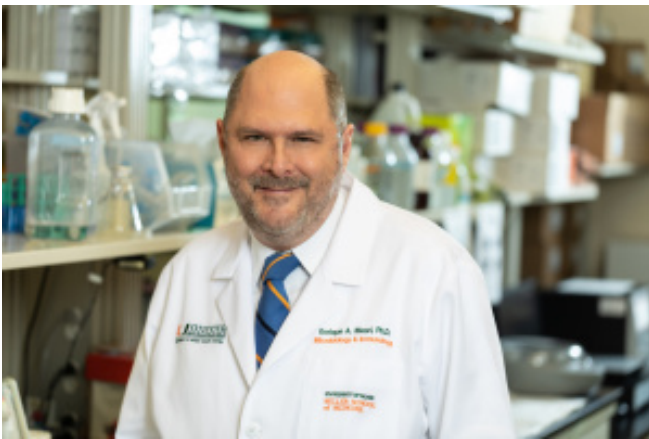


# Argentinian Government Recognizes Dr. Enrique Mesri

Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center researcher Enrique A. Mesri, Ph.D., has been awarded the RAICES award by the government of Argentina for his scientific contributions to that country.



Enrique A. Mesri, Ph.D.

The RAICES program, whose acronym means “roots” in Spanish, was established by the Argentinian Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) to support Argentinian researchers abroad so they can further develop their research in Argentina. As part of the program, the RAICES and Leloir awards were created in 2010, with the RAICES award recognizing Argentine researchers abroad who have promoted STI. The Leloir awards are presented to foreign scientists who have made significant contributions to the promotion and consolidation of STI cooperation in Argentina.

The award ceremony took place at the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs in Buenos Aires, with virtual connection to honorees, participants, and presenters. Santiago Cafiero, minister of external relations and international commerce, and Daniel Filmus, minister of STI, made the opening remarks.



From left: Kerry Burnstein, Ph.D.; Thomas Malek, Ph.D.; Mario Stevenson, Ph.D.; Cecilia Rubio, Enrique Mesri, Ph.D.; and Leandro Fernández-Suárez.

Dr. Mesri, who is also a professor of microbiology and immunology at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, attended the ceremony virtually from the Consulate General of Argentina in Miami with his family and representatives of Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, the Miami Center for AIDS Research, and the Miller School. Leandro Fernández-Suárez, consul general of the Consulate General and Promotion Center of the Argentine Republic in Miami, also attended.

“A million thanks, as I am honored and grateful for this important recognition,” Dr. Mesri said. “I would like to thank

and congratulate RAICES for its great work, and the Argentinian leaders, the University of Miami, my numerous Argentinian colleagues and mentees, and my family that helped make this possible.”

## Biomedical Advancements

Dr. Mesri was nominated in the Biological and Health Sciences category, where he stood out from his nomination cohort in large part for his work in HIV/AIDS and cancer as a member of Sylvester. Since arriving at the Miller School in 2005, Dr. Mesri has made strides in lab work and scientific collaboration with Argentina. In 2008, he was named a member of the U.S. advisory committee in Scientific and Technical Cooperation Programs, where he worked with various Argentinian leaders. Dr. Mesri earned a \$250,000 subsidy from the National Cancer Institute in 2010 for three labs in Argentina in a cooperative study of cancers associated with HIV/AIDS.



Enrique A. Mesri, Ph.D., giving his award speech.

“One can see Dr. Mesri’s passion in his work in the

translational field and advancing biomedicine in Argentina,” said Henri R. Ford, M.D., M.H.A, dean and chief academic officer of the Miller School. “His passion for academic science and international collaboration has earned him much recognition, with the RAICES award being an exceptional addition from his native country.”

These studies and early recognitions laid the groundwork for the 2017 NCI U54 grant in consortium with Sylvester, the Miami Center for AIDS Research, and four Argentinian basic and clinical research institutions. With more than \$3 million in funding, the grant is still being used to pursue research in AIDS-related malignancies while developing the careers of a critical mass of junior researchers in Argentina.

“Dr. Mesri is a leader in the field of AIDS-Kaposi’s sarcoma, KSHV and AIDS malignancies,” said Stephen D. Nimer, M.D., director of Sylvester, Oscar de la Renta Endowed Chair in Cancer Research, executive dean for research, and professor of medicine, biochemistry, and molecular biology at the Miller School. “His international collaborations have made great impact on our catchment area where we have the highest rates of HIV infection in the nation. His work in Kaposi’s sarcoma and virally induced cancers has been met with great praise, and his successful collaboration between two countries is an approach that should be emulated to advance team science.”

## **Argentinian Recognition**

The RAICES award is the second prestigious recognition given to Dr. Mesri by Argentina. In 2018, he was the recipient of the Taeda Award for Contributions to Science and Technology in the category of Scientific Cooperation.



Diploma and medal honoring Enrique A. Mesri, Ph.D.

“This award is testimony to Dr. Mesri and his scientific team’s passion and dedication to improving the lives of people suffering from cancer and related comorbidities in all their forms,” said Dr. Johnan Kaleeba, director of the AIDS Malignancy Program at the National Cancer Institute’s Office of HIV and AIDS Malignancy. “The UMiami/Argentina U54 consortium promises to elevate the NCI-supported cancer research across the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment/survivorship continuum in Argentina.”

As part of the RAICES award, Dr. Mesri will receive a diploma, a medal, and a grant for a 15-day stay in Argentina to see the U54 labs in action, collaborate with other researchers, and foster new connections.

“It’s always nice to be recognized for something one has spent so much time and care doing,” Dr. Mesri said. “This award signifies the wonderful scientific achievements made for Argentina and the American institutions that took part. When

Argentiniens are on the same page we can do great things, not only in soccer but also in science and technology. This award is a great message that inspires us to keep charging on.”

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