

For Immediate Release

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Nobel Laureates to Speak at Keystone Symposia RNA Silencing Conference

SILVERTHORNE, CO, April 17, 2009 – Keystone Symposia on Molecular and Cellular Biology will convene its conference on “The Biology of RNA Silencing” on April 25, 2009 at the Fairmont Empress Victoria in Victoria, British Columbia. This will be an opportunity to hear two Nobel Laureates within the speaker line-up.

Andrew Fire of Stanford University will deliver a keynote address on the evening of April 25 on “Adventures in the Small RNA-ome.” On Monday morning, April 27, Craig Mello of the University of Massachusetts Medical School will present on “Complexity of RNA Silencing in *C. elegans*.” Both scientists shared the 2006 Nobel Prize in Medicine for their pioneering work discovering how certain RNA molecules can be used to turn off specific genes in animal cells – a phenomenon known as RNA interference, or RNAi.

Also speaking on April 27 will be David Baulcombe, winner of the 2008 Albert Lasker Basic Medical Research Award. A scientist at the University of Cambridge, Baulcombe won that award along with Victor Ambros of the University of Massachusetts Medical School and Gary Ruvkun of Harvard Medical School/Massachusetts General Hospital for work on small RNAs and gene regulation.

The four-day conference will bring together more than 400 leading researchers from around the world working in different branches of RNA silencing to share their findings and facilitate a deeper understanding of the breadth and complexity of small RNA-related phenomena. RNA silencing pathways control an ever-expanding range of biological phenomena; defects in these pathways lead directly to disease, and RNA molecules can be used as powerful therapeutic agents. Our ability to harness RNA silencing for therapeutic purposes depends critically on our knowledge of the underlying biology.

The conference’s scientific organizers are Witold Filipowicz of Friedrich Miescher Institute for Biomedical Research in Switzerland and Erik Sontheimer of Northwestern University in the USA. Both also have done groundbreaking RNA work.

For more information about the conference, visit www.keystonesymposia.org/9D6.

About Keystone Symposia

Keystone Symposia on Molecular and Cellular Biology, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, has been conducting open, international scientific conferences since 1972 and has been headquartered in Summit County, Colorado since 1990 when it left the University of California at Los Angeles. Annually, Keystone Symposia holds more than 50 meetings involving more than 13,000 scientists from around the world.

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