

Speech by  
**Prof. Michel Sadelain**

I am deeply honored and elated by the recognition bestowed upon my lifetime's research and cell therapy in general. I designed molecules, that I named chimeric antigen receptors (CARs), to guide immune cells to identify CD19 and eliminate undesirable cells. I nicknamed these cells "Living drugs". Such living drugs have been administered to over 50,000 patients worldwide. Countless laboratories are now developing CARs for cancers, autoimmune and neurological disorders.

I want to thank all those who worked with me on the breakthrough of CD19 CAR therapy, chiefly Dr Isabelle Riviere, who demonstrated not only scientific ingenuity but the character and resilience needed to bring CAR T cells to patients when nobody believed in this approach. I want to thank my clinical colleagues and the giants of cell therapy on whose shoulders we stood. I also want to thank my family, for their support and tolerance of my infinite "distraction with research".

Lastly, I want to thank all supporters of science and medical research. Science is a method to understand the world around us, reducing past errors or misconceptions and bringing hope and new possibilities. Once in a while, a new paradigm like CAR therapy emerges. Research that is not motivated by profit depends on governments and benefactors. I want to express my gratitude to His Royal Highness, the King Faisal Prize and its scientific committee for their unwavering support of research, which is unexplainably vacillating back home. My program and my university remain unfalteringly committed to advancing health and innovation for the benefit of mankind.