

The Institut Curie honors Michael Douglas, iconic actor and cancer prevention advocate, with the inaugural Marie Curie Legacy Medal in New York City

The Institut Curie will honor Academy Award-winning actor and producer **Michael Douglas** with **its first-ever Marie Curie Legacy Medal** at a ceremony in New York City. This special medal recognizes the commitment of citizens who, through their public advocacy, increase awareness about cancer, a major global health threat. Douglas is himself a cancer survivor, diagnosed in 2010. Following his successful battle against the disease, he has been cancer-free since 2011 and has dedicated himself to **raising awareness of head and neck cancers, and the role of human papillomavirus (HPV) in their etiology.**

Oropharyngeal cancers are dramatically increasing in the United States – doubling over the past 15 years – and 70% of cases are linked to HPV. Nearly 20,000 people in the United States are diagnosed with oropharyngeal cancers annually. By presenting Michael Douglas with this medal, the Institut Curie underscores the vital importance of public awareness of cancer – including **the pressing need for increased attention to HPV’s contributory role in these tumors as well as ways to prevent viral infection including the use of effective vaccines.**

A global leader in the fight against cancer, the Institut Curie is hosting this event to support its Marie Curie Legacy Initiative that will establish a groundbreaking Chemical Biology of Cancer Research Center. This center – Europe’s first – is a flagship initiative of the Institut Curie, with doors due to open in 2025. It will provide leading researchers with the resources needed to characterize cancer cells and the micro-environments contributing to metastases linked to 90% of deaths from the disease. The center will also explore and develop novel treatment and prevention methods.

With deep historical ties to the United States, the Institut Curie is committed to making the Marie Curie Legacy Initiative a transatlantic movement. In this way, the Institut pays homage to Marie Curie’s journey to America in 1921 – when generous, visionary Americans raised \$100,000 to enable her purchase of a single gram of radium, equivalent to more than \$1.7 million today. At a White House ceremony in May of that year, President Harding gifted Curie with the radium necessary for her revolutionary research pioneering the field of radiation oncology, surrounded by American and French diplomats, scientific leaders, and generous members of the public – a testament to the enduring friendship between the two nations as well as their cooperation for innovation and progress.

And so, this gala celebration provides an important opportunity to **showcase the latest novel advancements in cancer research, treatment, and prevention.** The evening also carries forward into the 21st century **Madame Curie’s legacy of forging close scientific bonds between France and the United States in pursuit of scientific breakthroughs that will improve the health of people worldwide.**

“Understanding the chemical biology of cancers is vital to developing future treatments and prevention strategies. A dedicated research center within the Institut Curie, the first of its kind in Europe, will significantly advance the research process and allow us to explore new frontiers in developing targeted treatments for patients.” Prof. Alain Puisieux, Director, Institut Curie Research Center

“As a cancer survivor myself, the Marie Curie Legacy Medal is a unique and special honor. I’m proud to stand alongside the Institut Curie in their work to drive innovation and progress to defeat cancer. I owe my remission to the doctors and researchers whose groundbreaking work forms the basis of everything we know about cancer diagnosis, treatment and prevention. My hope is that research centers like the one spearheaded by the Institut Curie can spark even greater progress and save many more lives, bringing hope to patients and families all over the world.” **Michael Douglas, Academy and Emmy Award-winning actor and producer; French Officer of Arts and Letters; and recipient of two French César Awards for Career Achievement and the Honorary Palme d’Or**

“Madame Curie was an iconic scientist, as Michael Douglas is an iconic actor and advocate. Their legendary linkage tonight shines a spotlight on the lifesaving dividends of medical research and excellence in clinical and preventive care to ensure a healthier future for cancer patients, and for us all.” **Rear Admiral Susan Blumenthal, MD (ret.), Ambassador, Institut Curie, and Former US Assistant Surgeon General**

“I am deeply grateful for our American friends, each of whom is contributing to advancing pioneering research on cancer. I want to thank Michael Douglas for his efforts to promote our shared vision of more effective, efficient prevention and treatment of cancer – and ultimately, one day, a world that is free of this insidious disease. It is our honor to recognize him for his important work. I am humbled to count him among the dear friends of the Institut Curie and a powerful ally in our cause.” **Prof. Thierry Philip, Chairman of the Board, Institut Curie**

About the Institut Curie

Institut Curie is France's largest cancer research center and among the very best in Europe. It combines renowned research facilities with a cutting-edge hospital group to deliver excellence in clinical care. Institut Curie treats all types of cancers, even the rarest, and also serves as a Center of Excellence in Europe for breast cancer, as well as for pediatric cancers, eye tumors, and sarcomas. Founded in 1909 by Marie Curie, Institut Curie encompasses three sites (Paris, Saint-Cloud and Orsay) with more than 3,700 researchers, doctors, and caregivers, all sharing the common missions of research, excellence in clinical care, and sharing knowledge, to accelerate innovation in the fight against cancer and provide cutting-edge treatment to patients.

Recently, French President Emmanuel Macron announced that Institut Curie will lead the Women's Cancer Institute, a unique entity dedicated to female cancers, with an international reach to ensure that women are the focus of research and innovation initiatives. This new Institute is a critical component of the French Government's Health Innovation 2030 strategy, with the goal of establishing France as the leading European nation in pioneering health discoveries.

As a public interest foundation authorized to receive donations and planned gifts in the United States, including bequests, the Institut Curie is supported by donors to fuel new discoveries and improve cancer prevention, treatment, and the quality of life of patients.

Find out more: www.curie.fr

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