

2nd Annual Arthur Guyton Lectureship
Eric N. Olson, Ph.D.
Professor and Chairman
UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas

“MicroRNA Control of Heart Development and Disease”



Dr. Olson grew up in North Carolina where he attended Wake Forest University and received a B.A. in Chemistry and Biology in 1977, a Ph.D. in Biochemistry in 1981 and an honorary doctorate in 2003. After postdoctoral training with Luis Glaser at Washington University School of Medicine, he joined the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at The M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in 1984 and became Professor and Chairman in 1991. In 1995, he founded the Department of Molecular Biology at The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas. He holds the Robert A. Welch Distinguished Chair.

Dr. Olson's honors include the Basic Research Prize, the Founding Distinguished Scientist Award, and the Research Achievement Award from the American Heart Association; the Pasarow Medical Research Award in Cardiovascular Disease; the Gill Heart Institute Award; the Lucian Award for Research in Cardiovascular Disease; the Outstanding Investigator Award from the International Society for Heart Research; and the Pollin Prize for Lifetime Contributions to Pediatric Research. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the National Academy of Sciences, and its Institute of Medicine. Dr. Olson served as Editor-in-Chief of *Developmental Biology* from 1995 to 2005. He belongs to the Scientific Review Board of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, and is a member of numerous editorial boards, including *Circulation*, *Circulation Research*, and *Science*. He was a scientific co-founder and advisor of Myogen, Inc., a biotechnology company focusing on therapies for heart muscle disease. In 2007 he co-founded Miragen Therapeutics, a biotechnology company focusing on microRNAs as therapeutics for cardiovascular disease.

In his spare time, Eric Olson plays guitar in a rock band called The Transactivators. He is the Annie and Willie Nelson Professor of Stem Cell Research at UT Southwestern.

Summary of presentation: Eric Olson has dedicated his career to deciphering the mechanisms that control muscle gene regulation and development. His most recent work has focused on the genetic pathways responsible for congenital and acquired cardiovascular disease.