

## World Molecular Imaging Society Announces Early Stage Awardees for 2019

**Culver City, Calif. – September 12, 2019** – The World Molecular Imaging Society (WMIS) recognized the top up-and-coming researchers, Michael Z. Lin, M.D., Ph.D., as the Roger Tsien Awardee for Excellence in chemical biology and Aisling M. Chaney, Ph.D. as the Young Investigator of the Year. The awards were announced at the recently concluded annual Congress (WMIC) in Montreal.

The Roger Tsien Award for Excellence in Chemical Biology is given to an early-stage investigator at the level of assistant or associate professor, or equivalent, who has made significant contributions to the field of molecular imaging in the area of chemical biology. This includes the creation and/or use of novel chemistries to probe biological systems using noninvasive imaging approaches. Selection was based largely on novel syntheses of new molecular probes, with broad applications, that have been used for a better understanding of the biology of health or disease.

This year's winner is Michael Z. Lin, M.D., Ph.D., associate professor of Neurobiology and Bioengineering at Stanford University. After receiving a Ph.D. at Harvard Medical School in molecular neurobiology and an M.D. degree at University of California Los Angeles, Dr. Lin performed postdoctoral research with Roger Y. Tsien, Ph.D., at University of California San Diego on protein engineering. Dr. Lin has been a faculty member at Stanford since 2009. The Lin Lab develops technologies for optical sensing and control of neuronal function, including bright fluorescent proteins for FRET-based sensing, far-red fluorescent protein for *in vivo* imaging, fluorescent labels of protein age, fluorescent indicators voltage indicators, and chemical and optically controllable proteins.

One of the most prestigious awards at the WMIC, the Young Investigator of the Year Award, recognizes a young, next-generation scientist making significant breakthroughs in the field of molecular imaging. This year's awardee, Aisling M. Chaney, Ph.D., Postdoctoral Fellow in the James Lab at Stanford University, investigates novel PET imaging strategies to improve the understanding of the inflammatory component of devastating neurological diseases such as Alzheimer's, stroke and multiple sclerosis, with the ultimate aim of enhancing their diagnosis and treatment. The presentation, *Tracking*

*the Invaders in Multiple Sclerosis: a new highly specific PET imaging approach for visualizing peripheral innate immune activation with higher sensitivity than TSPO-PET*, is the first report of a highly specific PET imaging strategy for detecting pathogenic peripheral CNS-infiltrating myeloid cells.

“Imaging biomarkers for inflammatory activity in multiple sclerosis are notoriously challenging to develop. Aisling has leveraged a unique inflammatory target that not only depicts neuroinflammation but also reports on the specific cellular underpinnings of the disease. Tracking fundamental aspects of multiple sclerosis in this fashion will hasten the development of new therapies for this devastating illness,” says past WMIS president Dr. Martin G. Pomper.

Second runners-up for the award are Katie Parkins, Ph.D. Candidate at Western University, for her work titled “Engineering “Self-Homing” Circulating Tumor Cells as Novel Cancer Theranostics” and Dr. Corinne Beinat, Stanford University, for her work titled, “Evaluation of [18F]DASA-23 for non-invasive measurement of aberrantly expressed pyruvate kinase M2 in healthy volunteers and intracranial tumor patients.”

## **ABOUT WORLD MOLECULAR IMAGING SOCIETY**

The WMIS is dedicated to developing and promoting translational research through multimodality molecular imaging. The education and abstract-driven WMIC is the annual meeting of the WMIS and provides a unique setting for scientists and clinicians with very diverse backgrounds to interact, present, and follow cutting-edge advances in the rapidly expanding field of molecular imaging that impacts nearly every biomedical discipline. Industry exhibits at the congress included corporations who have created the latest advances in preclinical and clinical imaging approaches and equipment, providing a complete molecular imaging educational technology showcase. For more information: [www.wmis.org](http://www.wmis.org)

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