Cancer scientists Sun, Vadlamudi named AAAS Fellows

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Washington, D.C. (Nov. 23, 2015) — LuZhe Sun, Ph.D., and Ratna K. Vadlamudi, Ph.D., of the School of Medicine at The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, have been named Fellows of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). This election is an honor bestowed upon AAAS members by their peers.

Drs. Sun and Vadlamudi were recognized in the section of biological sciences. Dr. Sun, professor of cellular and structural biology in the School of Medicine, was elected for distinguished contributions to the field of molecular carcinogenesis, DNA repair and experimental therapeutics, particularly for growth factor signaling and measurement of DNA repair activity. Dr. Sun is associate director for translational research at the Cancer Therapy & Research Center (CTRRC) at the UT Health Science Center San Antonio, and is a member of the CTRC Experimental & Developmental Therapeutics Program. CTRC is South Texas’ only National Cancer Institute-designated Cancer Center.

Dr. Vadlamudi, professor of obstetrics and gynecology in the School of Medicine, was elected for distinguished contributions to the field of molecular biology of cancer, particularly using molecular biology tools to study estrogen and co-regulator signaling in cancer. Dr. Vadlamudi is a member of the CTRC Cancer Development & Progression Program.

“We are pleased to count Dr. Sun and Dr. Vadlamudi among our faculty, and as an institution we celebrate and share in their honor today,” said Francisco Gonzalez-Scarano, M.D., dean of the School of Medicine and vice president for medical affairs of the Health Science Center. "Solutions to the scourge of cancer will only come from the laboratories of talented and dedicated scientists such as our new AAAS Fellows. The work they do today will certainly contribute to transformed care for cancer patients at the CTRC and around the world."

Dr. Sun’s laboratory team is interested in multiple research topics. One of his current National Institutes of Health grants studies aging mammary stem cells and therapeutic approaches for breast cancer prevention. Dr. Sun holds the Dietemann Chair in Oncology and this year was awarded support as a Clayton Investigator by the Clayton Foundation for Research for the study of liver cancer of Hispanic patients.

Dr. Vadlamudi’s laboratory team is particularly interested in the hormone estrogen’s signaling, which is implicated in the progression of a number of diseases including breast, endometrial and ovarian cancers. His current grants from the National Cancer Institute explore treatment approaches for treating advanced breast cancer and brain cancer called glioma. His recent grant from the Cancer Prevention & Research Institute of Texas involves development of next-generation anti-estrogens.

This year 347 AAAS members were named Fellows because of their scientifically or socially distinguished efforts to advance science or its applications. The Fellows will be presented with an official certificate and a gold and blue (representing science and engineering, respectively) rosette pin in February at the 2016 AAAS Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C.

The Fellows will be formally announced in the AAAS News & Notes section of the journal Science on Nov. 27.

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The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, with missions of teaching, research and healing, is one of the country’s leading health sciences universities. Its schools of medicine, nursing, dentistry, health professions and graduate biomedical sciences have more than 32,200 alumni who are advancing their fields throughout the world. With six campuses in San Antonio and Laredo, the university has a FY 16 revenue operating budget of $301.8 million and is the primary driver of its community’s $30.6 billion biomedical and health sciences industry. For more information on the many ways “We make lives better,” visit www.uthscsa.edu.