Damon Runyon Alumni Elected to National Academy of Sciences

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Two Damon Runyon alumni were elected to the National Academy of Sciences (the science "Hall of Fame"), one of the highest honors that can be earned by a U.S. scientist. Being elected into this prestigious group of scientists recognizes their distinguished and continuing achievements in biomedical research. This brings the total number of Damon Runyon scientists who are members of the National Academy of Sciences to 74.

Feng Zhang, PhD (Damon Runyon-Rachleff Innovator '12–'14) of the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard, is a pioneer in developing the CRISPR-Cas9 system to edit genomes in living cells, including human. Since then, CRISPR is turbo-charging research in labs around the world. CRISPR is used to understand the molecular mechanisms of diseases such as cancer and hereditary diseases, diagnose infectious diseases, and explore gene-edited food.

Roger J. Davis, PhD (Damon Runyon Fellow '83–'84) of the University of Massachusetts Medical School, Worchester, is investigating the underlying mechanisms of how inflammation contributes to diabetes, cancer, and stroke. His studies have led to the discovery of new genes, which play a role in these devastating diseases and the development of novel therapeutic strategies.

Read more about the newest members of the National Academy of Sciences.

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