



Lidia Larizza

Lidia Larizza, Professor of Medical Genetics, Director of the Post-Lauream School in Medical Genetics, University of Milan, and President of E.C.A. from 2006 until September 2009, has been elected an Honorary Member in recognition of both her outstanding contributions to chromosome research and her leadership as President of the Association after having been a Board Member since its foundation.

During her career, she has published more than 170 peer-reviewed publications on cancer genetics and cytogenetics. As Research Director of the Laboratory of Human Molecular Cytogenetics and Medical Genetics, Istituto Auxologico Italiano, Milan, since 1993, Lidia has led many research projects ranging from the chromosomal and gene basis of mental retardation and autism to cancer genetics (with a focus on acute myeloid leukemia and the c-kit gene, pituitary adenomas and HMGA2, Glioma and MARK4). She has been involved in microdeletion and genomics studies of 17q11.2. Recently her group identified the gene responsible for Poikiloderma with Neutropenia, a rare syndrome predisposing to myelodysplasia and acute myeloid leukaemia. It represents a variant of the cancer predisposition syndrome Rothmund-Thomson on which Lidia has been working for many years.

After completing her medical doctorate and a CNR Fellowship at the University of Pavia, Lidia became a Research Fellow at the Department of Genetics, Stanford University, California in the early 1970s, working with the then recently established Italian population geneticist Professor Luigi Luca Cavalli-Sforza. In 1986, she became Professor of Medical Genetics at the University of Milan, a position she still holds in conjunction with her medical school and research directorships.

At E.C.A., she became a Board Member when the Association was founded, and has been coordinator of the E.C.A. Working Group on Solid Tumours since 2000. She was President of the extremely successful Fourth European Cytogenetics Conference held in September 2003 in Bologna, Italy, and after a period as Vice-President of E.C.A., became President in September 2006. She was President of AICM (Associazione Italiana Citogenetica Medica) and has now been elected President of SIGU (Società Italiana di Genetica Umana).

With her leadership, Lidia has increased the prominence and influence of the European Cytogeneticists Association and made its conferences the most successful in the field, attracting the best cytogenetics work from throughout the world