

## CHRISTOPHE AND RODOLPHE MÉRIEUX FOUNDATION

### A Prize to encourage the fight against AIDS in Haiti

The Christophe Mérieux Prize 2010 has been awarded to

#### DR. JEAN WILLIAM PAPE

Founder and Director of GHEKIO  
(Haitian Group for the Study of Kaposi's Sarcoma  
and Opportunistic Infections) in Port-au-Prince, Haiti  
Professor of Medicine at Cornell University, USA



**"Jean-William Pape, who is renowned internationally, has played a significant role in the study of AIDS and the fight against this disease"**

*Françoise Barré-Sinoussi, member of the Institut de France (Académie des sciences), 2008 Nobel Prize for Medicine*

The Christophe and Rodolphe Mérieux Foundation's 500,000 euro prize has been awarded to Dr. Pape in recognition of his considerable contribution to public health in Haiti and more specifically to AIDS research and prevention through the creation of GHEKIO in 1983. Through this award, the Foundation wishes to support his ongoing efforts and important research in this field. Dr. Pape was one of the front-runners for the prize before the earthquake in Haiti and the jury's decision does not in any way conflict with their genuine concern for the victims of the disaster.



GHEKIO was the first institution in the world dedicated to the fight against HIV/AIDS. By combining research, medical care and training, GHEKIO contributed significantly to the decrease in the prevalence of HIV in Haiti from 6.2% in 1993 to 2.2% in 2006, making Haiti a model for resource-poor countries to follow in their fight against AIDS, tuberculosis and diarrhea.

While the award demonstrates the Christophe and Rodolphe Mérieux Foundation's ongoing commitment to research on infectious diseases in developing countries, it also serves to broaden the Foundation's reach in light of the recent events and emergency situation in Haiti.

**The award will be presented under the dome of the Institut de France on**

**Wednesday, June 9, 2010 at 3 p.m.**

**alongside the scientific and cultural Grand Prizes of the following Institut de France Foundations: Louis D., Simone and Cino del Duca, NRJ and Lefoulon-Delalande Foundations**

## DR. JEAN WILLIAM PAPE

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Born in Haiti, Dr. Jean-William Pape, 61, is one of the world's leading pioneers in the fight against AIDS. Specializing in internal medicine and infectious diseases, his educational background includes a Bachelor of Science degree from Columbia University (1971) and a Medical Doctorate degree from the Weill Medical College of Cornell University (1975), USA. After returning to his native Haiti in 1979, he initiated a national programme with the Haitian Ministry of Health to prevent diarrhea-related dehydration, an initiative largely credited with decreasing national infant mortality by more than 50% between 1982 and 2004. He then went on to develop an integrated HIV care and prevention model through the formation of GHESKIO (Haitian Group for the Study of Kaposi's Sarcoma and Opportunistic Infections). Dr. Pape is currently Director of GHESKIO and Professor of Medicine at Weill Medical College, Cornell University. He is the author of numerous publications in international journals and his work, known across the globe, has garnered many awards, including the Prix Léon Audain (1996), the highest recognition given by the Haitian Medical Association, the French Legion of Honor (2002), and being elected as a member of the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States (2003).

### The GHESKIO Centers

Founded by Dr. Pape and Haitian health professionals in 1982, the Haitian Group for the Study of Kaposi's Sarcoma and Opportunistic Infections (GHESKIO) was the first institution in the world dedicated to the fight against HIV/AIDS. Despite ongoing political turmoil and deteriorating economic conditions, GHESKIO has continued to provide **uninterrupted care** to over 100,000 patients per year, **training** (over 10,000 trained professionals), and **research** for almost three decades. In 2000, the Haitian government designated GHESKIO a "Public Utility" institution for its services to the country and asked Dr. Pape to extend the GHESKIO model nationally. With the support of agencies including the ANRS (Agence Nationale de la Recherche sur le SIDA), Coopération française, GFATM (Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria), PEPFAR (Presidential Emergency Program For AIDS Relief), and the World Health Organisation, this model has now spread to 28 sites across the country, employing 415 field workers, laboratory technicians, nurses, doctors and researchers.

### Research on AIDS and related diseases

The main focus of GHESKIO's research is HIV, sexually transmitted infections, and tuberculosis. It seeks to define **treatment and prevention models that are appropriate and effective** for Haiti and other developing countries. GHESKIO's key projects and achievements include the definition of the natural history of HIV infection in Haiti, the CIPRA study for determining the stage at which to begin triple combination therapy for maximum effectiveness against AIDS, the study into methods of preventing congenital syphilis, the study of forms of drug-resistant TB, and the development of vaccine trials for HIV. GHESKIO contributed significantly to the decline of national prevalence of HIV in Haiti from 6.2% in 1993 to 2.2% in 2006 and serves as a model for resource-poor countries to follow in their fight against AIDS, tuberculosis and diarrhea (New York Times, 22/12/2002).

### GHESKIO and the Mérieux Foundation

Since its inception, GHESKIO has worked closely with the Haitian Ministry of Health, Haitian medical associations, North American and French universities, and the international community. The Christophe and Rodolphe Mérieux Foundation began supporting Dr. Pape and the GHESKIO Center in 2003. Over the years, it has actively contributed to substantive work in the area, including the creation of a clinical biology and research laboratory in the **Institute of Infectious Diseases and Reproductive Health (IMIS)** dedicated to fighting against the threat of infection, particularly acute in a country crippled by HIV. GHESKIO is also an active partner of the **GABRIEL network**, an international network created by the Mérieux Foundation for collaboration in the field of research on infectious diseases between laboratories in developed and developing countries. Furthermore, the Christophe and Rodolphe Mérieux Foundation has joined forces with ACME (Association pour la Coopération avec la Micro Entreprise) to set up a microcredit program aimed at helping HIV-positive women being monitored by the GHESKIO Centers.

## ABOUT THE CHRISTOPHE AND RODOLPHE MÉRIEUX FOUNDATION

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Established in 2001 at the Institut de France, the **Christophe and Rodolphe Mérieux Foundation** supports scientific research in the field of public health, provides assistance in new project implementation in the field of scientific training and school education, and contributes towards development through microcredits, both in France and abroad, particularly French-speaking developing countries. Strongly committed to a partnership approach to create conditions for sustainable development, the Foundation's activities are currently focused on six major projects in Cambodia, Haiti, Madagascar, Mali, Laos and Lebanon.

Since 2007, the Foundation has awarded the "Christophe Mérieux Prize" - a scientific Grand Prize worth **500,000 euros** - every year to support **research on infectious diseases in developing countries**.

### The Prize has previously been awarded to:

- In 2009: Mr. Eric Leroy, Director of Research at the IRD and Head of the Emerging Viral Diseases Unit of the International Medical Research Center of Franceville (CIRMF), Gabon
- In 2008: Professor François Nosten, Director of Research, Shoklo Malaria Research Unit (SMRU) in Thailand for his work on malaria in pregnant women and their children
- In 2007: Professor Ogobara Doumbo, Director of the Malaria Research and Training Center in Bamako (Mali) for his research on malaria

### Members of the jury of the Christophe Mérieux Prize:

- Mr. Jean-François Bach, Perpetual Secretary of the Académie des sciences, President of the jury
- Mrs. Françoise Barré-Sinoussi, Académie des sciences
- Mr. André Capron, Académie des sciences
- Mrs. Pascale Cossart, Académie des sciences
- Mr. Philippe Kourilsky, Académie des sciences
- Mrs. Anne-Marie Moulin, Director of Research CNRS-CEDEJ, Cairo, Egypt
- Mr. Gérard Orth, Académie des sciences
- Mr. Dominique Peyramont, CHU of Lyon
- Mr. Charles Pilet, Académie des sciences
- Mr. Philippe Sansonetti, Académie des sciences
- Mr. Alain-Jacques Valleron, Académie des sciences

## ABOUT THE INSTITUT DE FRANCE

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Known as the "Parliament of the Learned", the Institut de France is a French public corporation made up of **five academies**: Académie Française, Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, Académie des Sciences, Académie des Beaux-Arts, and Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques. Its primary role is to support the development and advancement of the arts and sciences on a purely non-profit basis.

The Institute manages several major **foundations** whose independent administrative and financial structures allow them to play an exceptional role in modern-day patronage.

In addition to the major prize awards, the Foundations also support projects in very different areas:

- **Scientific research**: rewarding renowned researchers, helping emerging talent, and supporting laboratories
- **Humanitarian aid**: fighting against endemic diseases and poverty
- **Cultural heritage**: conservation of works of art, creation of collections or support for young artists
- **Projects in education and training**: granting study and research scholarships
- **Projects in sustainable and environmental development**: safeguarding our natural and rural heritage

### GHESKIO

33 boulevard Harry Truman  
Port-au-Prince, Haiti  
Tel.: (509) 222-0031 / 2241  
E-mail: [annedmacdonald@gheskio.org](mailto:annedmacdonald@gheskio.org)  
[www.gheskio.org](http://www.gheskio.org)

### Institut de France

Camille Bouvier - Communications department  
23, quai de Conti – 75270 cedex 06  
Tel.: +33 (0)1 44 41 43 40  
E-mail: [com@institut-de-france.fr](mailto:com@institut-de-france.fr)  
[www.actualites.institut-de-france.fr](http://www.actualites.institut-de-france.fr)