

For Immediate Release

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## **TOP SCI PROFESSIONALS RECOGNIZED BY ASIA**

*Drs. Shea, Silver, and Tuszynski among those honored at 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting*

July 7, 2008 – The American Spinal Injury Association (ASIA) held its 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Meeting from June 19 – 22 in San Diego, CA with approximately 400 SCI professionals in attendance. ASIA, the nation's leading professional medical association in the field of spinal cord injury, presented the Lifetime Achievement Award to J. Darrell Shea, M.D., and The Erica Nader Award to Jerry Silver, Ph.D. for SCI regeneration research. Mark H. Tuszynski, M.D., Ph.D. was The Distinguished G. Heiner Sell Lecturer.

J. Darrell Shea, M.D., retired Medical Director of Lucerne Medical Center in Orlando, FL and past-president of ASIA (1985-87) was responsible for ground-breaking innovations in the treatment of people with SCI. Specifically, Dr. Shea's areas of special interest were emergency spinal cord injury care, and diagnosis and management of pressure sores. During his 19 year career at Lucerne, Dr. Shea, who referred to himself as a "simple bone cutter," transcended his work as an orthopaedic surgeon by approaching his patients from a holistic perspective.

Jerry Silver, Ph.D., Professor in the Department of Neurosciences at the Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine and adjunct Professor in the Department of Neurosurgery at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation received the Erica Nader Award sponsored by Viscogliosi Brothers. During the past three decades, Dr. Silver's work has focused on understanding the cellular and molecular mechanisms by which glial cells either promote or inhibit growing or regenerating axons from traveling along the multitude of pathways potentially available to them within the brain and spinal cord in mammals. He serves on a number of scientific editorial boards, reviews articles for over 35 high impact journals, reviews grants for 18 national and international organizations, and has served as lead or senior author on more than 130 publications.

Mark A. Tuszynski, M.D., Ph.D., Professor and Vice-Chair in the Department of Neurosciences at the University of California, San Diego presented the 2008 Distinguished G. Heiner Sell Lectureship entitled, "Enhancing Plasticity and Regeneration After SCI: Challenges of Clinical Translation." Since 1980, Dr. Tuszynski has received 15 awards internationally for his work in neuroscience repair.

Founded in 1973, ASIA has a membership of physicians and other medical professionals engaged in spinal cord injury research and care delivery. Its mission is to establish and promote standards of excellence for all aspects of health care of individuals with spinal cord injury, to educate members, other healthcare professionals, patients, and their families, on all aspects of spinal cord injury, to foster research for both acute and chronic SCI, and to facilitate communication in the SCI community.