



PRESS RELEASE

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Video Link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rY9RqOq9aKI>

MICHAEL E. DEBAKEY RECEIVES CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL

WASHINGTON — Foundation for Biomedical Research (FBR) Board Chairman Dr. Michael E. DeBakey was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian honor Congress can bestow, on Wednesday.

“The recipients of this medal who have come from the world of science are few, but they are iconic -- they include Thomas Edison, Walter Reed and Jonas Salk,” said President George W. Bush. “Today we gather to recognize that Michael DeBakey's name belongs among them.”

DeBakey, who has been Chairman of FBR’s Board of Directors since 1985, has received hundreds of awards including: the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1969, the Legion of Merit from the United States Army, the Eleanor Roosevelt Humanities Award, the Lasker Award and the Presidential National Medal of Science.

“Dr. DeBakey’s contributions to cardiovascular medicine have improved the health of millions of American citizens and people around the world. His extraordinary talents as a surgeon, inventor, educator and medical statesman make him a true medical legend,” said Frankie Trull, President of FBR.

DeBakey’s innovations have led to pioneering treatments and surgical techniques used in operating rooms around the world. The first successful coronary bypass, performed by DeBakey in 1964, triggered the most dynamic era in modern cardiac surgery. Two years later, he made medical history again by becoming the first person to successfully use a partial artificial heart (left ventricular bypass pump) to help patients who could not be weaned from a heart-lung machine following open-heart surgery.

Upon receiving the award, the 99-year old DeBakey said, “Again, let me come back to my sense of gratitude and because of my sense of high treasure I have for my citizenship, since receiving this award, my cup runneth over.”

“He received an almost biblical power to cure,” said Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi. “By literally fixing broken hearts, he has given hope and health to millions and today it is our honor to give him the Congressional Gold Medal.”

“Dr. DeBakey has a rare gift to see the world not as a maze of problems, but as a treasure map of solutions waiting to be discovered,” said Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid. “It’s really the vision of an oracle. Dr. DeBakey has changed the world along every step of the path of his life.”

“So many of Dr. DeBakey’s medical breakthroughs were discovered through the humane and responsible use of animal research,” said Trull.

A short video of the ceremony is available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rY9RqOq9aKI>

Established in 1981, FBR is the nation’s oldest and largest organization devoted to the public understanding, respect and support for the humane and responsible use of animals in medical and scientific research. For more information visit www.fbresearch.org.

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