ASTRO
TARGETING CANCER CARE

News Release
FOR IMMEDIATE REVIEW

Contact: Erin L. Boyle
703-839-7336
erin.boyle@astro.org

Leading surgeon, researcher Jack A. Roth, MD, named 2015 ASTRO Honorary Member

Fairfax, Va., July 29, 2015—The American Society for Radiation Oncology (ASTRO) has selected leading surgeon and researcher Jack A. Roth, MD, as the 2015 Honorary Member, the highest honor ASTRO bestows on distinguished cancer researchers, scientists and leaders in disciplines other than radiation oncology, radiobiology or radiation physics. Dr. Roth will be inducted as the 2015 ASTRO Honorary Member during the Awards Ceremony on Tuesday, October 20, at ASTRO's 57th Annual Meeting, October 18-21, 2015, at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center in San Antonio.

The first ASTRO Honorary Membership was awarded in 1989. The selection of Dr. Roth tallies the number of individuals to receive an Honorary Membership in ASTRO to 32.

"Throughout his renowned career, Dr. Roth has demonstrated leadership and commitment to multidisciplinary approaches for treating lung cancer," said Bruce G. Haffty, MD, FASTRO, chair of ASTRO's Board of Directors. "Patients should benefit from his pivotal work comparing the use of stereotactic ablative radiation therapy [SABR] versus surgery for operable clinical stage I non-small cell lung cancer [NSCLC]. He and colleagues found that SABR may improve outcomes for stage I NSCLC patients compared to standard lobectomy in their study. Dr. Roth is an excellent surgeon and clinician, as well as an inspiring mentor. ASTRO thanks him for his outstanding achievements."

Dr. Roth has received numerous grants and awards, including an NCI SPORE Grant in lung

cancer, published more than 560 articles in peer-reviewed journals and 116 book chapters, and has 59 issued and 22 pending U.S. and foreign patients.

He cited his and colleagues' study "Stereotactic ablative radiotherapy versus lobectomy for operable stage I non-small-cell lung cancer: a pooled analysis of two randomized trials," published in *Lancet Oncology* in May 2015, as his most recent career highlight.

"This was the culmination of 10 years of work from many international multidisciplinary groups," Dr. Roth said.

He said the topic caught his interest in 2005, when he attended presentations by Robert Timmerman, MD, and Hiroshi Onishi, MD, PhD, on the first SABR clinical trials in stage I lung cancer at the International Association for the Study of Lung Cancer (IASLC) World Conference in Barcelona.

"The potential to reduce treatment-related morbidity and mortality and for organ preservation was obvious," he said.

He organized a workshop sponsored by the IASLC in 2006 to discuss the feasibility of a clinical trial comparing SABR to lobectomy for operable clinical stage I NSCLC.

"Implementation faced many obstacles, including rejection of the protocol by clinical trials cooperative groups, difficulty in obtaining funding and the refusal of thoracic surgeons at academic medical centers around the world to participate," Dr. Roth said. "A turning point was the suggestion by Suresh Senan, MBBS, PhD, that the data from our two trials [STARS and ROSEL] be combined, which resulted in the *Lancet Oncology* publication."

He was also an early innovator in the development of gene therapy for cancer, and led the first tumor suppressor gene therapy clinical trials approved by the National Institutes of Health Recombinant DNA Advisory Committee and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. The approval for the protocols came from his demonstration of feasibility and efficacy through laboratory and preclinical studies. His work was the first gene therapy in cancer approved for human use.

"Cancer is a disease of dysfunctional genes," Dr. Roth said. "A direct way to address this is to

correct the genetic abnormalities through gene transfer. The first tumor suppressor gene therapy patient was treated by our group in 1995. This has been a long journey as well, with many technical challenges. However, during the past 5 years, real progress has been made in systemic gene delivery."

Dr. Roth has not only worked on the research and surgical sides himself, but he has also trained the next generation of surgical oncologists and laboratory researchers.

"I hope this research will inspire physicians of all oncologic disciplines to work together to improve outcomes for cancer patients with the understanding that the best way to achieve this is through rigorous scientific investigation," he said.

"It is always a great feeling to be recognized by your peers," Dr. Roth concluded. "My first thought was that this is a tribute to all the outstanding colleagues that I have been privileged to work with over the years."

Dr. Roth is professor, Department of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery, Division of Surgery, MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, and chief, Section of Thoracic Molecular Oncology, Department of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery, Division of Surgery, MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston.

For more information about ASTRO's 57th Annual Meeting, visit www.astro.org/AnnualMeeting.

For press registration and media policies for ASTRO's 57th Annual Meeting, visit www.astro.org/AMPress.

ABOUT ASTRO

ASTRO is the premier radiation oncology society in the world, with more than 10,000 members who are physicians, nurses, biologists, physicists, radiation therapists, dosimetrists and other health care professionals that specialize in treating patients with radiation therapies. As the leading organization in radiation oncology, the Society is dedicated to improving patient care through professional education and training, support for clinical practice and health policy standards, advancement of science and research, and advocacy. ASTRO publishes two medical journals, International Journal of Radiation Oncology • Biology • Physics

(www.redjournal.org) and Practical Radiation Oncology (www.practicalradonc.org); developed and maintains an extensive patient website, www.rtanswers.org; and created the Radiation Oncology Institute (www.roinstitute.org), a non-profit foundation to support research and education efforts around the world that enhance and confirm the critical role of radiation therapy in improving cancer treatment. To learn more about ASTRO, visit www.astro.org.

###