

Announcing the ISEV2019 special achievement award recipients: Takahiro Ochiya and Marca Wauben

The International Society for Extracellular Vesicles (ISEV) is pleased to announce two Special Achievement Awards that were presented at the ISEV2019 annual meeting in Kyoto, Japan, 24–28 April 2019. ISEV Special Achievement Awards are given each year to one or more individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the field of extracellular vesicle (EV) research or have performed extraordinary service to ISEV. In 2019, ISEV Special Achievement Awards were presented to Professors Takahiro Ochiya, PhD, and Marca Wauben, PhD (Figure 1).

Takahiro Ochiya

Takahiro Ochiya has served as Chief of the National Cancer Center Research Institute of Japan and on the council of the Japanese Cancer Association. He has authored more than 300 peer-reviewed publications and holds numerous patents in Japan, the US, and Europe. Dr. Ochiya has been a chief scientist of a program project in Japan, “Development of Diagnostic Technology for Detection of miRNA in Body Fluids,” which is supported by NEDO/AMED. Dr. Ochiya has served as President of the Japanese Society for Extracellular Vesicles (JSEV) as well as in leadership roles in the Japanese Society for RNA Interferences (JARI). In 2018 and 2019, Dr. Ochiya assisted with planning ISEV2019 as a member of the International Organizing Committee. At the meeting, he also delivered a plenary address, entitled “Extracellular Vesicles as Novel Therapeutic Targets in Cancer Metastasis.”

For many years, Dr. Ochiya has been at the forefront of microRNA and EV research. Building on numerous contributions to the stem cell and small RNA therapeutics fields [for example [1]], his group reported in 2010 that EVs mediate the release and uptake of microRNAs (miRNAs) [2]. In the same year, they also found that miRNAs could be delivered to cancer cells to suppress metastasis [3]. Dr. Ochiya and his team have probed the mechanisms of EV-mediated microRNA transfer [4] and have contributed to seminal work on the targeting of EVs

to tumor cells [5]. His group has also been interested in the contributions of milk EVs and extracellular RNA to offspring health [6].

An ISEV2019 Special Achievement Award was thus presented to Professor Takahiro Ochiya for his “sustained contributions in leading the field in cancer and RNA extracellular biology research and as a mentor to younger researchers.”

Marca Wauben

Marca Wauben is Professor of Intercellular Communication in the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at Utrecht University in The Netherlands. She has a long-standing interest in cell-cell interactions via extracellular vesicles, including within the immune system [7–9] and between mother and offspring via breast milk EV proteins and RNAs [10]. Her group has also made key contributions in the use and standardization of flow cytometry technology for metrology of extracellular vesicles [11–13].

Dr. Wauben’s service to ISEV is also notable. She served on the founding board of ISEV following the 2011 organizing meeting in Paris, was elected to the first ISEV Board of Directors when it was established in 2012, and helped to launch the Journal of Extracellular Vesicles [14]. As the first ISEV Executive Chair of Science and Meetings, Dr. Wauben was responsible for developing the structure and standard operating procedures of the annual meetings as well as the highly successful ISEV workshop formats, which have led to numerous position papers of ISEV [15–17] that were co-authored by Dr. Wauben. Currently the ISEV Secretary General, Dr. Wauben has also helped to lead various transnational EV networks and is founding president of the Netherlands Society for EVs.

In recognition of her extraordinary service to EV science and to ISEV, an ISEV2019 Special Achievement Award was therefore presented to Professor Marca Wauben.



Figure 1. ISEV2019 Special Achievement Awards. Awards were presented to Marca Wauben (middle) and Takahiro Ochiya (second from right) by ISEV2019 Chair Hidetoshi Tahara (left), ISEV President Andrew Hill (second from left), and ISEV Chair of Science and Meetings Kenneth Witwer (right).

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Kenneth W. Witwer

 kwitwer1@jhmi.edu

Department of Molecular and Comparative Pathobiology, The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Baltimore, MD, USA
Department of Neurology, The Johns Hopkins University

School of Medicine, Baltimore, MD, USA

 <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-1664-4233>

Andrew F. Hill

Department of Biochemistry and Genetics, La Trobe Institute for Molecular Science, La Trobe University, Bundoora, Australia

 <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-5581-2354>

Hidetoshi Tahara

Department of Cellular and Molecular Biology, Institute of Biomedical & Health Sciences, Hiroshima University, Hiroshima, Japan