



Thursday, October 16, 2003

Student awarded for breast cancer research

By **Jeff Samoray**, OU Web Writer

Scientists and physicians around the globe are taking notice of the research accomplishments of Oakland University students. Narine Mirijanian, CAS '00 alumna and a master's student in biology, presented her research on breast cancer at the **Second Young Medics' International Conference**, held Sept. 26-28 in Yerevan, Armenia. Mirijanian delivered an oral presentation titled "Hormonal Regulation on Oncoproteins in Breast Cancer Cells" and was invited to evaluate abstracts as a member of the conference's review board. In recognition of her work, Mirijanian was awarded "Best Presentation in the Section of Oncology," and a citation from the National Academy of Science of the Republic of Armenia.

"The conference's primary purpose was to expose Armenian doctors and scientists to international research and technologies and to exchange information," Mirijanian said. "The conference was wonderfully organized and had many renowned lecturers. The exposure to other researchers and the opportunity to ask questions was great. I was also very touched to receive the awards. Preparing for and delivering a presentation helps your professional development. Researchers spend many hours in laboratories, and the chance to deliver an oral presentation is a great opportunity to have your voice heard."

Mirijanian works in a lab run by Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost Virinder Moudgil. His team of researchers study the hormonal regulation of a class of proteins called tumor suppressors. In her presentation, Mirijanian examined another class of proteins called oncoproteins, which are cancer-causing proteins when activated. She discussed how estrogen and progesterone (female steroid hormones) influence the oncoproteins in breast cancer cells.

"I am very pleased that Narine was invited to share her work among her peers from around the globe," Moudgil said. "She is a dedicated student whose hard work is evident through the research she conducts."

Before emigrating to the United States, Mirijanian attended medical school in Armenia, where both of her parents are doctors. Through them, many Armenian physicians have followed Mirijanian's research.

"I think it was interesting for the physicians there to see me after having left their country and going through another educational round in the U.S.," Mirijanian said. "The conference was also an opportunity to showcase our research at Oakland University on an international level."

For more information on research opportunities for OU students, visit the **Provost's Program for University Research Scholars** Web page.

SUMMARY

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