

AFTER NEARLY 40 YEARS,  
DR. JOHN M. PAWELEK IS STILL  
EXPLORING NEW FRONTIERS.

He’s performed pioneering, breakthrough research in metastatic melanoma, discovered an enzyme critical to our understanding of the skin pigmentation process, and his work has been published in many of the world’s leading scientific and medical journals. Yet after four decades as a leading expert in skin pigmentation issues, Dr. John Pawelek is not slowing down.

*What’s on the horizon for your lab and ARTISTRY?*

“ARTISTRY’s goal, and mine, is to find new ways to inhibit pigmentation. We have a plan for developing products over the next several years that, for the first time, could target specific disorders. It’s exciting because very few people are doing this type of research.”

*After all of your accomplishments, what drives you now?*

“I have two major goals that I would like to see through to completion. First, I would like to finally understand how cancer metastasis is initiated. No one does yet. For several years now I have been working on a century-old theory in that regard and I would like to see it proven or disproven, one way or the other. Second, three-quarters of the world’s population is dark skinned. Abnormal pigmentation is a serious issue. The emotional and psychological harm is real and powerful. If we are successful, we can help a lot of people.”

DOCTORATE DEGREE

Brown University, Providence, RI

POST DOCTORAL TRAINING

Yale University

POSITIONS

Research Affiliate,  
Department of Dermatology  
Yale Cancer Center  
Yale University School of Medicine

Associate Fellow, Biology  
Gettysburg, College, Gettysburg, PA

RESIDENCY TRAINING

Yale-New Haven Hospital

CLINICAL FELLOWSHIPS

Yale-New Haven Hospital

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

President, Pan-American Society  
For Pigment Cell Research

Steering Committee,  
Society for Melanoma Research

Council, International Federation  
Of Pigment Cell Societies

Dr. Pawelek is a frequent  
speaker at conferences  
across the globe, and has  
published over 150 articles  
and papers on melanoma  
and pigmentation.

An amazing journey to become  
a leading authority.

John Pawelek earned his PhD at Brown University in 1967 and went on to complete a post-doctoral fellowship at Yale University in 1970. Shortly thereafter, his career took a critical turn. Dr. Aaron B. Lerner, the renowned leader of the team that discovered melatonin, the powerful hormone that regulates human sleep-wake cycles, hired young Dr. Pawelek as an assistant professor at Yale.

“That’s when I began my research into skin pigmentation using cells in cultures—a departure from using full-sized animals, which was common at the time,” Dr. Pawelek said. “I needed cells that would grow, so I used melanoma (cancerous) cells.”

That research led to groundbreaking work in metastatic melanoma. Soon Dr. Pawelek was one of the world’s top experts on the topic. From there, he began studying the enzymes involved in the pigmentation process—research that led to a breakthrough for which he earned even greater global recognition. His lab was the first to find that there was not just one enzyme that influences the pigmentation hormone, but two, and maybe even more. This discovery has been the foundation for a great deal of additional, critical research around the world.

ARTISTRY™ has established a lectureship in Dr. Pawelek’s name at the Asian Society for Pigment Cell Research, a fact that Dr. Pawelek considers “a wonderful and humbling honor in the deepest sense.” However, he is not resting on such laurels. Today, in addition to his ongoing cancer research, Dr. Pawelek is working to find the keys to inhibiting pigmentation and unlocking the doors to products that may target disorders such as post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation and melasma.

“These are huge problems across the world, affecting real people in powerful ways. Over the next few years, we hope to find the solutions that have a significant impact,” Dr. Pawelek said. Given his track record, no one is betting against him.

ARTISTRY AND PAWELEK,  
A STRONG WORKING RELATIONSHIP.

“In the early part of the last decade, ARTISTRY was looking for someone with whom they could partner on skin pigmentation research. I was a natural fit. Our goals were the same. The research facilities they offer are very impressive. And the staff is excellent. In the end our goal is to help ARTISTRY scientists create products of the highest quality, giving hope to millions of people by offering specific treatments for specific problems.”

