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PRESS RELEASE

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HWI’S DR. DEBASHIS GHOSH TO SPEAK AT 8TH ANNUAL SUSAN G. KOMEN BREAST CANCER SURVIVOR LUNCHEON

Debashis Ghosh, Ph.D., of the Hauptman-Woodward Medical Research Institute, has been invited to speak at the 8th annual Breast Cancer Survivor Luncheon hosted by Susan G. Komen for the Cure on Saturday, May 9, 2009. He will discuss his recent breakthrough in the fight to prevent breast cancer. The lecture will be held at the Hearthstone Manor at 333 Dick Road in Depew at 11 a.m.

The molecular details of Aromatase, the key enzyme required for the body to make estrogen, are no longer a mystery thanks to the structural biology work done by the Ghosh lab. Ghosh’s solution of the 3-D structure of aromatase is the first time that scientists have been able to visualize the mechanism of synthesizing estrogen. In fact, Ghosh and his lab have determined the structures of all three of the enzymes involved in controlling estrogen levels that can serve as drug targets for estrogen-dependent tumors in breast cancer.

Why Is This Important?
Most people know that breast cancer is the most common cancer among women in the United States and the second leading cause of cancer death in women, after lung cancer. Many people also may be aware that the chance of a woman having invasive breast cancer some time during her life is about 1 in 8 and the chance of dying from breast cancer is about 1 in 35. But many may not be aware that 75-80 percent of all breast cancer tumors are estrogen-fed. Estrogen is a female sex hormone and androgens are the male sex hormones. Regardless of gender, everyone has some percentage of both estrogens and androgens in their bodies. Each of the enzymes discussed above can individually promote the growth of estrogen-dependent breast cancers, but knowing all three structures opens the door to customized, comprehensive medical treatment.

About Dr. Debashis Ghosh
In addition to his position as an HWI senior research scientist, Ghosh is an associate member of the Department of Pharmacology and Therapeutics at RPCI and in the Department of Structural Biology of UB. Ghosh received his bachelor’s degree with honors in Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics from St. Xavier's College, University of Calcutta, India and his master’s degree in Physics from the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, India. He completed a post-master’s fellowship in Biophysics at the Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics in Calcutta, India. Ghosh then earned his doctorate in Crystallography from the University of Pittsburgh and completed his post-doctoral fellowship in Material Science at Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

About HWI
Hauptman-Woodward is an internationally-renowned independent, non-profit facility specializing in life altering research. Our team of more than 75 members is committed to improving human health through the study of the causes of diseases, as well as potential therapies, at their fundamental molecular level. HWI is located in downtown Buffalo, New York, in a new state-of-the-art structural biology research center. For more information, visit HWI’s website at www.hwi.buffalo.edu.

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