



## **RAFICK-PIERRE SÉKALY, PH.D.**

Co-Director and Scientific Director

Rafick-Pierre Sékaly, Ph.D., one of the world's leading scientists in AIDS research, human immunology and immunotherapy, is co-director and scientific director of VGTI Florida. Dr. Sékaly's work has led to a generation of novel approaches to cancer and HIV vaccines, and recognition that his team is on the cusp of finding a possible cure for HIV infection.

His research has resulted in the publication of more than 200 peer-reviewed articles in scientific journals, and in more than 20 patents. Over the past two decades, Dr. Sékaly has generated more than \$160 million in grant income from organizations such as the National Institutes of Health, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Canadian government. That includes money to build a primate research center and a Canadian national laboratory to monitor immune response to vaccines and other interventions under study.

He also serves as scientific director for the National Laboratory of Immune Monitoring — a collaboration between the University of Montreal and a major pharmaceutical company — and INSERM Unit 743 in Human Immunology, which is a unit of France's major scientific funding organization. And for the last six years, he has held the position of Chairman of Human Immunology in Canada. Prior to coming to VGTI Florida, he served as scientific director of basic research and strategic planning and director of the Laboratory of Microbiology and Immunology at the Research Center of the University of Montreal Hospital Center.

Dr. Sékaly has received numerous honors and awards. Most recently, he was one of four scientists named the 2009 winners of the Avante-Garde Award for HIV/AIDS research presented by the National Institute on Drug Abuse, which is part of the National Institutes of Health. The award, worth more than \$500,000 a year for five years, is given annually to groundbreaking researchers. The money will go to Dr. Sékaly's work focusing on identifying — and eliminating — latent HIV infection, which could be one of the last steps to developing a cure for the disease. In 2007, the Canadian Society for Immunology presented him with the Bernard Cinader Award, which is given to the Canadian scientist who exemplifies distinguished scientific leadership and accomplishments in immunology.

In 1984, the University of Lausanne in Switzerland awarded Dr. Sékaly his doctorate in biochemistry. He went on to perform his postdoctoral fellowship there on immunogenetics and molecular biology.

Vaccine & Gene Therapy Institute of Florida

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