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UVM's Russell Tracy Honored with American Heart Association 2015 Distinguished Scientist Award

University of Vermont (UVM) College of Medicine Professor of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Russell Tracy, Ph.D., was awarded the Distinguished Scientist designation by the American Heart Association (AHA)/American Stroke Association (ASA) during the Opening Session at the AHA 2015 Scientific Sessions on November 8, 2015 in Orlando, Fla.

In receiving this distinction, Tracy, who is a Fellow of the AHA, joins “a prominent group of scientists and clinicians whose work has importantly advanced our understanding of cardiovascular diseases and stroke,” according to the AHA. Created in 2003, the award recognizes AHA/ASA members for significant, original and sustained scientific contributions that have advanced the association's mission of “Building healthier lives, free of cardiovascular diseases and stroke.”

Currently serving as interim senior associate dean for research at the UVM College of Medicine, Tracy is also director of the Laboratory for Clinical Biochemistry Research (LCBR) and currently serves on the Board of Trustees of the UVM Medical Center and is a Distinguished Investigator of the Cardiovascular Research Institute of Vermont. From 2001 until 2009, he served as senior associate dean for research and academic affairs at the College of Medicine.

Tracy received a B.S. degree from LeMoyne College, a Ph.D. in biochemistry from Syracuse University and completed a postdoctoral fellowship in clinical chemistry at the Mayo Clinic. He also has ABCC Board certification as a clinical chemist.

In the mid-1980s, Tracy began work in cardiovascular clinical trials and in the late 1980s, added epidemiological science, which has become his major area of interest. His research focuses on coagulation, inflammation and adaptive immune systems in cardiovascular disease (CVD), and other chronic diseases. Tracy has made major contributions to our understanding of inflammation in atherosclerosis and as a major cause of CVD and non-CVD morbidity and mortality in “well-controlled” HIV infected individuals. Most recently, his lab has focused on the

role of chronic infections, including CMV, HIV and HCV, in the regulation of adaptive immunity, and the implications for CVD.

NIH-funded since 1984, Tracy is involved in a broad range of molecular and genetic epidemiological studies, serving as core lab director, biorepository director, and/or as a steering committee member on many of them, including: the Cardiovascular Health Study; the Multi-Ethnic Study of Atherosclerosis (MESA); the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute's (NHLBI) Heart Failure Network; NHLBI's HIV-CVD Consortium; and NHLBI's Exome Sequencing Program. The LCBR Biological Specimen Repository is a major national resource, currently housing more than four million samples in almost 200 ultracold freezers.

Tracy has more than 600 scientific publications, and has received numerous honors during his career, including the American Association of Clinical Chemistry Bernie Zak Award for Research, the University of Oklahoma Kelly West Lecturer, Emory University Distinguished Visiting Professor in Pathology and University of Kentucky Gill Heart Institute Visiting Professor. He serves currently on the Office of AIDS Research Working Group on HIV and Aging, and has participated in many NHLBI, National Institute on Aging and National Institute on Allergy and Infectious Diseases workshops and planning sessions. He has done extensive mentoring of graduate students, postdoctoral fellows and junior faculty, and has served on the advisory boards of several training programs around the country.

Tracy resides in Colchester, Vt.

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