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UIC Professor to Receive Prestigious Dawson Biotechnology Award

Honoree is a leader in identifying how new antibiotics interact with the ribosome.

Alexandria, Va.—The [American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy](#) will recognize a pharmacy educator from the [University of Illinois at Chicago](#) (UIC) for his contributions to contemporary **teaching and scholarship in biotechnology**. Alexander S. Mankin, Ph.D., will receive the prestigious [Paul R. Dawson Biotechnology Award](#) during the **AACP Annual Meeting, [Pharmacy Education 2013](#)**, in Chicago, Illinois, July 13-17.

Mankin has been at the forefront of the UIC College of Pharmacy's efforts to advance biotechnology at the graduate and professional levels. As the associate director, and then the director of the Center for Pharmaceutical Biotechnology, he helped to establish a formal specialization in pharmaceutical biotechnology within the pharmacognosy graduate program and has served as coordinator of this track for more than 15 years. Under his direction, the track flourished and developed into an important venue for graduate education at the college. Nearly all of the graduates from the biotechnology track are currently pursuing careers in pharmaceutical industry and in academia.

“Biotechnology today is not only genetically modified foods and engineered microorganisms, but it is primarily the basic science that feeds the applied research,” said Mankin. He called the award an “awesome” achievement.

Mankin is an outstanding scientist whose work has provided new approaches for drug discovery. His research in two major areas—the mechanisms of action for ribosome-targeted antibiotics and the fundamental mechanisms of protein synthesis—led to understanding of the mechanisms of action of several important antibiotics and developing new ways for discovery of novel antibiotics.

Mankin's work has made several breakthrough contributions that put him in the front line of antibiotic research. His research established the site and mechanism of action of the antibiotic linezolid—the first new class of antibiotics in 35 years. His mutational and biochemical studies showed that linezolid acts upon the ribosomal peptidyl transferase center and that resistance to this drug can originate from mutations in ribosomal RNA.

“Shura's work in elucidating the mechanism of antibiotic action will pave new ways to consider the effective treatment of serious infections—it is truly at the cutting edge of science,” said Jerry Bauman, Pharm.D., FCCP, FACC, dean of the UIC College of Pharmacy. “He is a wonderful leader in our college, not only leading by example but also in mentoring young faculty for a career in pharmaceutical education and research. Shura is so deserving of this prestigious award; we are extremely lucky to have him in our college.”

The most recent work in the Mankin lab may have a transformative influence on the way protein synthesis inhibitory antibiotics are viewed and developed. His new paper published in *Cell* [Kannan et al., 2012] demonstrates that one of the most important class of antibacterials, macrolides, selectively inhibit production of individual proteins in the bacterial cells and that inhibitory action of the drug correlates with the spectrum of inhibited proteins. This discovery opens new ways for development of superior antibiotics and other drugs acting upon protein synthesis.

Mankin has published more than 100 papers in leading journals since 1981, including *Nature*, PNAS, and *Molecular Cell*. His expertise has led him to write some of the most definitive papers on his research areas, with his work on linezolid being cited many times by other scientists in the drug discovery field. He is currently principal investigator on two separate grants from the National Institutes of Health, one from the National Science Foundation, and a co-PI on a DARPA grant (the Department of Defense).

“Research in the field of antibacterial agents is critically important to healthcare around the world and Dr. Mankin’s work has been groundbreaking,” said Lucinda L. Maine, Ph.D., R.Ph., AACP executive vice president and CEO. “He brings additional prestige to the 2013 Paul R. Dawson Biotechnology Award.”

The [2013 AACP Annual Meeting](#) will be held July 13-17 at the Hyatt Regency Chicago. The conference offers educational programming, exhibits, networking events and award presentations. Registration fees are waived for credentialed journalists. Visit the [AACP Web site](#) or contact our media relations representative for more information.

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About AACP

Founded in 1900, the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy is the national organization representing the interests of pharmacy education. AACP comprises 129 accredited colleges and schools of pharmacy, including more than 6,500 faculty, approximately 60,000 students enrolled in professional programs and 5,100 individuals pursuing graduate study. To learn more about AACP, visit www.aacp.org.

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