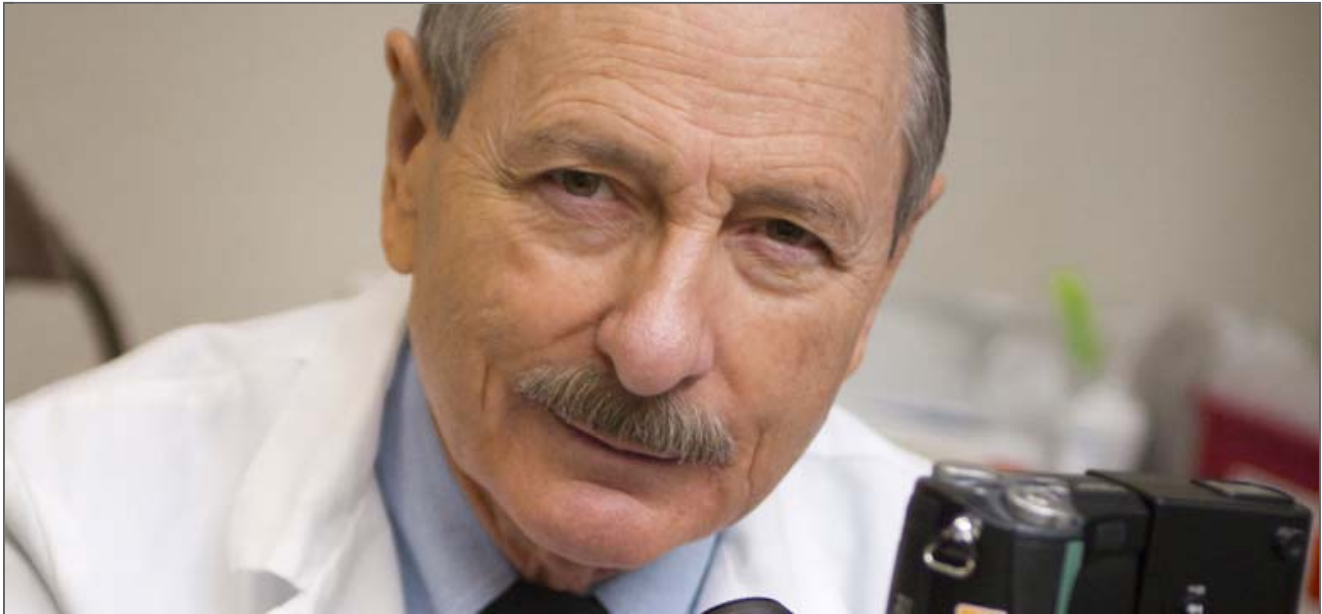


Renowned veterinary scientist to receive honorary degree

Ralph Brinster's pioneering research revolutionized the fields of human and veterinary medicine

May 7, 2015



Veterinary scientist Ralph Brinster will receive an honorary degree at the May 7 convocation. Photo by Scott Spitzer

The honorary degree, Doctor of Laws, is the University of Calgary's highest academic honour, bestowed on individuals whose notable achievements and community service merit recognition.

Ralph Brinster, one of the world's most accomplished veterinary scientists, will have an honorary degree conferred upon him on May 7 at the afternoon convocation for the Cumming School of Medicine and the faculties of law, veterinary medicine and graduate studies.

Brinster's pioneering research in the development of transgenic mice has revolutionized the fields of human and veterinary medicine. Grounded in his upbringing on a small farm in New Jersey, Brinster developed an early interest in animal genetics. He studied animal science as an undergraduate at Cook College of Agriculture, Rutgers University, and completed his BSc in 1953. That same year, he entered the United States Air Force and served as an officer in the Korean War. Upon returning from military service in 1956, Brinster went on to earn his VMD (1960) and his PhD in physiology (1964) from the University of Pennsylvania.

Brinster's dedication to veterinary science is unwavering. A Richard King Mellon Professor of Reproductive Physiology at the School of Veterinary Medicine, University of Pennsylvania, he continues to perform cutting-edge research and is developing novel techniques for the culture and genetic modification of germline stem cells to restore fertility in male children undergoing cancer treatment.

Brinster has earned numerous awards throughout his distinguished research career, including the International Society of Transgenic Technology, Pioneer Award (2011), the Canada Gairdner Foundation International Award (2006) and the Wolf Prize in Medicine (2003). Most recently, he was awarded the National Medal of Science by President Obama in 2011, one of eight University of Pennsylvania faculty to receive this distinction in the medal's 50-year history, and the first veterinarian in the country.

Today, Brinster's long list of scientific breakthroughs form the foundation for applications in human assisted reproduction, animal transgenesis and stem cell biology.



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