



Paul Lasko

GRFP Recipient: 1980

Undergraduate Institution:
B.S. 1981, Harvard University

Graduate Institution:
Ph.D. 1986, Massachusetts
Institute of Technology (MIT)

Graduate Field of Study:
Genetics

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Current Position:
James McGill Professor,
Department of Biology, McGill
University; and Scientific
Director, Institute of Genetics,
Canadian Institutes of Health
Research (CIHR)

RESEARCH INTERESTS //

Paul Lasko's research group conducts fundamental research on the fruit fly *Drosophila* to study genetic mechanisms that control the development of animals from fertilization to adulthood and reproduction. He has co-authored over 100 scientific publications, 14 of which have been cited over 100 times. In a long-standing collaboration with Nahum Sonenberg's lab, Lasko's group has produced many papers concerning translational control at the level of mRNA recruitment to the ribosome, which involves a key protein called eIF4E. eIF4E has been linked to cancer as well as to autism and is the topic of extensive study (over 2,300 papers on PubMed). Clinical trials of several molecules that target it have been published. Lasko was also a participant in the 1999 Celera 'annotation jamboree', an unprecedented international community effort that linked biological information to the *Drosophila melanogaster* genome sequence, which was the first to be completed using the shotgun assembly approach.

AWARDS/ HONORS //

- Tomlinson Science Award, McGill University (2012)
- Award of Excellence, Genetics Society of Canada (2004)
- Young Scientist Award, Genetics Society of Canada (1998)
- National Merit Scholar (1977)

POSITION PROFILE //

Lasko completed his Ph.D. at MIT under the supervision of Mary Lou Pardue and was a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Cambridge from 1986-90. He was recruited as an assistant professor in the Department of Biology at McGill in 1990, and was promoted to associate professor in 1996 and to full professor in 1999. He served as department chair from 2000-11. He has been scientific director of the CIHR Institute of Genetics since May 2010.