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Retina Implant AG Founder Professor Eberhart Zrenner and Research Team Honoured at EURETINA

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Retina Implant AG announced that the Company's founder Professor Eberhart Zrenner, MD, was awarded the second prize by The European Society for Retina Specialists (EURETINA). Professor Zrenner received the group's inaugural Innovation Awards in London last week for his work in the field of artificial vision.

Dr. Zrenner, professor of Ophthalmology and director Emeritus of the Institute for Ophthalmic Research at the Centre for Ophthalmology of the University of Tuebingen and the project team consisting of research teams from several universities, received the award for their investigations into subretinal implant technology.

Speaking of the award, Dr. Zrenner said: 'It is an incredible honour that such a prestigious community of my peers has presented me with this award. We are proud of the work our team has done to restore useful vision to those suffering from retinitis pigmentosa.'

In 2003, Professor Zrenner and the leading project team managers founded Retina Implant AG, a leading developer of subretinal implants for the visually impaired. Zrenner and the team designed a 3 x 3 mm² array containing 1,500 electrodes to stimulate the damaged cells using pulsed, light-dependent electrical stimuli. The team's goal was to restore useful vision to the blind in order to provide these patients with some independence and to date clinical trials have produced positive results.

Retina Implant AG's first clinical trial began in 2005 at the University Eye Clinic of Tuebingen, Germany by implanting 11 patients. Results of the first clinical trial have been presented at several industry-wide scientific meetings and were published in the journal Proceedings of the Royal Society B last November.

The 2011 EURETINA Innovation Award is a new initiative sponsored by EURETINA to support and encourage innovation in the field of retinal medicine. These awards aim to facilitate and support an entrepreneurial culture to deliver new market applications for the ultimate benefit of patients with retinal disorders, as well as engage and encourage the networking potential of the retinal community across the EU to improve both patient care and outcomes.

There were over 20 applications for the award and six finalists. As part of the short-listing process, nominees were invited to present their innovation at the EURETINA Congress. The winner was then

selected by a judging panel chaired by Prof. Einar Stefansson of Landspítali University Hospital. The other finalists included Dr J Farrar (Trinity College) research into mutation-independent gene therapy for rhodo-spin linked autosomal dominant retinitis pigmentosa and Dr M Rudolf (University of Luebeck) and his team's development of novel drug candidates for the prevention and treatment of age-related macular degeneration, which won the first prize.

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