



# KEYSTONE SYMPOSIA

*Connecting the Scientific Community*

## **For Immediate Release**

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## **Keystone Symposia Announces the Inaugural Awards of the Anita Roberts Young Scientist Scholarship**

SANTA FE, New Mexico – February 4, 2008 – Keystone Symposia on Molecular and Cellular Biology is pleased to announce that its 2008 meeting on TGF-beta in Santa Fe, New Mexico has served as the first occasion of the award of the Anita Roberts Young Scientist Scholarships. Organized by Dr. Roberts's colleagues at the National Cancer Institute and funded by donations from the scientific community, the award will be given to two conference attendees to defray the cost of attending the meeting, which is typically held by Keystone Symposia every two years. This year, one winner will be a graduate student and the other an international postdoctoral fellow. Funds for the scholarships were collected with the cooperation of the Foundation for the NIH.

Anita Roberts was an internationally recognized molecular biologist who made pioneering discoveries regarding the protein TGF-beta (transforming growth factor beta) that is critical in wound and bone fracture healing as well as in cancer suppression and stimulation. She organized several Keystone Symposia meetings on the topic including the 2006 conference when she was already suffering from the gastric cancer that eventually led to her death at the age of 64 in May 2006. Since 1976, she had worked at the National Cancer Institute, part of the National Institutes of Health. From 1995 to 2004, she headed the Institute's Laboratory of Cell Regulation and Carcinogenesis.

Among the discoveries of Dr. Roberts and her collaborators was that TGF-beta inhibits the growth of some cancers while stimulating growth in advanced cancers, including cancers of the breast and lung.

For 37 years, Keystone Symposia has been internationally recognized for its scientific conferences focused on topics at the leading edge of biomedical research and featuring the

world's most respected research scientists. The organization holds approximately 55 scientific meetings each year on a global basis.

When discussing possible ways to commemorate Dr. Roberts's contributions, her family and colleagues specifically recalled her fondness for Keystone Symposia and suggested a scholarship be founded in her name for young scientists wishing to attend the Keystone Symposia meeting that she herself had organized. Her colleagues at the NIH then went to work raising the necessary funds.

Commented colleague Lalage Wakefield, an NCI scientist, "Anita loved the Keystone meetings and would always come back fired up with new ideas. She felt that the friendly, interactive atmosphere provided a wonderful environment for young scientists to meet leaders in the field, for collaborations to develop and science to be enjoyed."

Keystone Symposia CEO Dr. James W. Aiken expressed his gratitude while attending the 2008 TGF-Beta meeting in Santa Fe, which runs from February 3-8 at the Eldorado Hotel. "Providing access to the Keystone Symposia TGF-beta meeting for young scientists who might not otherwise be able to attend is a fitting way to commemorate the contributions of Dr. Roberts. Not only did she play such a key role shedding light on the importance of TGF-beta, but she was also a tireless meeting organizer on behalf of Keystone Symposia. Giving scientists opportunities for greater collaboration is really what Keystone Symposia is all about. We thank the family of Anita Roberts, her colleagues in the scientific community who contributed, and the Foundation for the NIH for their cooperation, and look forward to the ongoing award of this scholarship at future meetings on TGF-beta."

### **About Keystone Symposia**

Keystone Symposia on Molecular and Cellular Biology, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, has been holding internationally renowned scientific meetings since 1972 and has been headquartered in Silverthorne, Colorado since 1990, when the organization left the University of California at Los Angeles. Annually, Keystone Symposia holds more than 50 meetings involving a total of more than 13,000 scientists from around the world. Most of the meetings are held in the Rocky Mountain U.S. states and Canadian provinces, with a few each year now scheduled for international locations such as Asia, Africa, and Europe. More details about the organization can be found at <http://www.keystonesymposia.org>, and more information on scholarships available for students can be found at <http://keystonesymposia.org/Students/Scholarships.cfm>.