

Honorary Member – Professor Lidia Larizza

Lidia Larizza, Professor of Medical Genetics, Director of the Post-Lauream School in Medical Genetics, University of Milan, and President of E.C.A. from 2006 until September 2009, has been elected an Honorary Member in recognition of both her outstanding contributions to chromosome research and her leadership as President of the Association after having been a Board Member since its foundation.

During her career, she has published more than 170 peer-reviewed publications on cancer genetics and cytogenetics. As Research Director of the Laboratory of Human Molecular Cytogenetics and Medical Genetics, Istituto Auxologico Italiano, Milan, since 1993, Lidia has led many research projects ranging from the chromosomal and gene basis of mental retardation and autism to cancer genetics (with a focus on acute myeloid leukemia and the c-kit gene, pituitary adenomas and HMGA2, Glioma and MARK4). She has been involved in micro-deletion and genomics studies of 17q11.2. Recently her group identified the gene responsible for Poikiloderma with Neutropenia, a rare syndrome predisposing to myelodysplasia and acute myeloid leukaemia. It represents a variant of the cancer predisposition syndrome Rothmund-Thomson on which Lidia has been working for many years.

After completing her medical doctorate and a CNR Fellowship at the University of Pavia, Lidia became a Research Fellow at the Department of Genetics, Stanford University, California in the early 1970s, working with the then recently established Italian population geneticist Professor Luigi Luca Cavalli-Sforza. In 1986, she became Professor of Medical Genetics at the University of Milan, a position she still holds in conjunction with her medical school and research directorships.

At E.C.A., she became a Board Member when the Association was founded, and has been coordinator of the E.C.A. Working Group on Solid Tumours since 2000. She was President of the extremely successful Fourth European Cytogenetics Conference held in September 2003 in Bologna, Italy, and after a period as Vice-President of E.C.A., became President in September 2006. She was President of AICM (Associazione Italiana Citogenetica Medica) and has now been elected President of SIGU (Società Italiana di Genetica Umana).

With her leadership, Lidia has increased the prominence and influence of the European Cytogeneticists Association and made its conferences the most successful in the field, attracting the best cytogenetics work from throughout the world. As she moves forward to new activities, we look forward to hearing about these at our future conferences in Porto and beyond.

E.C.A.
Honorary Member

Professor
Lidia Larizza



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Professor
Albert Schinzel

Honorary Member – Professor Albert Schinzel

Professor Albert Schinzel, who has been elected an honorary member of the E.C.A., was President of the Association from 1999 until September 2006. He has been an active member of the Society since its foundation and was involved in many of the developments. When he became president cytogenetics was a flourishing and promising sector of medical genetics. He was very successful in not only maintaining but also increasing the expertise in this field thus enhancing the image of the Association.

Albert was born in Vienna and studied medicine in Innsbruck, Vienna and Berlin, before working in Oulu (Finland) and Seattle (USA) and moving to the Institute of Medical Genetics at the University of Zurich, becoming an associate professor in 1986 and a full professor and Director in 1996. Besides being President of the E.C.A., he has also been President of the European Society of Human Genetics and the Swiss Society of Medical Genetics.

His laboratory has been built around modern techniques applied with meticulous care to large numbers of cases. Albert's encyclopaedic knowledge has led to the discovery and documentation of many correlations between aberrant karyotypes and abnormal development. His earlier and ongoing work includes analysis of prenatal and postnatal cases involving mosaicism and triploidy as well as structural chromosome abnormalities. In the last decade, exploiting the strengths of molecular cytogenetics, he has discovered many microdeletions and cryptic aberrations, and has been involved in identifying complex cases of uniparental disomy. Among his

many publications and achievements, the 1000-page "Catalog of Unbalanced Chromosome Aberrations in Man" and the Human Cytogenetics Database on CD with clinical and cytogenetic information on 1,200 chromosome aberrations have found a place in every human cytogenetic laboratory. Many of his papers are essential reading in courses on medical genetics. No less than five medical syndromes with developmental disorders are now associated with Schinzel, in particular the Schinzel-Giedion congenital neurodegenerative terminal syndrome.

To many members of E.C.A., Professor Schinzel is known as the Director, organizer and key contributor to teaching in the yearly 'Goldrain Course on Clinical Cytogenetics' which is organized with the support of the Association and was held for the fourth time in 2009. He has put together an outstanding programme ranging from classical and molecular cytogenetics to clinical findings associated with chromosomal imbalances. In 2009 Albert launched the first 'Goldrain Course on Prenatal Genetic Diagnosis' meant for obstetricians, clinical geneticists and (molecular) cytogeneticists.

Albert is among the world's foremost cytogeneticists. He is committed to the highest quality of research and diagnosis and to the writing and publication of key reference works in cytogenetics in which he integrates vast amounts of knowledge. He is devoted to teaching and development of the next generation of cytogeneticists and to developing the future of the subject, not least through E.C.A.

Pat Heslop-Harrison profiled the new Honorary Members of E.C.A.

E.C.A. Membership

The total number of members now stands at **1319**, comprising:

1165 active members, 134 associated members from non-European countries, 12 honorary members, 8 patient and other organizations.

There are E.C.A. members in **39 European Countries** and E.C.A. associated members in **32 non-European Countries**.