

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

Monday, June 1 2015

Peers celebrate leader in devil tumour research

Professor Greg Woods, the immunologist who leads the scientific hunt for a vaccine against the Tasmanian Devil Facial Tumour Disease (DFTD), has been formally recognised for his 30-year contribution to medical research, teaching and the community.

The awarding of the Australian Society for Medical Research Certificate in Recognition of Distinguished Service to Medicine, Science and Community in Tasmania was announced at the ASMR Medical Research Week® annual dinner in Hobart.

Professor Woods, who works for University of Tasmania's Menzies Institute for Medical Research and the School of Medicine, said his enthusiasm for medical research was fired by the job's daily challenges and by seeing outcomes with implications for human health.

Professor Woods joined the University's School of Medicine Pathology Department in 1988, although he was associated with the University while doing his PhD with Professor Ray Lowenthal in the early 1980s.

The Dean of the University's Faculty of Health, Professor Denise Fassett, said Professor Woods played a leading role in the David Collins Leukaemia Foundation, a philanthropic organisation of which he is Vice-President. He has been instrumental in the supervision of about 30 PhD and Masters students and innumerable Honours students, and has been awarded teaching merit awards throughout his career, she said.

Professor Woods' research looks at the regulation of the immune response. He leads the Tasmanian laboratory effort against DFTD and has been awarded several prestigious National Health and Medical Research Council and Australian Research Council grants. He was a key member of the team that won the Sherman Eureka Prize for Environmental Research in 2011 for work on DFTD.

One of Professor Woods' PhD students on the DFTD project at Menzies, Amanda Patchett, was one of two runners-up in the ASMR Medical Research Week® Postgraduate Student Awards for Tasmania.

This award was won by Menzies PhD student Lei Si, who is investigating the health economics of osteoporosis. The other runner-up was Dean Picone, whose PhD at Menzies is looking at blood pressure during exercise in people with type 2 diabetes, and how this relates to organ damage.

The Director of the Menzies Institute for Medical Research, Professor Tom Marwick, congratulated Professor Woods and all student winners. "What we see here is two generations of research excellence and dedication of which we should all be very proud."

Information released by:

Miranda Harman
Marketing and Communications Manager
Menzies Institute for Medical Research
University of Tasmania
Phone: 61 3 6226-7751
61 427 199 562
Email: miranda.harman@utas.edu.au