

Igor Bert Dawid Biography

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Biography

Igor Dawid, the chief of the Laboratory of Molecular Genetics, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, is currently researching embryonic induction and the regulation of **gene expression** in amphibian and zebrafish (*Danio rerio*) embryogenesis. **Gene** expression is the manifestation of an organism's genetic material, demonstrated as a collection of distinctive traits. This research is significant in yielding clues to the mechanisms by which embryonic cells progress and develop. The Dawid Lab is located at the Laboratory of Molecular Genetics, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Maryland.

Dawid was born in Czernowitz (Chernivtsi), situated on the Prut River, which flows into the Danube. Since 1918, the city was part of Romania. In 1940, when Dawid was five years old, Czernowitz was ceded to the USSR, to become part of the Ukraine. WWII marked Dawid's early childhood; he was ten years old when Germany surrendered to the Allies in May 1945. Dawid moved to Austria and finished high school in Vienna. In 1960, at the age of 25, he received his Ph.D. in chemistry from the University of Vienna. Later that same year he traveled to Cambridge, Massachusetts, as a Post-doctoral Fellow at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Dawid is fluent in both German and English. His professional history includes work at the Carnegie Institution of Washington, the Max-Planck Institute in Germany, and John Hopkins University. Since 1978, Dawid has worked for the National Institutes of Health. From 1998 to 2000 he was the Acting Scientific Director at the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. Dawid is a member of numerous professional societies, among them the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Society of Biological Chemists, and the International Society of Developmental Biologists.

Dawid has co-authored over 200 research papers on topics important in the chronology of biology and genetics. Those topics include differential synthesis of genes for ribosomal **DNA** during the formation of eggs (oogenesis) in amphibians, mitochondrial **protein synthesis**, and **cell** fate and lineage determination. Earlier research focused on studies of mitochondrial and ribosomal genes. Current major interests are concentrated on the molecular genetics of embryonic development. Dawid is also studying the structure and function of nucleated cell (eukaryotic) genes.