

## Professor Dr. Helma Wennemers of the University of Basel receives the Leonidas Zervas Award sponsored by Bachem

On September 6, 2010, Prof. Dr. Helma Wennemers from University of Basel in Switzerland received the Leonidas Zervas Award. The award, sponsored by Bachem, is one of the most important in the field of peptide research. The ceremony took place during the 31<sup>st</sup> European Peptide Symposium at Copenhagen, Denmark.



Presentation of the Leonidas Zervas Award to Prof. Dr. Helma Wennemers (University of Basel) by Dr. Thomas Vorherr (Bachem Holding AG) in Copenhagen on September 6, 2010.

The Leonidas Zervas Award was established in 1988 by the European Peptide Society, an association of peptide researchers from 26 countries, and is assigned every two years in the context of the respective European Peptide Symposium. It is one of the most prestigious awards in the field of peptide research and the laureates are chosen by the European Peptide Council.

Dr. Leonidas Zervas had a significant input on the development of modern synthetic tools to support peptide synthesis and can be regarded as a founding father of modern peptide chemistry. Interestingly, in 1960 the University of Basel awarded him an honorary doctorate. The election of Prof. Dr. Helma Wennemers for the Leonidas Zervas award marks the third time the prize goes to Basel, Switzerland. Due to the history in academic peptide research, the presence of manufacturers like Bachem, and close-by pharma-companies interested in peptide therapeutics, the region of Basel can be regarded as a centre of innovation for peptide chemistry.

The Leonidas Zervas Award, sponsored by Bachem, was presented at the 31<sup>st</sup> European Peptide Symposium in Copenhagen by Dr. Thomas Vorherr (Business Development Bachem Group) on September 6, 2010. Prof. Dr. Helma Wennemers receives the award for her significant contributions in the fields of peptides as asymmetric catalysts, for selective recognition, and for poly-prolines applied as molecular scaffolds. Following post-graduate studies in America and Japan, Prof. Dr. Wennemers started at the University of Basel in 1999. She accepted the newly established assistance professorship for peptide chemistry founded by Bachem AG. In 2003, she was promoted to associate professor. In a short time, she has built up a research group active at the interface between chemistry and biology. Up to now, Bachem supports Prof. Dr. Wennemers to encourage academic research on peptides at the University of Basel.