

Komen Awards Give Recognition to Leading Researchers

BY ELIZABETH WHITTINGTON

Nearly 500 people gathered in honor of Susan G. Komen for the Cure's award program to recognize leading researchers for their work in basic and clinical breast cancer research. This year, Komen honored National Cancer Institute researcher Patricia S. Steeg, PhD, with the Basic Science Award for her work on breast cancer metastases.

Richard D. Gelber, PhD, and Aron Goldhirsch, MD, were jointly given the Clinical Research Award for their work in clinical trials including developing a method to compare treatments in terms of survival time, as well as quality of life. Komen's chief scientific advisor Eric P. Winer, MD, introduced the award winners to a welcoming crowd.

The keynote speaker, Ellen Ochoa, PhD, deputy director at the Johnson Space Center, explained how the work NASA has done has been transferred to help in the fight against breast cancer, including in the areas of surgery, diagnostics, and clinical research. She also presented each of the award winners with pink ribbon pins that had been taken on a past flight mission.

Rene Syler, who was featured in "[Facing a Legacy](#)" in the Fall 2008 issue of *CURE*, opened the 2008 Brinker Award for Scientific Distinction, noting that she was the daughter of two breast cancer survivors and had a prophylactic mastectomy herself after several worrisome biopsies.

"In the near future we will live in a world without breast cancer," Syler said, giving mention to the night's theme "Imagine, Life Without Breast Cancer."

She also listed the groundbreaking work that Komen had made this year including further expanding its mission across the world. During a time when "federal funding has declined about a billion dollars a year," Komen continues to provide millions of dollars in research grants, patient services, and awareness and advocacy programs, she said.

Collaboration was another theme for the night with both Steeg and Winer stressing the importance of collaboration between research groups, doctors and clinicians.

"Move, and move quickly, although deliberately," Winer said. "And the only way to do this is through collaboration."

Read more of *CURE's* coverage of the 31st annual San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium at <http://media.curetoday.com/htmlmail/sabcs>.

