



PRESS RELEASE

CONTACT:

Darien Sutton

215-898-3988 | dsutton@wistar.org

EMBARGOED UNTIL: Tuesday, July 10, 2024

Nobel Laureate Drew Weissman, M.D., Ph.D., Delivers 28th Annual Jonathan Lax Memorial Lecture at The Wistar Institute

PHILADELPHIA — (July 10th, 2024) — On Tuesday, July 16th at 6:30 pm EDT, Nobel Laureate in Medicine or Physiology [Drew Weissman, M.D., Ph.D.](#), — Roberts Family Professor in Vaccine Research, Director of Vaccine Research, and Director of the Institute for RNA Innovation at the University of Pennsylvania — delivers the 28th annual Jonathan Lax Memorial Lecture at The Wistar Institute in recognition of his outstanding contributions to HIV research. Dr. Weissman's talk, "Development of novel therapies based on RNA: from COVID vaccines to anti-HIV strategies," is open to the public both in-person at Wistar and virtually through an online live stream.

Dr. Weissman and his colleague Dr. Katalin Karikó received the 2023 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for their research on mRNA vaccine technology — technology vital to the development of the lifesaving COVID-19 vaccines that mitigated the worldwide pandemic. That same mRNA technology has opened the door to many different angles of approach to HIV cure research, which will be the subject of Dr. Weissman's talk.

"I am honored to receive this award from my colleagues at The Wistar Institute in memory of such an inspiring figure as Jonathan Lax, whose dedication to helping those living with HIV is an example to every one of us," said Weissman. "Although HIV has long presented a challenge to us biomedical researchers, I am grateful that my lab's work on RNA has been able to make an impact in the all-important search for a cure."



“Honoring a researcher with The Jonathan Lax Memorial Award is always a privilege for us, but this year, we are especially happy to have the opportunity to distinguish our neighbor, collaborator, and friend, Dr. Drew Weissman,” said Wistar’s [Luis J. Montaner, D.V.M., D.Phil.](#), the Herbert Kean, M.D., Family Professor, leader of the [HIV Research Program](#) at The Wistar Institute and co-principal investigator of the [BEAT-HIV Delaney Collaboratory](#). “As a revolutionary RNA researcher whose work has paved the way for new approaches to overcoming HIV, Dr. Weissman’s research continues to improve upon our capabilities to understand and defeat HIV.”

The Wistar Institute and Philadelphia FIGHT established the **Jonathan Lax Memorial Award Lecture** after Mr. Lax’s death to honor his legacy by bringing distinguished speakers to a lay audience. Previous speakers include luminaries in the HIV/AIDS field such as Nobel Laureate [Françoise Barré-Sinoussi, Ph.D.](#), Professor Emeritus at the Institut Pasteur; [Mike McCune, M.D., Ph.D.](#), head of the HIV Frontiers Initiative and Biotechnology Accelerator Program of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; and [Anthony S. Fauci, M.D.](#), former Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

The 2024 lecture is free and open to a global audience. [Register here for in-person attendance](#) and [register here for virtual attendance](#).

ABOUT THE WISTAR INSTITUTE

The Wistar Institute is the nation’s first independent nonprofit institution devoted exclusively to foundational biomedical research and training. Since 1972, the Institute has held National Cancer Institute (NCI)-designated Cancer Center status. Through a culture and commitment to biomedical collaboration and innovation, Wistar science leads to breakthrough early-stage discoveries and life science sector start-ups. Wistar scientists are dedicated to solving some of the world’s most challenging problems in the field of cancer and immunology, advancing human health through early-stage discovery and training the next generation of biomedical researchers. [wistar.org](https://www.wistar.org).