

NEWS

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The American Society of Human Genetics Honors Dr. Huntington Willard as 2009 Allan Award Recipient

Duke Institute for Genome Sciences & Policy Director Huntington F. Willard Honored as 2009 Allan Award Winner at ASHG 59th Annual Meeting

BETHESDA, MD – September 15, 2009 – The American Society of Human Genetics will present the 2009 William Allan Award to Huntington F. Willard, PhD, Director of the Institute for Genome Sciences & Policy (IGSP) at Duke University, in a formal ceremony at the Society's 59th Annual Meeting on October 23, 2009, in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Founded in 1948, the [American Society of Human Genetics \(ASHG\)](#) is the primary professional membership organization for human genetics specialists worldwide, representing nearly 8,000 researchers, academicians, clinicians, genetic counselors, nurses and others with a special interest in this area. The Society's Annual Meeting is the world's largest gathering of human genetics professionals and a forum for renowned experts in the field.

The Allan Award recognizes substantial and far-reaching scientific contributions to human genetics, carried out over a lifetime of scientific inquiry and productivity. One of ASHG's longest-standing and most distinguished awards, the Allan Award was established in 1961 in memory of William Allan, who was one of the first American physicians to conduct extensive research in human genetics.

"I feel incredibly grateful to be named as the recipient of this year's Allan Award," Willard said. "Receiving this prestigious acknowledgement from my colleagues in the human genetics field is a tremendous honor for me and those in my laboratory, and I look forward to accepting the 2009 Allan Award at the Society's Annual Meeting in October."

"Dr. Willard is an outstanding scientific leader, having made seminal findings in the understanding of chromosome and genome structure and behavior," said Dr. Joann Boughman, executive vice president of ASHG. "As a senior scientist and educator, Dr. Willard leads a model organization in genetics – the Institute for Genome Sciences & Policy at Duke University – as well as demonstrating the importance of outreach by teaching undergraduate courses at Duke. He is an outstanding example of a model 'citizen-scientist' in the human genetics field."

Dr. Willard is well known in the ASHG community, having been a faculty member at University of Toronto, Stanford University, and then professor and chair at Case Western Reserve University. He was president of ASHG in 2001, and has held leadership positions in many other genetics organizations, as well as being the co-founder and executive editor of *Human Molecular Genetics*.

Throughout his career, Dr. Willard's work has been instrumental in the understanding of human chromosome behavior. He has completed pioneering research into the behavior of human chromosome centromeres and performed insightful and essential studies into the mechanisms of X chromosome inactivation. His continued basic research endeavors in genome biology have only been enhanced by his foresight and more expansive vision for human genetics and the role our research community has in biomedical sciences and policy.

The Society recognizes the significant achievements of the Allan Award winner by honoring the recipient with a \$10,000 prize and an engraved medal. The 2009 Allan Award will be presented to Dr. Willard in a formal ceremony at the ASHG 59th Annual Meeting that will take place on Friday, October 23, 2009, at 4:00 p.m. in the Mid Pacific Conference Center at the Hilton Hawaiian Village Hotel in Honolulu. Dr. Willard will deliver the Allan Award Address immediately following the award presentation ceremony.

ABOUT THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF HUMAN GENETICS

Founded in 1948, the American Society of Human Genetics (ASHG) is the primary professional membership organization for human genetics specialists worldwide. The nearly 8,000 members of ASHG include researchers, academicians, clinicians, laboratory practice professionals, genetic counselors, nurses and others involved in or with a special interest in human genetics.

The Society's mission is to serve research scientists, health professionals and the public by providing forums to: (1) share research results through the Society's Annual Meeting and in the *American Journal of Human Genetics (AJHG)*; (2) advance genetic research by advocating for research support; (3) educate current and future genetics professionals, health care providers, advocates, policymakers, educators, students and the general public about all aspects of human genetics; and (4) promote genetic services and support responsible social and scientific policies. For more information about ASHG, please visit <http://www.ashg.org/>.

ASHG 2009 ANNUAL MEETING: PRESS INFORMATION & ONLINE REGISTRATION

For more information about the ASHG 2009 meeting, our press guidelines and policies, as well as details about this year's press briefing sessions, live webcasts of ASHG media events, and expert speakers available for interview, please visit: <http://www.ashg.org/2009meeting/pages/press.shtml/>. Complimentary meeting registration will be available to members of the media who provide appropriate press credentials identification. To pre-register to attend the 2009 Annual Meeting, please complete the online press registration form at the following Web site URL: http://www.ashg.org/2009meeting/pages/press_register.shtml/. For general information about the ASHG 59th Annual Meeting, visit: <http://www.ashg.org/2009meeting/>.

Please direct all press inquiries to ASHG Press Office, ASHG Communications Manager, ~~media at~~ press@ashg.org, or by phone at 301-634-7346 (o) or 240-281-2386 (c).

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