Dr. Ernest Beutler, Internationally Recognized Scientist, is Awarded Honorary Doctorate for Pioneering Work in Hematology

La Jolla, CA. May 18, 1993 -- An internationally recognized scientist at The Scripps Research Institute has been awarded an honorary doctoral degree from Tel Aviv University in Israel for outstanding achievements in hematology.

Ernest Beutler, M.D., chairman of the Department of Molecular and Experimental Medicine and a member of the National Academy of Sciences, was conferred the honorary degree at a ceremony during the Annual Meeting of the International Board of Governors of Tel Aviv University on May 16, 1993.

He has conducted pioneering work in the fields of anemia, lipid storage disorders (particularly Gaucher disease), and the use of 2-Chlorodeoxyadenosine (2-CdA) in the treatment of lymphomas and leukemia.

Beutler has authored hundreds of scientific papers during the course of his career. He was the lead author of an article concerning the discovery of a gene mutation that plays a role in Gaucher disease; a finding that has important implications for screening couples at risk for having a baby with the disease. His work in studying the response of patients to different dose schedules of aglucerase, the commercially-available recombinant
enzyme deficient in Gaucher disease, has led to successful treatment of adult patients at a greatly reduced dosage and cost than was previously believed.

Beutler led the team that tested the new anti-cancer drug, 2-CdA (LEUSTATIN") developed at The Scripps Research Institute by Dennis Carson, M.D. It has been characterized as one of the most promising chemotherapeutic agents developed in the last 10 years and has produced a large number of complete remissions in hairy cell leukemia patients and in patients with other leukemias and lymphomas. The drug recently has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration.

"This most recent recognition of Dr. Beutler is certainly well deserved," according to William H. Beers, Ph.D., Senior Vice President of The Scripps Research Institute. "He has had an extremely productive career and continues to make significant contributions in the area of hematology that could have a profound effect on the health and lives of many people."

After receiving his medical degree from the University of Chicago in 1950, Beutler spent four years on the school’s faculty. He then moved to the City of Hope Medical Center in Duarte, California, where he was chairman of the Division of Medicine and director of the Department of Hematology. Beutler was also a clinical professor of medicine at the University of Southern California until 1978 when he joined Scripps Clinic. He is currently a clinical professor of medicine at the University of California, San Diego.