

New York Blood Center Welcomes Distinguished Hematologist Douglas R. Higgs, FRS at 32nd Annual Wiener Lecture



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On March 2, 2010, NYBC welcomed distinguished hematologist Dr. Douglas Roland Higgs as guest speaker at the 32nd Annual Alexander S. Wiener Lecture. Dr. Higgs presented his research on the regulation of globin genes during hematopoiesis.

Dr. Higgs received his medical degree from King's College Hospital Medical School, United Kingdom, in 1974 and trained as a hematologist. He is currently Professor of Molecular Hematology at the University of Oxford and Director of the MRC Molecular Hematology Unit. Dr. Higgs focuses much of

his research on the molecular genetics of thalassemia, one of the most common of all human genetic disorders. His work has



L-R: Barbara Sawitsky, Dr. Connie Westhoff, Christine Lomas-Francis, Dr. M Reid

contributed to understanding the inheritance pattern of the severe forms of the disease. Currently, his goal is to understand the processes of lineage commitment in hematopoiesis with particular emphasis on erythropoiesis. Determining how the globin genes are activated and regulated during normal erythropoiesis will help in the understanding of thalassemia and other human genetic diseases.

NYBC's Annual Wiener lecture was attended this year by about 160 medical and science professionals. The lecture is named in honor of Dr. Alexander S. Wiener (1907-1976), a lifelong resident of New York City who was recognized internationally for his contributions to science. He was an outstanding leader in the fields of forensic medicine, serology, and immunogenetics. His pioneer work led to discovery of the Rh factor in 1937 and subsequently to the development of exchange transfusion methods that saved the lives of countless infants with hemolytic disease of the newborn. He received a Lasker Award for his achievement in 1946.



L-R: Dr. M. Narla & Dr. D. Higgs



L-R: Dr. C. Hillyer, Dr. M. Narla, Dr. D. Higgs