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Exploring the Frontiers of Cancer Research: Nobel Prize Winner J. Michael Bishop, Seminal Leader in the Detection and Treatment of Cancer, will Lecture at UCSB

J. Michael Bishop, MD, who shared the 1989 Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine for discovering that the seeds of cancer are in our genetic makeup, will deliver a free public lecture at UC Santa Barbara April 22 at 7:30 p.m. in the Corwin Pavilion.

His presentation, titled

"Opening the Black Box of Cancer," is part of the Frontiers in Cancer Research lecture series that has brought prominent scientists to UCSB to discuss their groundbreaking advances in the treatment and prevention of cancer.

The Frontiers of Cancer Research series is made possible by the generous support of the Cancer Center of Santa Barbara and the Doreen J. Putrah Cancer Research Foundation, as well as UCSB's College of Letters and Science and College of Engineering.

Last month, Bishop, who is chancellor of UC San Francisco, was awarded the National Medal of Science, the nation's highest honor for science and technology.

The award honors individuals in a variety of fields for pioneering scientific research that has led to a better understanding of the world, as well as to the innovations and technologies that give the United States its global economic edge.

Bishop shared the 1989 Nobel Prize with Harold Varmus, a former UCSF professor of microbiology and immunology who today is president and CEO of Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center.

Together, they directed the research that led to the discovery of proto-oncogenes—normal genes that can be converted to cancer genes by genetic damage.

This work eventually led to the recognition that all cancer probably arises from damage to normal genes, and provided new strategies for the detection and treatment of cancer.

Bishop has devoted his research to the study of proto-oncogenes—their functions in normal cells and the manner in which they become cancer genes.

Bishop, who is also the Arthur and Toni Rembe Rock Distinguished Professor, University Professor, and Professor of Microbiology and Immunology at UCSF, began his research career working on the replication of poliovirus.

Soon after arriving at UCSF in 1968, he shifted his attention to Rous sarcoma virus, hoping to explore the fundamental mechanisms of tumorigenesis.

In 1970, he was joined by Varmus.

Bishop has served as a member and chair of the National Cancer Advisory Board and is currently a member of the Advisory Committee to the Director of the National Institutes of Health.

He has been elected to the National Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Medicine, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

He graduated from Gettysburg College in 1957 and from Harvard Medical School in 1962, and holds several honorary degrees.

Bishop continues to teach medical students and supervise a research team studying the molecular pathogenesis of cancer.

He is the author of more than 300 research publications and reviews, and of the book, "How to Win the Nobel Prize: An Unexpected Life in Science," published by Harvard University Press.

For more information call (805) 893-5819.

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