

# Plenary Session

## State-of-the-Art Lecture

### Researcher to Describe Role of Stem Cells in Diabetes



Douglas A. Melton

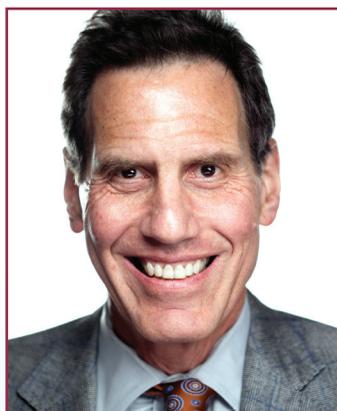
Stem cells offer hope for treatment of a host of diseases, and diabetes could be one of the most important. The potential of “Stem Cells to Understand and Treat Diabetes” will be the subject of a state-of-the-art lecture by Douglas A. Melton, PhD, on Thursday, Nov. 13.

Dr. Melton is the Saris University Professor at Harvard. He is also an investigator at the Howard Hughes Medical Institute and co-chair of the department of stem cell and regenerative biology at the Harvard Stem Cell Institute. Dr. Melton’s laboratory studies how cell differentiation is directed during development and the role of stem cells in tissue regeneration. The lab’s particular focus is the study of the genes and cells that make pancreatic tissue with the goal of making pancreatic cells for transplantation into people with diabetes.

Dr. Melton earned his doctorate in molecular biology from Cambridge University in the U.K. He has been with Harvard since 1981, and he and his wife serve as co-masters of a residential house for about 450 Harvard College undergraduates.

The author or co-author of more than 170 scientific publications, he is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Medicine, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. His many awards include the Lounsberry Medal from the National Academy of Sciences and the Joslin Medal from the Joslin Diabetes Center. In recognition of his advocacy for stem cell research, he was chosen as the *Scientific American* policy leader of the year in 2007. He has twice been named one of *Time* magazine’s 100 most influential people in the world.

### ABIM President to Speak on Luring in New Physicians



Richard J. Baron

The president of the American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) will deliver the Christopher R. Blagg, MD, Lectureship in Renal Disease and Public Policy on the topic “Opportunities and Challenges: Attracting the Next Generation” on Thursday, Nov. 13.

In addition to leading ABIM, Richard J. Baron, MD, also heads the ABIM Foundation in Philadelphia. ABIM is a certifying board that works with 250,000 physicians in 19 specialties—about one in four practicing physicians in the United States. Dr. Baron leads a staff of 200.

Previously, Dr. Baron served as group director of seamless care models at the

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Innovation Center, where he led efforts related to accountable care organizations and primary care. Prior to his CMS appointment, he practiced general internal medicine and geriatrics in Philadelphia at a practice that has been a pioneer in the adoption of electronic health records in the small practice environment. Before joining the federal government, he also served on the board and a technology advisory committee of the National Quality Forum as well as on the standards committee of the National Committee for Quality Assurance.

Dr. Baron served as chief medical officer of Health Partners, a not-for-profit Medicaid HMO set up by four teaching hospitals in Philadelphia, from 1988 to 1996. He was the architect of a best practices program, funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Center for Health Care Strategies, in which he worked with Medicaid health plans around the country to improve the quality of care for their members. This program reached plans serving more than half of the Medicaid managed care population in the United States.

Dr. Baron co-chairs the Public Health–Health Care Collaboration Workgroup, which provides recommendations to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. He is also a member of the newly formed Commonwealth Fund advisory group on health care reform, which aims to improve outcomes and lower costs for high-need, high-cost patients and vulnerable, low-income populations.

Dr. Baron received his medical degree from Yale University. He completed house staff training at New York University-Bellevue Medical Center and served a three-year obligation in the National Health Service Corps in rural Tennessee.

*ASN gratefully acknowledges the Northwest Kidney Centers and its contributors for support of the Christopher R. Blagg, MD, Lectureship in Renal Disease and Public Policy. ASN thanks its Public Policy Board and the Renal Physicians Association for assistance with this session.*

### Brenner Lectureship to Look at Glomerular Disease



Martin R. Pollak

A leading researcher into the genetic basis of kidney disease will deliver the Barry M. Brenner, MD, Endowed Lectureship on Thursday, Nov. 13. Martin R. Pollak, MD, will speak on “APOL1 and Glomerular Disease.”

Dr. Pollak is the chief of the renal division at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston. He is also professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School and an associate member of the Broad Institute.

African-Americans are at disproportionate risk for nondiabetic kidney disease, and particularly focal and segmental glomerulosclerosis (FSGS). Most of this disparity is due to two variants of the

APOL1 gene. Dr. Pollak’s work has shown that two common coding variants in the APOL1 gene confer resistance to trypanosomiasis, or sleeping sickness, a serious disease in some regions of Africa. But the variants also confer a sevenfold to tenfold increased susceptibility to FSGS and hypertension-associated kidney disease. His laboratory is currently working to identify the mechanisms by which these mutations in the APOL1 gene lead to a greater propensity for kidney damage.

Dr. Pollak serves on the scientific advisory board of the NephCure Foundation and was on the FSGS task force of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. For ASN, he has chaired the genetic subcommittee and served as a member of the program committee and the basic science committee.

He has served as an editorial reviewer for the *Journal of Clinical Investigation*; *Nephrology*, *Dialysis, and Transplantation*; and the *American Journal of Nephrology*.

He has received a physician scientist award from the National Institutes of Health as well as an achievement award and the Marilyn Farquhar Award for Podocyte Biology from the NephCure Foundation.

Dr. Pollak attended medical school at New York University School of Medicine. He completed his internship and residency in internal medicine at Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center. He completed a fellowship in nephrology at Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston and postdoctoral training in genetics at Harvard Medical School. He was a member of the department of medicine at Brigham and Women’s Hospital of Harvard before being named to his current position.

*ASN gratefully acknowledges Monarch Pharmaceuticals for support of the Barry M. Brenner, MD, Endowed Lectureship.*