

# ISNV

*International Society for NeuroVirology*

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## Avindra Nath 2012 Pioneer in NeuroVirology

Joseph Berger M.D., Lexington, KY

The International Society for Neurovirology honors Dr. Avindra Nath with the 2012 Pioneer in NeuroVirology Award. Research from Dr. Nath's group is at the heart of many noteworthy findings regarding molecular mechanisms by which HIV damages cells of the CNS. It is widely accepted that HIV injures neural cells by both direct and indirect mechanisms. This dogma was established in large part by findings from Dr. Nath and colleagues. Early in the HIV epidemic, Dr. Nath and colleagues described a mechanism by which the HIV protein Tat depolarized neurons by activating NMDA receptors. These observations prompted an explosion in the field of HIV protein-mediated neurotoxicity studies and paved the way for the hypothesis that HIV damages cells of the CNS in multiple ways. Furthermore, Dr. Nath's work on the crosstalk dynamics among glia, neurons and virus pioneered a new direction for investigations of viral-host crosstalk and molecular mimicry. Expanding upon findings regarding the crucial and unique roles that the neuroimmune system plays in the progression of HIV CNS disease, he conducted important clinical studies addressing the increased risks of HIV patients for developing an immune cell-mediated encephalitis called CNS-immune reconstitution inflammatory syndrome (IRIS). A review of the more than 200 publications from Dr. Nath and colleagues clearly demonstrates a career conducting true translational science. Dr. Nath's work has led to the development of several



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neuroprotective compounds that are in various stages of clinical trials. His significant and most extensive contributions toward unraveling the complicated molecular crosstalk between virus and host are equally matched by findings from his clinical studies that have shaped current trends in best practices for the care of HIV patients and patients suffering from other CNS diseases.

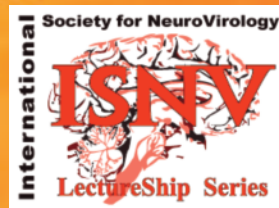
Dr. Nath began his medical career in 1982 after receiving an M.D. degree from the Christian Medical College in Ludhiana, India. He then completed neurology residency and a neuroimmunology fellowship at the University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston. In 1988, he was a Visiting Associate in the Section of Molecular Virology and Genetics, Laboratory of Viral and Molecular Pathogenesis at the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS). In 1990, Dr. Nath joined the faculty at the University of Manitoba, Departments of Internal Medicine and Medical Microbiology, where he remained until he was recruited

by the Department of Neurology at the University of Kentucky in 1997. Dr. Nath then joined the Johns Hopkins University in 2002, where he served as Director of both the Division of Neuroimmunology and Neurological Infections and the Neurovirology and Neuroimmunology Laboratory. He also served as Co-Director of the Neuro-AIDS Translational Research Center. Recently, Dr. Nath joined the NINDS in Bethesda, Maryland as the Clinical Director of the intramural program where he plans to build the clinical program through recruitment of new faculty and the development of a Translational Neuroscience Center.

His commitment to education and to promoting promising young researchers is evident by the scores of undergraduates, graduate and medical students, residents, and junior faculty who were trained under his guidance. Dr. Nath is a founding member of ISNV and has been an active part of the society since 1988. He is currently the Vice President of ISNV, and continues to be a driving force behind the growth and success of ISNV.

## The Pioneer in NeuroVirology Award

The Pioneer in NeuroVirology Award is presented in recognition of outstanding individual achievement in the field of neurovirology. Each International Symposium on NeuroVirology honors a worthy recipient of this award. Pioneers in NeuroVirology have been recognized by the International Society for NeuroVirology since 1999. The International Society for NeuroVirology will accept nominations for the 12th International Symposium on NeuroVirology to be held Fall of 2013. Please send all inquiries and nominations to [mail@isnv.org](mailto:mail@isnv.org).



### Past recipients of the Pioneer in NeuroVirology Award



Richard T. Johnson, M.D.  
Johns Hopkins University  
School of Medicine

1999



Volker ter Meulen, M.D., Ph.D.  
University of Wurzburg

2000



Neal Nathanson, M.D.  
University of Pennsylvania

2002



Michael B. A. Oldstone, M.D.  
Scripps Research Institute

2003



Hilary Koprowski, M.D.  
Thomas Jefferson  
University

2004



Opendra Narayan, D.V.M., Ph.D.  
University of Kansas  
Medical Center

2006



Donald H. Gilden, M.D.  
University of Colorado  
Health Sciences Center

2007



Diane Griffin, M.D., Ph.D.  
Johns Hopkins University  
School of Hygiene &  
Public Health

2009



Kamel Khalili Ph.D. Temple  
University School of Medicine

2010

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