



Hwang to Receive Global Stem Cell Award

By Kim Tae-gyu
Staff Reporter

Seoul National University professor Hwang Woo-suk will receive a stem cell award from a U.S.-based organization, which leads a global cause of therapeutic cloning research.

The Genetics Policy Institute (GPI) yesterday announced its first Global Achievement Award will go to Hwang in recognition of his recent medical breakthroughs.

“Hwang’s accomplishments are breathtaking in scope and mark a quantum leap in efficacy. He has brought humankind to the threshold of potentially life-saving regenerative medicine research,” said Bernard Siegel, executive director of the GPI.

He added the GPI is very proud since its first Global Achievement Award will go to a true pathfinder and humanitarian, the 52-year-old Hwang.

The honor will be granted to Hwang on June 11 on the sidelines of the Stem Cell Policy and Advocacy Summit, which will be held in Houston June 11-12 to overcome negative legislation on therapeutic cloning and secure adequate funding for the research.

The GPI is an international advocacy organization promoting stem cell research. It has called for legislation banning reproductive cloning while preserving scientific freedom in the pursuit of cures.

The organization said it made the Global Achievement Award this year to distinguish a scientist who made the greatest contribution in the field of stem cell and regenerative medicine.

Earlier last month, Hwang surprised the world by publishing via the journal Science that his team cloned 11 customized stem cell lines of as many patients with critical diseases and disabilities.

Scientists hailed the seminal exploit will open the door to the new-concept therapy of replacing damaged cells or tissues with cloned ones from individuals.

Hwang plans to receive the award himself. In fact, he expressed his interest in taking part in the Stem Cell Policy and Advocacy Summit, which will bring together many big shots in the medical world.

Included among the participants are renowned embryologist Gerald Schatten, a professor at University of Pittsburgh, Denton Cooley of the Texas Heart Institute and pioneer heart surgeon Michael DeBakey.

“The summit will bear great meaning at a time when the debate on embryonic stem cell research is flaring up in the

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U.S. Plus, I want to hear opinions of world's medical luminaries (on stem cell studies)," Hwang said.

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