

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, July 13, 2010

Contact:

Staci Vernick Goldberg

(215) 898-3716

sgoldberg@wistar.org

**CANCER BIOLOGIST DARIO ALTIERI TO LEAD
THE WISTAR INSTITUTE CANCER CENTER**

(PHILADELPHIA – July 13, 2010) – The Wistar Institute today announces that cancer biologist Dario C. Altieri, M.D., has been appointed director of Wistar’s Cancer Center, a National Cancer Institute-designated Cancer Center since 1972. Altieri will also take on the role of the Institute’s Chief Scientific Officer and professor in the Wistar Molecular and Cellular Oncogenesis Program.

Altieri will join Wistar full-time in September from his previous appointment as professor and chair of the Department of Cancer Biology at the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

The Wistar Institute recruited Altieri after an extensive search for a cancer biologist to lead the scientific faculty of the Wistar Cancer Center. Current Cancer Center Director Russel E. Kaufman, M.D., steps away from his Wistar Cancer Center leadership position to focus on his role as president and CEO of The Wistar Institute.

“The Wistar Institute Cancer Center recently achieved a very successful NCI review and renewal of its Cancer Center Support Grant, and now is the ideal time to pass on the leadership,” Kaufman said. “Dario Altieri has the experience and intellect we desired in a candidate to further our progress in both basic cancer science and our ongoing efforts in translating scientific discovery into practical therapies to prevent and cure cancer.”

“Throughout his career, he has shown excellent leadership and a remarkable ability to recruit top-notch scientific talent, capabilities that we plan to utilize in earnest as we expand our research faculty,” Kaufman added.

At Wistar, Altieri will continue his laboratory’s successful research program on the mechanisms that underlie how tumor cells survive and proliferate in cancer. In particular, his laboratory is interested in how tumor cells evade the normal processes that cause cells with genetic faults to self-destruct. Understanding these mechanisms could provide new therapeutic targets and novel approaches for virtually every type of human cancer. To date, his research has resulted in nine patents and over 160 scientific articles.

Born in Milan, Italy, and educated at the University of Milan School of Medicine, Altieri became a practicing clinician at the university, where he would later earn a postgraduate specialty degree in clinical and experimental hematology. In 1987, he joined the Scripps Clinic and Research Foundation in La Jolla, Calif., first as a research fellow and later as a member of the faculty.

(MORE)



The Wistar Institute is a National Cancer Institute-designated Cancer Center.

ALTIERI TO LEAD WISTAR CANCER CENTER/PG 2

In 1994, Altieri became an associate professor at the Yale University School of Medicine, was named professor in 1999, and served in that role for some time before being recruited as the founding chair of the Department of Cancer Biology at the University of Massachusetts.

Altieri is also an accomplished scientific citizen of the international cancer research community. He is currently on the editorial board of seven scientific publications and a reviewer for 16 such journals. As a mentor, he has guided the careers of over 40 men and women, from undergraduates to postdoctoral fellows. In 2005, he co-founded both the National Cancer Biology Training Consortium, an effort to promote scientific excellence in the next generation of cancer researchers, and the Pancreatic Cancer Alliance, an all-volunteer patient advocacy organization devoted to supporting the efforts of pancreatic cancer research.

Since 1972, The Wistar Institute has been a National Cancer Institute-designated Cancer Center and has focused its basic biomedical research on understanding the causes and treatment of cancer. Today, the Wistar Cancer Center includes preeminent researchers studying melanoma, lung cancer, brain tumors, and a variety of other cancers. It has a history of significant advances in cancer genetics, cancer biology, and tumor immunology and virology. Wistar Cancer Center accomplishments include the identification of genes associated with breast, lung, and prostate cancer and the development of monoclonal antibodies used to study the pathways and proteins involved in tumor development. Learn more at www.wistar.org/cancercenter.

The Wistar Institute is an international leader in biomedical research with special expertise in cancer research and vaccine development. Founded in 1892 as the first independent nonprofit biomedical research institute in the country, Wistar has long held the prestigious Cancer Center designation from the National Cancer Institute. The Institute works actively to transfer its inventions to the commercial sector to ensure that research advances move from the laboratory to the clinic as quickly as possible. The Wistar Institute: Today's Discoveries – Tomorrow's Cures. On the web at www.wistar.org.

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