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A shower of awards at the DKFZ

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Six young cancer researchers can look forward to receiving science awards on Tuesday, December 19, 2017, at the DKFZ. The Waltraud Lewenz Award, the Walther and Christine Richtzenhain Award, the Andreas Zimprich Award, the Nicola Werner Research Award for young scientists will be presented by the German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ) at a festive ceremony. The Bayer Foundation awards the Bayer Early Excellence in Science Award on the same occasion.



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From left to right: Christoph Geisenberger (Andreas Zimprich-Award); Elham Pishali (Richtzenhain-Award); Daniel Hasche (Nicola Werner Award); Theresa Bunsche (Bayer Early Excellence in Science Award); David Brocks (Waltraud-Lewenz-Award).
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In her PhD thesis, she was able to show that a group of targeted anticancer drugs called kinase inhibitors have a consistent spectrum of activity than originally expected.

Elham Pishali undertook her award-winning PhD thesis at the DKTK partner site at Dresden Technical University where cells can be directed specifically against prostate cancer cells with the goal of developing a combined radio-immunotherapy.

The award goes back to physicians Walther and Christine Richtzenhain, a married couple from Darmstadt, Germany. Since her own death in 1975, Christine Richtzenhain had founded the Walther and Christine Richtzenhain Award to commemorate Walther, who had died from pancreatic cancer. Richtzenhain was a neurologist and psychiatrist who had also studied actively involved in the German Peace Society (DFG). One of the very first winners of the Richtzenhain Award in 1971 was Hans-Joachim Hausen, who later became a Nobel Prize winner and was DKFZ Chairman of the Board for many years.

This year's Andreas Zimprich Award, which is accompanied by a monetary prize of €2,500, will be given to Christoph Geisenberger, who currently pursues research at the Hubrecht Institute for Developmental Biology and Stem Cell Research in Utrecht, The Netherlands. He receives the award for his research on biomarkers that are associated with long-term survival in glioblastoma. He works at the Neurosurgery Department of Heidelberg University Hospital.

The award goes back to the Zimprich family from Heilbronn, Germany, whose son Andreas died from brain cancer at the age of 15. The family decided at the time to support research in the area of neuro-oncology. Jointly with the DKFZ, they established the Zimprich Foundation, which has awarded the Andreas Zimprich Award for an outstanding medical doctoral thesis in 2015.

The 2017 Nicola Werner Research Award for young scientists is given to Daniel Hasche from the DKFZ Division of Viral Mechanisms. The young virus researcher has recently been the first to prove experimentally that specific types of human papillomavirus (HPV) are also responsible for the development of non-melanoma skin cancer.

The €2,000 Nicola Werner Award is named after an artist who died from an HPV induced tumor. She was committed to research on HPV and to making prevention possibilities such as HPV vaccination more widely known. The award is a distinction for young scientists at DKFZ with an outstanding doctoral thesis or publication in the area of HPV research.

This year's Bayer Early Excellence in Science Award, which carries a monetary prize of €10,000 and thus has the highest value, is presented that day, is given to Theresa Bunsche for her research at the Clinical Cooperation Unit "Neuroimmunology". The award, the Bayer Foundation aims to support creative young researchers at early stages in their career.

Theresa Bunsche had developed a vaccine that causes a highly specific immune response against a characteristic type of melanoma tumors. The vaccine was capable of stopping tumor growth in mice and is already being examined for safety in a phase I trial.

Jointly with the award winners, the Scientific Council of the DKFZ on that day celebrates its exact 40th anniversary of its founding. Research matters at the Center.

A picture is available for download:

www.dkfz.de/de/presse/pressemitteilungen/2017/bilder/preistraeger.jpg
(<http://www.dkfz.de/de/presse/pressemitteilungen/2017/bilder/preistraeger.jpg>)

From left to right: Christoph Geisenberger (Andreas Zimprich-Award); Elham Pishali (Richtzenhain-Award); Daniel Hasc Award); Theresa Bunse (Bayer Early Excellence in Science Award); David Brocks (Waltraud-Lewenz-Award).

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The German Cancer Research Center (Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum, DKFZ) with its more than 3,000 employees is the largest biomedical research institution in Germany. More than 1,300 scientists at the DKFZ investigate how cancer develops, identify cancer risk factors and search for new strategies for preventing and treating cancer. They are developing new methods to diagnose tumors more precisely and treat cancer patients more successfully. The patient information service (KID) provides patients, interested citizens and experts with individual answers to all questions on cancer.

Jointly with partners from the university hospitals, the DKFZ operates the National Center for Tumor Diseases (NCT) in Heidelberg and the German Children's Cancer Center KiTZ in Heidelberg. In the German Consortium for Translational Cancer Research (DKTK), one of the six German research consortia, the DKFZ maintains translational centers at seven university partner locations. NCT and DKTK sites combine excellent university research and clinical expertise to contribute to the endeavor of transferring promising approaches from cancer research to the clinic and thus improve the chances of cancer patients.

The DKFZ is 90 percent financed by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and 10 percent by the state of Baden-Württemberg. The DKFZ is a member of the Helmholtz Association of German Research Centers.

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