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GW Medical Center Welcomes Dr. Rakesh Kumar
as Chair of the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology of the GW School of
Medicine and Health Sciences
Renowned Cancer Researcher Joins GW Medical Center

WASHINGTON — **The George Washington University Medical Center** announces the appointment of Rakesh Kumar, PhD, as Professor and the Catharine Birch McCormick Endowed Chair of the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology of the GW School of Medicine and Health Sciences.

A renowned researcher in the fields of cancer biochemistry and molecular biology, Dr. Kumar brings a wealth of research, teaching, and mentorship experience to his new post. Dr. Kumar joins the GW Medical Center from the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, where he served as the John G. and Marie Stella Kenedy Memorial Foundation Chair; deputy chairman of the Department of Molecular and Cellular Oncology; professor of molecular and cellular oncology; and professor of biochemistry and molecular biology. In addition, he served as professor of the Graduate School of Biological Sciences at The University of Texas, Houston. He remains an adjunct professor in the Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology at Baylor College of Medicine, and adjunct professor in the Department of Molecular and Cellular Oncology at The University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center.

“We are very excited to welcome Dr. Kumar to the GW Medical Center faculty. He brings significant cancer research expertise, and his dedication to developing biomedical scientists is inspiring,” said Provost and Vice President for Health Affairs John F. Williams, MD, MPH, EdD. “I know GW students will benefit from his experience and his strong track record of mentoring students who have gone on to prestigious positions at cancer centers across the country.”

“Bringing Dr. Kumar’s research team to GW is key to our expansion of basic cancer research. Through his research we will be able to get closer to understanding the regulation of important cellular signaling pathways and networks of genes that govern the growth of cancer,” said Steven Patierno, PhD, executive director of the GW Cancer Institute. Dr. Kumar’s research has focused on defining the phenotypic signaling leading to changes important for cancer progression, learning how and why normal cancer cells move, and mechanisms of estrogen receptor action with a special focus on chromatin modifiers and sub-cellular localization. His laboratory was the first to show a mechanistic role of p21-activated kinase-1 (PAK1) in cancer cell invasiveness, and discovered numerous physiologic substrates responsible for various cellular activities. He also discovered the functions of

the metastasis tumor antigen (MTA) family of nuclear receptor coregulators. Dr. Kumar's discoveries have put PAK and MTAs on the map, and have expanded opportunities for biomedical research.

“Dr. Kumar is a renowned cancer scientist and we are extremely happy to have him join our faculty,” said Jim Scott, MD, dean of the GW School of Medicine and Health sciences. “His years of experience his significant educational contributions make him a perfect fit for this role.”

Dr. Kumar has given numerous presentations on topics within the fields of molecular cell and cancer biology, transcription, and phenotypic-signaling and has been an invited speaker around the world. He is a chartered member of the National Institutes of Health study section and serves on grant-awarding panels both nationally and internationally. He has authored 171 research articles and 39 invited reviews in peer-reviewed journals and several book chapters. He served as editor for the book *Molecular Signaling and Therapeutics*, and co-editor of *NR Coregulators in Human Diseases*. He serves on editorial boards of six leading cancer and biochemical journals, including *Endocrinology*, *Journal of Cellular Physiology*, *Journal of Translational Research*, *Cancer and Metastasis Reviews*, *Clinical Cancer Research* and *Cancer Research*. He is serving as editor-in-chief of *Open Cell Signaling Journal*.

Dr. Kumar received his degree in Biochemistry from the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, and his degrees in Chemistry; and Chemistry, Botany and Zoology at Rohilkhand and Agra Universities in India. Dr. Kumar's Postgraduate Training includes a Postdoctoral Fellowship in Molecular Biology Program at Sloan-Kettering Institute for Cancer Research. He has held academic appointments at Sloan-Kettering Institute, Pennsylvania State University College of Medicine, The University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, and the Baylor College of Medicine.

Dr. Kumar joined The George Washington University on March 1.

About The George Washington University Medical Center

The George Washington University Medical Center is an internationally recognized interdisciplinary academic health center that has consistently provided high-quality medical care in the Washington, DC metropolitan area, since 1824. The Medical Center comprises the School of Medicine and Health Sciences, the 11th oldest medical school in the country; the School of Public Health and Health Services, the only such school in the nation's capital; GW Hospital, jointly owned and operated by a partnership between The George Washington University and a subsidiary of Universal Health Services, Inc.; and the GW Medical Faculty Associates, an independent faculty practice plan. For more information on GWUMC, visit www.gwumc.edu.

*Photo credit: Dr. Rakesh Kumar
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