



Global Virus Network (GVN) Presents Mosquito-Borne Virus Expert Scott Weaver with First Robert C. Gallo Award for Scientific Excellence

The Award was presented during a meeting organized by Emory University and co-sponsored by the GVN on the Zika virus

May 2, 2016, Atlanta, GA: The [Global Virus Network \(GVN\)](#), representing 35 Centers of Excellence and 5 Affiliates in 26 countries, and comprising foremost experts in every class of virus causing disease in humans, today announced Scott Weaver, MS, PhD, as the first recipient of the GVN Robert C. Gallo Award for Scientific Excellence. Dr. Weaver is Chair of GVN's Chikungunya and [Zika Task Forces](#) as well as director of the University of Texas Medical Branch's Institute for Human Infections and Immunity and scientific director of the Galveston National Laboratory, a GVN Center of Excellence. The Award was presented by José Esparza, MD, PhD, president of the GVN and Raymond Schinazi, PhD, Hon Dsc, member of the GVN Board of Advisors and Zika Task Force and the Frances Winship Walters Professor at Emory University. The honor was bestowed during a scientific meeting entitled, "Bridging the Sciences: Zika Virus," organized by Emory University and co-sponsored by GVN in Atlanta, Georgia May 1-3, 2016.

"It was unanimous when deciding who should receive the inaugural Award, and it is my great pleasure that Dr. Scott Weaver will be the first honoree," said Dr. Robert C. Gallo, co-founder and scientific director of the Global Virus Network (GVN), The Homer and Martha Gudelsky Distinguished Professor in Medicine, co-founder and director of the Institute of Human Virology at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, a GVN Center of Excellence. "Dr. Weaver is not only a leader in the GVN, but an exceptional public health virologist who is most deserving of this recognition. A warm congratulations to Dr. Weaver."

Scott Weaver, MS, PhD Biography

Scott Weaver, MS, PhD, is a virologist and vector biologist who advances our understanding of arthropod-borne viruses (arboviruses) and their transmission by mosquitoes, and develops vaccines to control the diseases that they cause. As a faculty member since 1994 at the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) in Galveston, he has developed an internationally recognized research program encompassing the ecology and epidemiology of enzootic arbovirus transmission cycles, virus-mosquito interactions, and emergence mechanisms of epidemic

strains. Dr Weaver utilizes his broad training to develop interdisciplinary approaches that have had major impacts on our understanding of arboviral disease emergence. These include Venezuelan equine encephalitis, for which the international research groups he has led determined the ecological and evolutionary sources as well as mechanisms of epidemic strain emergence. Dr Weaver's recent studies have focused on chikungunya virus, its history of emergence from wildlife African cycles, mosquito-adaptive evolution, and its viral genetic constraints, as well as Zika virus, which arrived in the Americas and is causing a major epidemic associated with congenital microcephaly and Guillain Barré syndrome. His research on tropical arboviral diseases has included major field studies in Venezuela, Colombia, Peru, Mexico, Panama, Senegal, and Kenya. Dr Weaver has also developed promising new vaccines for several of these arboviral diseases. The chikungunya vaccine developed in his laboratory, licensed to Takeda Pharmaceuticals and patented in 19 countries, is in late preclinical evaluation.

Dr Weaver's research has led to over 260 peer-reviewed publications in scientific journals, and over 70 reviews and book chapters. He has mentored 18 PhD students as well as 23 postdoctoral fellows, and many have gone on into prominent, independent scientific positions in government, academia, and industry. Dr Weaver's research and educational contributions have been recognized with many local and international awards. In 2014 he received the Walter Reed medal, awarded every three years by the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene for distinguished career accomplishments in tropical medicine research. His many leadership positions include his current role as chair of the Global Virus Network's Chikungunya and Zika Task Forces. He also serves as an editor for several major tropical medicine and microbiology journals. At UTMB, Dr Weaver leads the Institute for Human Infections and Immunity (IHII), which coordinates infectious disease research as the administrative home of the Galveston National Laboratory (one of two NIH-funded national biocontainment facilities); the Sealy Center for Vaccine Development; the Center for Biodefense and Emerging Infectious Diseases; and the Center for Tropical Diseases. He is also scientific director of the Galveston National Laboratory, and interim chair of the Department of Microbiology and Immunology.

About the Global Virus Network (GVN)

The Global Virus Network (GVN) is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization, comprised of leading medical virologists from 35 Centers of Excellence and 5 Affiliates in 26 countries. The GVN's mission is to combat current and emerging pandemic viral threats through international collaborative research, training the next generation of medical virologists, and advocacy. For more information, please visit www.gvn.org. Follow us on Twitter @GlobalVirusNews

Media Contact:

Nora Grannell
410-706-1954
ngrannell@gvn.org