Dr Robert C. Gallo, M.D.

Dr Robert C. Gallo is one of the world's most eminent scientists having discovered two retroviruses, the only known human leukaemia virus – HTLV, the human herpes virus, the interleukin-2, the discovery of chemokines and made significant contributions to demonstrating that HIV is the cause of AIDS. His discoveries have influenced multiple facets of the HIV response in South Africa and in the world.

Lifetime achievements in Dr Gallo's distinguished career include discoveries that have led to both diagnostic and therapeutic advances in cancer, AIDS and other viral disorders while his vision remains unprecedented in the field of virology. He has dedicated his career to creating and building the Global Virus Network and trying to find solutions to ending the AIDS epidemic, mainly through significant contributions to pathogenesis.

Although best known for his co-discovery of HIV, it was Dr Gallo and his team that pioneered the development of the HIV blood test, which enabled health care workers for the first time to screen for the AIDS virus. This breakthrough led to a more rapid diagnosis whilst simultaneously, protecting patients receiving blood transfusions. He holds 32 honorary doctorates and was the most referenced scientist in the world in the 1980s and 1990s. He had the unique distinction of twice winning America's most prestigious scientific award - the Albert Lasker Award in Medicine - in 1982 and again in 1986. Dr Gallo holds over 50 patents. He is the author of more than 1,300 scientific publications and the book "Virus Hunting - AIDS, Cancer & the Human Retrovirus: A Story of Scientific Discovery."

UKZN will confer an Honorary degree (Doctorate in Science) to Dr Gallo on the 14th April 2016 for his unique and outstanding contributions that have had a profound impact on society locally and at a global level.