medzhitov Wins Share of Million Dollar Shaw Prize

Yale University Yale University



New Haven, Conn. — Ruslan M. Medzhitov, the David W. Wallace Professor of Immunobiology at Yale School of Medicine, a member of Yale Cancer Center and a Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator, is one of three scientists awarded the prestigious Shaw Prize in Life Science and Medicine for 2011.

The Shaw Prize, now in its eighth year, consists of three annual prizes: Astronomy, Life Science and Medicine, and Mathematical Sciences - each bearing a monetary award of \$1 million.

Medzhitov shares this year's prize in Life Science and Medicine with Jules A. Hoffman, professor at the University of Strasbourg, France, and Bruce A. Beutler, chair of the Department of Genetics at The Scripps Research Institute, La Jolla, California. The Shaw Prize Foundation honored them "for their discovery of the molecular mechanism of innate immunity, the first line of defense against pathogens."

"I am very honored to be a recipient of this prestigious award," Medzhitov said. "Awarding this prize in the field of innate immunity is a reflection of the great advances made by many investigators in the field."

Medzhitov has made groundbreaking contributions to the understanding of innate immunity, which provides immediate defense against infection. His studies helped elucidate the critical role of toll-like receptors (TLRs) in sensing microbial infections, mechanisms of TLR signaling, and activation of the inflammatory and immune response.

"I am delighted that the Shaw Prize has recognized Ruslan Medzhitov's outstanding research," said Robert J. Alpern, M.D., dean of Yale School of Medicine. "Ruslan demonstrated the importance of the innate immune response and then identified

the mechanism by which this occurs."

Medzhitov has been highly honored for his large body of work. He was awarded the 2010 Lewis S. Rosenstiel Award for Distinguished Work in Basic Medical Research. The Rosenstiel Award, founded in 1972 at Brandeis University, has a long record of identifying and honoring pioneering scientists who have subsequently been honored with the Lasker Award and Nobel Prize. Last year, Medzhitov was also elected to the prestigious National Academy of Sciences, the elite corps of researchers from the nation's top scientific institutions.

About the Shaw Prize and Foundation (www.shawprize.org [1]):

The Shaw Prize is an international award to honor individuals who are currently active in their respective fields and who have achieved distinguished and significant advances, who have made outstanding contributions in culture and the arts, or who in other domains have achieved excellence. The award is dedicated to furthering societal progress, enhancing quality of life, and enriching humanity's spiritual civilization. The Shaw Prize, established under the auspices of Run Run Shaw in November 2002, is managed and administered by The Shaw Prize Foundation based in Hong Kong.

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