

Media release

André Schroeder Research Prize awarded to Xiaolong Zhu

Special award presented to Samuel G. Steinemann for lifetime-achievement

Munich, 20 June 2005: The André Schroeder Research Prize, an annual award worth CHF 20 000 for the advancement of dental research and development, was presented in Munich today to Dr Xiaolong Zhu of the Section of Medical Materials and Technology, Department of Prosthodontics and Medical Materials, University of Tübingen, Germany. The award was made at a ceremony held during the ITI World Symposium, which is one of the most important congresses in implant dentistry and oral tissue regeneration and is currently taking place in Munich.

Xiaolong Zhu commended for biotechnical implant surface

Xiaolong Zhu (42), who is of Chinese origin, is the twelfth recipient of this prestigious prize. He was selected by the jury for his scientific study of biochemical modifications of titanium implant surfaces designed to promote osseointegration (the growth of bone into the implant surface structure). Osseointegration is necessary for the implant to achieve long-term stability. A special method was used to synthesize a nano-hydroxyapatite (HA) prototype that closely mimics the mineral phase of bone. Nano-HA was mixed with collagen gel and coated onto pure titanium or titanium oxide. Bone cells subsequently showed an excellent adhesion to the nano-HA/collagen surface. The conclusion of Dr Zhu's study is that this approach may lead to further optimization of osseointegration.

Special award for Professor Samuel G. Steinemann

This year, for the first time, a special award of the André Schroeder Prize was presented by Straumann to honor the lifetime achievement of Professor Samuel G. Steinemann. In the course of his scientific research in medicine and dentistry, the recipient – now 82 – has achieved worldwide recognition for his work in fields such as metallurgy, biomechanics and biomaterials. In addition to his contribution to other fields of science, Steinemann decisively influenced the design and, in particular, the surface technology of dental implants, considerably advancing modern implant dentistry.

Professor Steinemann was one of the first to recognize that a rough surface is essential for bone cell growth on titanium implants. In collaboration with Straumann, he developed titanium plasma spray (TPS) coated dental implants in the 1970s and, in the 1980s, the sandblasted and acid-etched (SLA) surface that hitherto has been the gold standard for implant surface technology. He also played a significant role in the development of Straumann's new generation surface technology, SLActive.

Presenting the awards, Gilbert Achermann, CEO of Straumann, noted: "With his world-class achievements in basic research over several decades, Sam Steinemann has helped to shape modern implantology. We are very grateful to him for his tireless efforts as a researcher, which have contributed to the establishment of Straumann's reputation as an innovating trendsetter and technological leader in implant dentistry."

About the André Schroeder Research Prize

First presented in 1992, the Prize serves to promote new scientific findings in oral implantology and related fields. It is given in honor of the late Professor Schroeder, who pioneered dental implantology and whose life's work contributed greatly to modern dentistry.

Sponsored by Straumann, the André Schroeder Prize furthers illustrates the company's commitment in the field of research and development, where it ranks among the leading contributors in the industry.

Previous winners are: Dieter Weingart (1992), Franz Sutter (1993), Daniel Buser (1995), David Cochran (1996), Joachim Hermann (1997), Siegfried Heckmann (1998), Alexandra Behneke (2000), Leif Persson (2001), Lisa Mayfield (2002), Yuelian Liu (2003) and Michael Hänggi (2004).

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About Straumann

Headquartered in Basel, Switzerland, Straumann (SWX: STMN) is a global leader in implant dentistry and dental tissue regeneration. In collaboration with the International Team for Implantology (ITI), leading clinics, research institutes and universities, the Group researches, develops, produces and distributes implants, instruments and tissue regeneration products for use in tooth replacement solutions or to prevent tooth loss. Straumann also provides training and services to the dental profession worldwide. The Group's implants and instruments are manufactured in Switzerland, whilst its dental tissue regeneration products are produced in Sweden. Straumann's products and services are available in more than 60 countries worldwide through the Group's 15 distribution subsidiaries and a broad network of distribution partners. Straumann employs approximately 1200 people worldwide, and generated sales of CHF 420 million in 2004 with a net income of CHF 101 million.

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