Women and Autoimmune Diseases: Gender and Biological Perspectives

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Jean-Francois Bach, M.D. is Head of both the Clinical Immunology Unit and the Immunology Research Laboratories at Necker Hospital in Paris, France. He also serves as a Professor of Immunology at Necker Faculty, Chairman of the Scientific Council of the French Cancer League, Vice President of the Fondation pour la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS), and Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Autoimmunity. His principle areas of interest include self-recognition and autoimmune diseases, immunotherapy, thymus biology, and medical genetics. Dr. Bach has authored or co-authored five books on immunology-related topics, including The Mode of Action of Immunosuppressive Agents, Monoclonal Antibodies and Peptide Therapy in Autoimmune Disease, and T-Cell Directed Immunointervention. He has received numerous awards and honors for his work.

Denise Faustman, M.D., Ph.D. is Associate Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School and directs the Immunobiology Laboratory at the Massachusetts General Hospital. Since 1998, she has also served as Executive Vice-President for the Society for the Advancement of Women's Health Research. Dr. Faustman's groundbreaking research, particularly on diabetes, has both increased the basic science field and contributed towards novel ideas in the field of human and murine autoimmunity. She established the first human islet transplant program in New England and introduced the cellular transplantation technology of donor antigen modification. Her work has also broadened the understanding of T cell education and the pathophysiology of complex autoimmune disease processes. Her findings have been published several times in Science.

Virginia Ladd is President and Executive Director of the American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association, Inc. (AARDA), an organization she founded in order to bring a national focus to autoimmunity. Diagnosed with lupus more than 30 years ago, she has been involved in the non-profit community for over 20 years as a patient advocate and educator. Mrs. Ladd was instrumental in bringing about a Congressional Biomedical Research Caucus briefing on autoimmunity and initiated an effort to form the Patient Health Education and Advocacy Network of Michigan. She also founded the Chronic Illness Awareness Coalition and was instrumental in the formation of the International
Alliance of Patient Groups. In honor of her many years of volunteer service, she was a 1995 Jefferson Award Honoree of the American Institute for Public Service.

**Kellie Martin** is an actress and a national spokesperson for AARDA. She is perhaps best known for her roles as Becca Thatcher on the ABC series, "Life Goes On," for which she received an Emmy nomination for Best Supporting Actress, and as medical student Lucy Knight on the NBC-TV drama "ER." When she is not acting, she attends classes at Yale University, where she is an Art History major. Her experience with autoimmune diseases began in 1998 when her 19-year old sister, Heather, died of lupus that was repeatedly misdiagnosed. Today, she works to help raise awareness of autoimmunity as a major women's health issue and to educate the public about the warning signs of autoimmune diseases, new and promising research developments, and the need for a more coordinated, collaborative approach to diagnosing, treating, and ultimately curing these diseases.

**Dr. Nafsiah Mboi** is Director of the Department of Women's Health at the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva.

**Vivian W. Pinn, M.D.** is Director of the Office of Research on Women's Health (ORWH) and Associate Director for Research on Women's Health at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Dr. Pinn came to NIH from Howard University College of Medicine, where she had been Professor and Chair of the Department of Pathology since 1982, and has previously held appointments at Tufts University and Harvard Medical School. During the past two years she led a national effort to reexamine priorities for the women's health research agenda for the 21st century, involving over 1,500 advocates, scientists, policy makers, educators, and health care providers in a series of scientific meetings across the country. Dr. Pinn has received numerous honors, awards, and recognitions, and has been granted six Honorary Degrees of Law and Science since 1992.

**Noel R. Rose, M.D., Ph.D.** is one of the world's leading experts on autoimmunity and autoimmune disease. His pioneering research more than 40 years ago was instrumental in establishing the concept of autoimmunity and ushered in the modern era of research on autoimmune diseases. An immunologist, pathologist, and molecular microbiologist, Dr. Rose has long been associated with Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health, where today he is Professor in four departments: Pathology, Molecular Microbiology and Immunology, Medicine, and Environmental Health Sciences. Dr. Rose is currently Chairperson of the AARDA Scientific Advisory Committee and is an autoimmunity expert for the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences. He has authored more than 550 journal articles and his book, The Autoimmune Diseases, was recently published in its third edition.
Elaine M. Wolfson, Ph.D. is founding President of the Global Alliance for Women's Health. She has been studying socioeconomic and governmental parameters of women's health policy formation and implementation for over 25 years and has authored, co-authored, and/or edited articles, monographs, and reports on women's health on subjects including trachoma and depression in the mature woman. Dr. Wolfson was instrumental in the successful campaign to include provisions for women's health throughout the life span in four of the platforms of the United Nations world conferences in the 1990's. She is a member of the advisory board of the European Institute of Women's Health and has been a consultant for INSTRAW and the World Health Organization.