AACR and University of Catania Honored Dr. Silvia Caggia With the Third Margaret Foti Award

AACR

The scholar-in-training award recognizes an outstanding postdoctoral candidate.

PHILADELPHIA — The American Association for Cancer Research congratulates Silvia Caggia, Ph.D., on receiving the Third Margaret Foti Scholar-in-Training Award from the University of Catania. Caggia received the accolade for her doctoral thesis, which underscores the role of transforming growth factor-beta3 (TGF-beta3) in prostate cancer and its potential therapeutic implications.

The award is named in honor of Margaret Foti, Ph.D., M.D. (h.c.), chief executive officer of the AACR. Foti presented the award to Caggia on Friday, Oct. 5 in Catania, Italy.

“I am very honored to present the Margaret Foti Award to Dr. Caggia,” said Foti. “I am thrilled that her scientific achievements are being recognized by the university through this award. Acknowledging the meritorious work of promising young investigators will help sustain the pipeline of cancer researchers and will lead to future breakthroughs in cancer research. Moreover, this award stimulates international collaborations, which are so critical to moving science forward at a rapid pace.”

Caggia presented her thesis, “Transcription Factors Involved in the Genesis and Progression of Cancer Differently Modulated by Transforming Growth Factor-beta3 (TGF-beta3) in Prostate Cell Lines,” following the award presentation.

Because few studies have focused on the role of TGF-beta3, Caggia’s thesis explores its role in tumorigenesis. Recent data have shown that the transcription factor Yin Yang 1 (YY1), which is associated with cancer progression, is involved in the TGF-beta3 pathway. Caggia examined the expression of p53 and YY1 in a human benign prostate hyperplasia cell line (BPH-1) and in two prostate cancer cell lines, androgen-sensitive and androgen-refractory, following treatment with TGF-beta3. She found that TGF-beta3 stimulation in these prostate cancer cell lines showed different effects, such as YY1 downregulation and p53 overexpression, which are associated with a different modulation of intracellular signaling pathways. In the opinion of the selection committee, Caggia’s findings could have important implications for prostate cancer therapeutics.

The Margaret Foti Award was established in 2010 to recognize an outstanding candidate from the University of Catania who has just completed a doctorate in the field of translational oncology. The winner receives funds from the Italian League

Against Cancer in the form of a Young Investigator Scholar-in-Training Travel Award to attend the AACR Annual Meeting, which will be held April 6-10, 2013, in Washington, D.C.

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