



The foundation  
of kidney care.

## NEWS RELEASE

### The Medal for Research Excellence 2009 Award Recipient

**"Dr. Sue Quaggin is a central figure in the Canadian and international nephrology communities, an outstanding basic scientist, a patient-centered clinical investigator, and an overall 'ambassador of the kidney'."**

*Dr. Brendan Barrett, Scientific Co-Chair of The Kidney Foundation of Canada's Research Council*

**December 11, 2009** – Montreal, Quebec - **Dr. Susan E. Quaggin** has been awarded The Kidney Foundation of Canada's 2009 Medal for Research Excellence for exceptional work that has extensively improved the lives of people living with kidney disease.

Following her post-doctoral training at Yale University, Dr. Quaggin embarked on a study that led to a landmark discovery: the podocyte. This cell is vital to developing healthy kidneys, hearts and lungs. Podocytes help form the glomeruli (the kidney's filtration barrier) that remove excess fluids and wastes. Their discovery and study is fundamental to understanding kidney physiology and disease states. Her basic research findings have also led to an exponential increase in the understanding of the molecular mechanisms that underlie common kidney diseases such as diabetic nephropathy and nephrotic syndrome. She is currently studying glomerulosclerosis, a condition caused by diabetes. Glomerulosclerosis results in the scarring of the glomeruli and may lead to kidney disease.

As a clinician-investigator, Dr. Quaggin conducts meaningful translational research at its best. For instance, she found that VEGF inhibitors, widely used as anti-cancer agents, target and harm the kidney. She takes a real-life approach to her clinical practice at St. Michael's Hospital. Through her observations and work with patients, she develops research questions of major importance which are then studied in her lab. The findings help provide new explanations for poorly understood disease processes and offer the potential for new therapies.

Today, Dr. Quaggin runs her own laboratory at the Samuel Lunenfeld Research Institute at Mount Sinai Hospital in Toronto where she performs groundbreaking work. Topflight people are drawn to work with her: she has recruited and trained over three dozen outstanding graduate students and post-doctoral fellows from across Canada and around the world. And that number is steadily growing.

"Sue Quaggin is an extensively published, accomplished and talented young scientist in the flourishing phase of her career," notes Dr. Andras Kapus, associate professor at the research institute of St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto. "She has rendered immense service to the field of nephrology and to people with kidney disease. We look forward to what she will achieve in the years to come."

Each year The Kidney Foundation of Canada awards The Medal for Research Excellence to honour a Canadian researcher whose work is recognized by their peers for having improved the treatment and care of people living with kidney disease and related conditions.

The Kidney Foundation of Canada is the national health charity committed to kidney health, and to reducing the burden of kidney disease.

For more information, contact:

Wim Wolfs M.Sc., MBA  
Director, Research Programs  
The Kidney Foundation of Canada  
(514) 531-2212