

Professor William (Bill) R. Brinkley, Ph.D., 2006 ASMR Medalist



Professor Brinkley is a Distinguished Service Professor in the Department of Molecular & Cellular Biology, and Dean of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences at Baylor College of Medicine, Texas, USA. He also served as President of the American Society for Cell Biology and President of The Federation of American Societies of Experimental Biology (FASEB), a 60,000 member federation that supports and promotes America's leadership in basic and clinical research. He presided over the International Federation of Cell Biology. More recently, he played a leadership role in a five-year campaign to double the National Institute of Health (NIH) budget from \$US14bn to \$US27bn from 1998-2003.

Professor Brinkley completed his Ph.D. at Iowa State University then pursued postdoctoral studies at the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Hospital and Tumor Institute in Houston. Professor Brinkley then moved to The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston, where he was appointed Professor and Director of the Division of Cell Biology. He later moved to Baylor College of Medicine, where he served as Professor and Director of Cell Structure in the Department of Cell Biology. In 1985, he accepted the position of Chairman of the Department of Cell Biology at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Concurrently, he was Co-Director of the Gregory Fleming James Cystic Fibrosis Research Center and Senior Scientist at the University's Comprehensive Cancer Center. In 1991, he was invited to return to Baylor to serve as Senior Vice President for Graduate Sciences and Dean of the Graduate School, where he remains today.

His research interests have focused on the cytoskeleton and mitotic apparatus as related to genomic instability in cancer. Of particular interest were his pioneering studies of centromere of mammalian chromosomes where he and his coworkers provided the first work on the fine structure of kinetochore and identified key proteins required for its assembly and function. He and a co-worker, Gerald M. Fuller, developed the first monospecific antibodies against tubulin and discovered the cytoplasmic microtubule complex in animal cells by indirect

immunofluorescence. He has published over 200 research articles, including landmark papers in *Cell*, *Nature*, *Nature Genetics* and *EMBO Journal*.

Professor Brinkley is the recipient of a Merit Award from NIH where he has received continuous funding for research on the biology of tumor cells for over 30 years. He has served on numerous editorial boards, including *Cell* and the *Journal of Cell Biology*. He is currently Editor-in-Chief of *Cell Motility and the Cytoskeleton*. He has been a member on numerous NIH review panels including the NIH Cell Biology Study Section and the Biomedical Sciences Study Section, where he served as Chairman. He is Past-President of the Campaign for Medical Research, a Washington DC-based organization that played a key role in the doubling of the funding for the National Institutes of Health. Dr. Brinkley was elected to the National Academy of Sciences, Institute of Medicine in 1999 and has received the Distinguished Alumnus from each of his former academic institutes, San Houston State University, Iowa State University, and The University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center.

Professor Brinkley feels that it is important for every scientist to become involved in establishing government science policy. He believes that scientists in the U.S. have generally done a poor job of communicating their role in society to Congress and the public. He thinks that scientists must continue to educate their Representatives on the need for increased funding of individual investigator-initiated awards, and he believes the U.S. needs a science policy that recognizes the huge impact that fundamental science and basic scientists have on the economy through emerging industries, such as biotechnology, and on the nation's health care system, through research.

Professor Brinkley is to be awarded the 2006 ASMR Medal. He will be the keynote speaker at ASMR Dinners, and give the NAB televised address at the National Press Club in Canberra during ASMR Medical Research Week® in June.

Professor Levon Khachigian,
ASMR President