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## **Malaria Vaccine Pioneer Awarded the Albert B. Sabin Gold Medal in Vaccinology**

*Sabin Vaccine Institute recognizes Ruth S. Nussenzweig  
for her groundbreaking work on malaria vaccine*

*Katherine L. O'Brien to receive Sabin's first annual Young Investigator Award*

**Washington, D.C. (Tuesday, May 6, 2008)** – Continuing its 15-year tradition of recognizing extraordinary accomplishments and groundbreaking research in the field of vaccinology, Sabin Vaccine Institute (SVI) today awarded Dr. Ruth S. Nussenzweig the 2008 Albert B. Sabin Gold Medal for her outstanding malaria-focused initiatives. SVI has also named Dr. Katherine O'Brien the first-ever recipient of the Sabin Young Investigator Award for her focus on pneumococcal research, which has helped to improve the lives of millions.

Dr. Ruth S. Nussenzweig, a pioneer in research who paved the way for the development of vaccines against malaria, becomes the 16<sup>th</sup> recipient of the Sabin Gold Medal for her dedication to the investigation and prevention of tropical and parasitic diseases. She forged ahead with research that demonstrated an immune response against the malarial parasite, breaking new ground in the development of vaccines against malaria, some of which are now in clinical trials. If implemented, an effective malaria vaccine could prevent more than one million deaths per year, mostly in Sub-Saharan Africa.

“Dr. Nussenzweig is a true champion in the world of vaccine research and disease prevention,” said Dr. Peter Hotez, President of Sabin Vaccine Institute. “With up to 500 million cases of malaria occurring worldwide each year and more than one million deaths annually, the impact that an effective malarial vaccine will have on global health is profound. Dr. Nussenzweig’s pioneering work has helped put the development of such a vaccine within reach.”

Receiving the Sabin Gold Medal, Dr. Nussenzweig joins an impressive group of recipients that have made extraordinary advancements in vaccine discoveries or employed vaccines to combat vaccine-preventable diseases in order to improve lives around the world. The medal commemorates the legacy of late Dr. Sabin, who

discovered the oral polio vaccine and worked tirelessly during his lifetime to see it and other vaccines utilized globally.

“Malaria is a disease that threatens more than 40 percent of the world’s population, and kills a child every thirty seconds,” said Dr. Hotez. “Dr. Nussenzweig’s discoveries have paved the way for prevention, and her contributions are certain to change the face of global health.”

Currently, Dr. Nussenzweig is the C.V. Starr professor of Medical and Parasitology and Pathology at New York University’s School of Medicine. She has served on the faculty of NYU’s School of Medicine since 1965, and since 1972 has served in the Department of Preventative Medicine to focus on disease prevention. Dr. Nussenzweig is currently a member of the National Academy of Medicine and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and has served on the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committees of the World Health Organization and the Pew Foundation, among other groups, and is the author of over 200 peer-reviewed publications.

Sabin also named Dr. Katherine L. O’Brien the first recipient of the Sabin Young Investigator Award, which was established in 2008 to honor promising young scientists who are committed to fighting preventable diseases.

“This year, Sabin created the Young Investigator Award to recognize the future of our field. Dr. O’Brien’s commitment to improving the lives and health of the world’s children is an outstanding example of the talent that exists,” said Dr. Philip K. Russell, Chairman of the Sabin Board of Trustees. “Her research exemplifies the vision of Dr. Sabin and demonstrates the promise of the next generation of scientists working to eliminate disease. We are proud to recognize both her work and her promise as a pioneer in the field of public health.”

Dr. O’Brien, a pediatric infectious disease physician and epidemiologist, has played a critical role in the clinical trial of the pneumococcal conjugate vaccine among American Indians. She currently leads the Johns Hopkins’ Center for American Indian Health’s Infectious Disease Group, conducting clinical trials of vaccines for diseases of importance to American Indian Tribes. She also serves as associate director for vaccine research strategy at GAVI’s PneumoADIP, a four-year, \$30 million effort funded by GAVI to accelerate the development and implementation of lifesaving pneumococcal vaccines for the world’s poorest children.

Sabin Vaccine Institute (SVI) is a Washington DC-based 501c(3) medical research and advocacy organization dedicated to reducing human suffering from infectious and neglected tropical diseases (NTDs). Through its efforts of vaccine research, development and advocacy, greater access to vaccines and essential medicines for millions stuck in poverty is possible. Founded in 1993, SVI continues to work with prestigious institutions, such as George Washington University, to further its research efforts.

For more information about the Sabin Vaccine Institute, the Sabin Gold Medal or the Gold Medal Award Ceremony, visit [www.sabin.org](http://www.sabin.org).

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