

SZEGED HOSTS A CONFERENCE WITH NINE NOBEL LAUREATES

Jubilee Publication on the occasion of the 75th Anniversary of Albert Szent-Györgyi's Nobel Prize Award

The Faculty of Medicine at the University of Szeged, Hungary, is organizing an international conference series on the occasion of the 75th Anniversary of Albert Szent-Györgyi's Nobel Prize Award, which he received in 1937 for isolating vitamin C and for his research on the Krebs cycle. The event is scheduled to start on 22nd March, 2012 (Thursday) and ends on 25th March 2012 (Sunday).

ALBERT SZENT-GYÖRGYI AS A ROLE MODEL

Rectors. The portrait of Albert Szent-Györgyi, a former rector of the University of Szeged, who is in the study of the current rector of the University of Szeged, Gábor Szabó, a physicist and academician.

We interviewed the current rector of the University of Szeged, the physicist and academician Gábor Szabó, about the former professor and rector of the University of Szeged in the year of the 75th anniversary of his Nobel Prize award.

– On the day in 1937, when he got to know that he received the most prestigious scientific acknowledgement, the Medical Nobel Prize, Albert Szent-Györgyi visited Klebelsberg's grave in the dome of Szeged. This gesture illustrates the importance of the role Kunó Klebelsberg played in the development of Szent-Györgyi's career, when he as a Minister of culture called him back to the ascendant of the University of Szeged. However, this move also expresses that these two persons had a key role in rebuilding the University – said Gábor Szabó, physicist and academician. The rector of the University of Szeged found it important to highlight, that Klebelsberg knew what is needed for the success of a scientific research: infrastructure and man, and even today nothing else is important at a research university.

– Albert Szent-Györgyi's personality and work is exemplary from different point of views. He won the Nobel Prize because of his work at Szeged, but besides this accomplishment, he created an achievement in America, which could worth another Nobel Prize – according to the rector at Szeged.

I also find it important that in his later years he started the path which leads to the 21st century: leaving the area of the disciplines he regularly discoursed with the physicist to emphasize that science rips open the disciplinary boundaries.

– As the Minister of education Szent-Györgyi created underlying principles in his inaugural – reminds us the current leader of the University of Szeged. He believes: No one but the scientist can anticipate, that is the scientist's responsibility to navigate others in the complexity which characterizes our time. His favorite quote which is still valid is: "Our future will be like, our schools are today."

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Translated: Krisztina Seres (English communicator)

(The whole version of the interview was published in the issue of Délmagyarország on 14th January, 2012)



Photo: Andrea Schmidt



Photo: Sándor Gémes

THE SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CONFERENCE

The Conference series on the occasion of the 75th Anniversary of Albert Szent-Györgyi's Nobel Prize Award welcomes participants from all over the world: Szeged will host the academic elite during the period of 22-25 March.

– It is not a question that the internationally acknowledged scientific work of the University of Szeged – truly worthy of Szent-Györgyi' heritage - has contributed a lot to the realization of this highly significant event. The fact that nine Nobel Prize Winners have accepted the invitation can be considered as a sign of recognition of the scientific work done by the University of Szeged. The organizational committee as well as the university staff have made very serious efforts to ensure the event to be realized” – said *László Vécsei*, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, president of the Szent-Györgyi Conference.

Commemorating the Nobel Laureate and former rector of the University of Szeged, Albert Szent-Györgyi, who received his Nobel Prize for Medicine in 1937 for his discoveries in connection with the biological combustion processes, with special reference to vitamin C and the catalysis of fumaric acid.

– He is the only Hungarian scientist who has been honored with this award for his scientific work realized in Hungary. He went to the Nobel Prize Award Ceremony from Hungary and he returned as well.” - said *András Varró*, Vice Rector of the University of Szeged for Science, Research Development and Innovation.

The organizing committee is commemorating Szent- Györgyi not only for his being an excellent researcher, but also for his being a former rector: in 1941 Albert Szent-Györgyi was the head of the University of Szeged. The conference has great scientific significance. The Attila József Study and Informational Center will be the central venue of the four-day programme. Sessions will focus on topics researched by the University of Szeged.

– The latest results of six academic fields will be presented during 412 lectures given in four different venues – all related to the personality of Albert Szent-Györgyi - to the participants of this event of great scientific importance.” – said *Péter Hegyi*, General Secretary of the Conference. Almost 1000 internationally renowned researchers – among them nine Nobel Laureates – will take part in the six parallel conferences in Cardiology, Gastroenterology, Immunology & Inflammation, Molecular Biology & Genetics, Neuroscience, and Tuberculosis Evolution.

THE ORGANIZERS OF THE CONFERENCE CARDIOLOGY

Chairman: András Varró

GASTROENTEROLOGY

Chairman: Tibor Wittmann

IMMUNOLOGY & INFLAMMATION

Chairman: Lajos Kemény

MOLECULAR BIOLOGY & GENETICS

Chairman: Márta Széll

NEUROSCIENCE

Chairman: László Vécsei

TUBERCULOSIS EVOLUTION

Chairman: György Pálfi & Oliver Dutour

THE GUESTS OF THE CONFERENCE

From the nearly 1000 visitors of the Conference, the most attention definitely goes to those nine Nobel Laureates who accepted the invitation of the organizing committee. They were all recognized with a Nobel Prize for making significant scientific discoveries.



Andrew V. SCHALLY

Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 1977

Prize motivation:

“for their discoveries concerning the peptide hormone production of the brain”



Bert SAKMANN

Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 1991

Prize motivation:

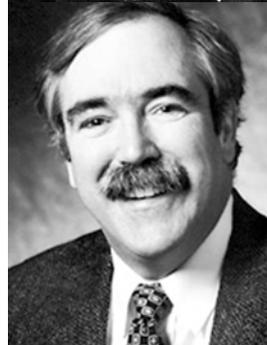
“for their discoveries concerning the function of single ion channels in cells”



Robert HUBER

Nobel Prize in Chemistry 1988

Prize motivation: “for the determination of the three-dimensional structure of a photosynthetic reaction centre”



Eric WIESCHAUS

Nobel Prize in Physiology or

Medicine 1995

Prize motivation: "for their discoveries concerning the genetic control of early embryonic development"

Peter C. DOHERTY

Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 1996

Prize motivation: "for their discoveries concerning the specificity of the cell mediated immune defence"

John E. WALKER

Nobel Prize in Chemistry 1997

Prize motivation: "for their elucidation of the enzymatic mechanism underlying the synthesis of adenosine triphosphate (ATP)"

Tim HUNT

Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2001

Prize motivation: "for their discoveries of key regulators of the cell cycle"

Aaron CIECHANOVER

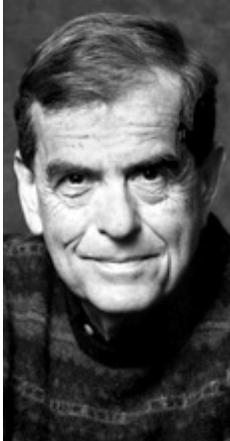
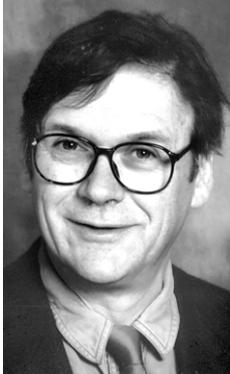
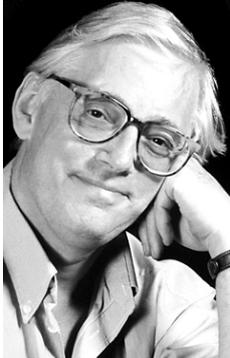
Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2004

Prize motivation: "for the discovery of ubiquitinmediated protein degradation"

Ada E. YONATH

Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2009

Prize motivation: "for studies of the structure and function of the ribosome"



PRESS RELEASES - THE NOBEL PRIZE WINNER SCIENTISTS

The University of Szeged is celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the former rector's, Professor Albert Szent-Györgyi's, Nobel Prize Award with an international conference series. There will be nine state-of-the-art lectures delivered by Nobel Laureates at this conference series. Journalist, Ilona Újszászi asked 9 local scientists to introduce these renowned scientists.

These press releases are written in Hungarian, and they can be downloaded from the downloads menu on the right hand side of the webpage: <http://www.szeged.hu/81>

REPRESENTING HUNGARY

„We are aware of representing not only the city and the University of Szeged, but Hungary as well. Therefore we intend to prepare a variety of special additional programs to welcome our guests.” – said József Pál, Vice Rector of the University of Szeged for Foreign Affairs and Public Relations.

Available science at Szeged

The world of science will be opened to everyone at the University of Szeged, including young adults, the people of the university and other enquirers with the help of the public events of the Szent-Györgyi Conference as well. Nearly 1000 guests from more than 50 countries will be introduced to the Hungarian hospitality by cultural-artistic and gastronomic programs.

“We would like to bring the scientists closer to the public of the south plain and Szeged.” said József Pál about the public programs of the jubilee Szent-Györgyi Conference, who is the international and public relations vice rector of the University of Szeged.



Forum of the Youth

Within the frames of a Forum high school and university students will be able to meet the 9 Nobel Prize winner scientists who will come to the University of Szeged. Nobel Prize in Physiology and Medicine was received by Andrew W. Schally in 1977, Bert Sakmann in 1991, Eric Wieschaus in 1995, Peter C. Doherty in 1996, Tim Hunt in 2001. Nobel Prize in Chemistry was given to Ada E. Yonath in 2009, Aaron Ciechanover in 2004, John E. Walker in 1997, Robert Huber in 1988.

Albert Szent-Györgyi, who won the Nobel Prize 75 years ago and was also a former rector of the University, believed in that one of the vocations of the University of Szeged is to be the intellectual center of the Plain. To follow his guideline, the organizers of the jubilee conference invited applications for high school students. 70 students applied from the 12 schools of the Vajdaság (Vojvodina, Serbia) and the South Plain. After several month of preparation 27 students were chosen who will be able to have a personal talk with the 9 Nobel Prize winners before the programs. During the „Open Forum” program 9 students will introduce one of the world-famous researchers in English to the audience consisting of hundreds of people. How did they live through their failures? Is it possible to coordinate serious scientific career with family life? How did they decide which profession to choose? Obviously, questions like these interest most of the students facing a career choice about the lives of the Nobel Prize winners. The TV presenter, Szilvia Krizsó is the moderator of the forum, which is in English and is open to the people and students of the University.

The English Forum of the Youth in the SZTE Szent-Györgyi Conference will start at 2 p.m. on March 23, 2012 in the Congressional Room of the Attila József Study and Information Centre (Szeged, Ady square 10.). Those besides the invited, who are interested in the forum, can follow the events on projectors.

Among the guests of the conference Ole Petersen (Cardiff, UK) and Péter Somogyi (Oxford, UK) are the members of both the Hungarian Scientific Academy and the English Scientific Academy. The professors will be interviewed by the Association of Hungarian Medical Students and will be discoursing at the TIK on the 23rd and 24th of March from 12:00 to 12:30 – as a continuation of the Forum of the Youth.

The Tree of Sciences

The best students of the SZTE SÁGVÁRI Endre High School, interested in science performed joint experiments with the guidance of the Nobel Prize winner Peter Doherty. The Tree of Sciences commemorates the jubilee Szent-Györgyi Conference, it will be planted between the buildings of the SZTE Attila József Study and Information Centre and the Faculty of Arts on the 24th of March at 2 p.m.

The pedunculate oak tree was offered by the SZTE Arboretum, the place of plantation was chosen and designed by the plans of the Prima Primiissima Prize winner architect, István Novák. A plaque will also be dedicated at the ceremony which is the artwork of the sculptor and medalist, Mihály Fritz and the goldsmith, Géza Szabó.

Accompanying programs for the guests

Cultural-artistic and gastronomic programs will also accompany the conference. The Szent-Györgyi Memorial Room will be established in the central location of the conference, in the Attila József Study and Information Centre which can be visited from the **22nd to the 24th of March, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.** The organizers would like to present here the golden Nobel Medallion which belongs to the Albert Szent-Györgyi Nobel Prize. The Medallion is guarded in the National Museum, but for the time of the conference it will return to Szeged.

The high standard of entertainment of the guests will be guaranteed by the orchestra of the Hungarian State Folk Ensemble, the Duna Art Ensemble and the joint performance of the Dance Ensemble of Szeged and *Márta Sebestyén*, and also by the organ concert of *Xavér Varnus* and the piano night by *Csilla Szentpéteri*.

Familiar hospitality and culinary enjoyment are promised by the organizers of the conference, Hungarian tastes and drinks will also be served to the participants.

On the occasion of the conference, a Szent-Györgyi Medallion, and an album containing studies on the Hungarian Nobel Prize winner as well as the detailed program of the conference were made as a gift.

Translated: Krisztina Seres (English communicator)

HOSTS OF THE MEETING

You will be mainly looked after by staff and students (graduate and post-graduate) of the University of Szeged.

Dean's Office, University of Szeged, Faculty of Medicine

Registered guests and sponsors

Up until the beginning of March, 776 scientist from 29 countries have registered to the conference at Szeged, 421 scientist would like to give a lecture – reported Péter Hegyi, the secretary general of the conference. The vice rector of the School of Medicine in Szeged, Lajos Kemény informed us: besides the TÁMOP competition, the Richter pharmaceutical company, the local government of Szeged and other companies also support the conference which has a budget of 100 million forints. The organization of the conference is supported by the EU through the competition with the identity numbers of SZTE TÁMOP-4.2.1/B-09/1/KONV-2010-0005.

The media supporters of the event are: the Publishing and Media center of the University of Szeged, the Magazine of the University of Szeged, the Délmagyarország, the Radio 88, the szegedma.hu.