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Chair of the Department of Molecular Medicine Named



Dr. Maurine E. Linder has been named chair of the Department of Molecular Medicine and professor of pharmacology at Cornell University's College of Veterinary Medicine, effective July 1, 2009.

"I am extremely pleased that Maurine, a superb scientist with an international reputation in cell signaling, has decided to join the College as chair of the Department of Molecular Medicine," said Michael I. Kotlikoff, Austin O. Hooey Dean of Veterinary Medicine. "I look forward to continued excellence from this great department and expect that Professor Linder will significantly enhance the teaching and research missions of the department. Maurine, who grew up on a dairy farm, and her husband Glenn, will be wonderful additions to the Cornell community and I thank Provost Fuchs, Professor Joe Fetcho and the Neuroscience community at Cornell, and Professor Teukelsky and the Department of Physics for making this pivotal recruitment possible."

Linder—whose responsibilities will be divided between research, teaching, and service—will lead the department of approximately 45 faculty and staff who participate in veterinary education primarily in the pre-clinical curriculum, and pursue cutting edge research in cell signaling, cell biology, and cancer biology. As the chair, Linder will oversee the department's important interdisciplinary programs with Cornell's new Weill Institute for Cell and Molecular Biology and Weill Medical College, and revitalize the graduate field of Pharmacology.

Linder comes to Cornell from Washington University School of Medicine, where she is the director of the Molecular Cell Biology Graduate Program and professor of cell biology and physiology. Her research is focused on understanding the mechanisms that regulate the localization of signaling proteins, processes that are key to the ability of cells to respond appropriately to signals from the environment. Linder's research group is currently characterizing a family of enzymes that mediate palmitoylation, the reversible attachment of the lipid palmitate to membrane proteins. Aberrant functions of palmitoyltransferases have been implicated in oncogenesis and metastasis, as well as several disorders of the nervous system.

"I am delighted to be joining the Department of Molecular Medicine at Cornell," said Linder. "Building upon the tradition of excellence in teaching and research, this is a wonderful opportunity to broaden the department's portfolio in cell regulation and its links to animal health and disease. Cornell's initiatives in the Life Sciences make it a particularly exciting time to come on board, and I look forward to working with my new colleagues in the College and down campus."

Linder will assume the position of chair from Dr. Gregory Weiland, associate professor of pharmacology, who has led the department since 1998.

"Greg has served the University and the Department extremely well in this time of transition, and I am extraordinarily grateful for his willingness to take on this responsibility on behalf of the Department," said Kotlikoff. "The Department and College look forward to growth and transition in this critical Department, inspired by Professor Linder's vision."