



For Immediate Release — Tuesday, October 17, 2017

Gairdner awardee Dr. Lewis Kay to present public talks at University of Lethbridge, local high school

Media Availability for Dr. Kay: Thursday, Oct. 19, 11:15 a.m., M4125

For the fifth consecutive year, the University of Lethbridge is one of only 15 universities across Canada selected to host a Gairdner Student Outreach & Gairdner Lecture Program event, bringing one of the world's top scientific researchers to southern Alberta.

From Oct. 19-20, Dr. Lewis Kay, professor, Department of Molecular Genetics, Biochemistry and Chemistry, University of Toronto; senior scientist, Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto will be hosted by the U of L's Alberta RNA Research and Training Institute (ARRTI) and the Canadian Centre for Research in Advanced Fluorine Technologies (C-CRAFT).



Kay is one of five 2017 Canada Gairdner International Laureates who, along with his co-workers, has made important contributions to the field of biomolecular nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) spectroscopy. They have developed methods used to visualize protein molecules in their natural solution environment, shedding new light on how molecules involved in neurodegeneration can form abnormal structures that ultimately lead to diseased states.

These methods extend our understanding of how cellular machines function and how the communication between different parts of these machines can be targeted for the development of drugs in the fight against certain cancers.

"We're extremely fortunate to be a part of the Gairdner program and to be able to bring a researcher such as Dr. Kay to campus," says Dr. Ute Kothe, associate/assistant

professor of biochemistry and ARRTI member. “In addition to his on-campus lecture for faculty and students, he will deliver a lecture to high school students, host a brown bag lunch session with students, tour various facilities on the U of L campus, host a graduate student luncheon and take part in our annual Chinook Symposium.”

A major thrust of the Gairdner Foundation program is to ignite scientific discovery in young minds by making science accessible.

“We believe that science is for everyone,” states a Gairdner Foundation release that indicates Gairdner events across Canada reach more than 3,000 students every year. “With our annual student outreach program, we make current scientific developments relatable, digestible and exciting to audiences of all ages. Our speakers share more than just their world class achievements with student audiences; they put a real face and story to scientific careers and unexpected pathways to success.”

Dr. Trushar Patel, an associate/assistant professor of biochemistry and ARRTI member, says that bringing a researcher the calibre of Kay to campus benefits faculty and students, both undergraduate and graduate.

“Interacting with a world-class researcher like Dr. Kay is one of the most inspirational experiences for any scientist, junior or senior,” says Patel. “We can all learn from Dr. Kay how to strive for the most exciting scientific discoveries that will advance our understanding of human health and ultimately provide the basis for innovative approaches in medicine.”

Kay will kick off his visit with the Gairdner High School Lecture on Thursday, Oct. 19 at 9:45 a.m. at Lethbridge Collegiate Institute, followed by a brown bag lunch session with students. At 2 p.m., he’s at the U of L presenting the Gairdner Free Lecture, NMR Why Bother? Studies of the p97 Molecular Machine Provide an Answer, at 2 p.m. in the University Recital Hall, W570.

On Friday, Kay will take part in a series of meetings and tour the U of L’s ARRTI, C-CRAFT and Canadian Centre for Behavioural Neuroscience facilities before leading a career development discussion at a graduate student luncheon. He will then view the annual Chinook Symposium, which runs from 1 to 5 p.m. in the University Hall Atrium.

To view online: <http://www.uleth.ca/unews/article/gairdner-awardee-dr-lewis-kay-present-public-talks-university-lethbridge-local-high-school>

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