

University of Iowa News Release

May 11, 2010

### **Mullins appointed to new Kolder professorship**



Robert Mullins, Ph.D. (*left*), associate professor of ophthalmology and visual sciences with University of Iowa Health Care, is the inaugural recipient of the Hansjoerg E.J.W. Kolder, M.D., Ph.D., Professorship in Best Disease Research. The five-year appointment was effective April 1.

The professorship was established in the UI Carver Family Center for Macular Degeneration through a gift jointly made by Martin G. and Ruth A. Carver of Muscatine, Iowa, and an anonymous donor to honor Kolder (*right*), who joined the

UI in 1968.

Kolder, who became an emeritus professor in 1995, made important contributions to electro-oculography. This method was used to diagnose Best disease, which is a hereditary form of progressive macular degeneration, before molecular testing was developed. Kolder also excelled as a clinician and surgeon and taught residents for more than 20 years.



"This professorship allows us to honor Dr. Kolder's considerable legacy in a most appropriate and fruitful way -- advancing his pioneering research in Best Disease," said Edwin Stone, M.D., Ph.D., director of the Carver Family Center for Macular Degeneration, and holder of the Seamans-Hauser Chair in Molecular Ophthalmology.

As a mentor to Mullins, Stone added, "The occasion of this professorship recognizing Robert Mullins and his outstanding work further validates the collaborative nature of our research program. Collaboration is an important part of Iowa's culture, one that continues to distinguish us from our peers."

Mullins joined the UI in 2001 and was promoted to associate professor in 2007. He holds a secondary appointment in molecular physiology and biophysics. His primary research interests include the genetics and cell biology of Best disease, the disease mechanism of age-related macular degeneration, especially the role of the choriocapillaris, a layer of tiny blood vessels that help provide oxygen and other essentials to the outer layer of the eye.

"Robert Mullins is ideally qualified for this professorship, and we greatly appreciate Martin and Ruth Carver's generosity that has made this opportunity possible," said Keith Carter, M.D., professor and head of ophthalmology and visual sciences, who also holds the Lillian C. O'Brien and Dr. C. S. O'Brien Chair in Ophthalmology.

Mullins received a bachelor of science degree in biology from Wheaton College in Illinois. He earned a master of science degree in biology and a doctoral degree in cell and molecular biology from Saint Louis University, where he focused on studying drusen in macular degeneration. Mullins also completed postdoctoral research at the UI.

The UI acknowledges the UI Foundation as the preferred channel for private contributions that

benefit all areas of the university. For more information, visit the UI Foundation's Web site at <http://www.uifoundation.org>.

Learn more about Kolder at <http://webeye.ophth.uiowa.edu/dept/Endowment/KolderProf.htm>.

Learn more about Mullins at <http://webeye.ophth.uiowa.edu/dept/BIOGRAPH/mullins.htm>.

STORY SOURCE: University of Iowa Health Care Media Relations, 200 Hawkins Drive, W319 GH, Iowa City, Iowa 52242-1009

MEDIA CONTACT: Becky Soglin, 319-356-7127, [becky-soglin@uiowa.edu](mailto:becky-soglin@uiowa.edu)