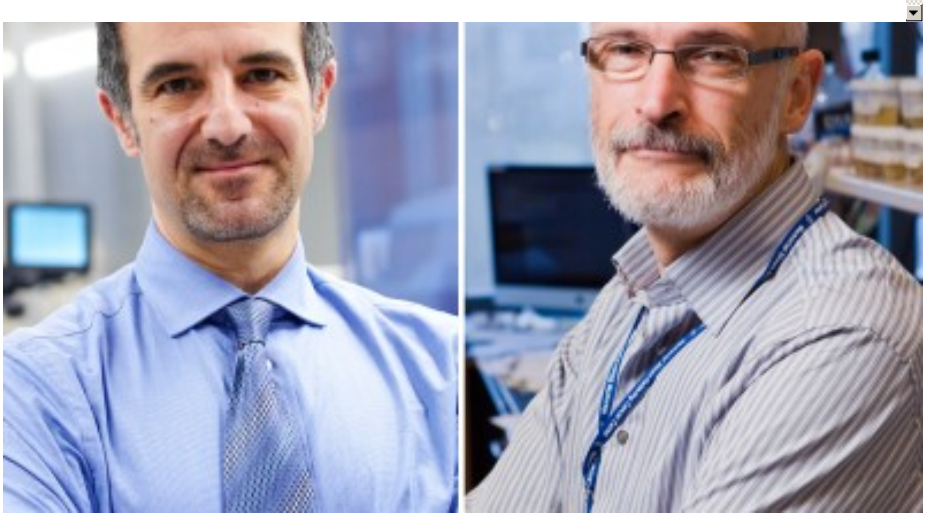
the highest honors given to scientists working in the United States.



Structural Biology Program Chair Nikola P. Pavletich (left) and immunologist Alexander Y. Rudensky

Two Memorial Sloan Kettering investigators have been named members of the National Academy of Sciences, one of the highest honors given to scientists working in the United States. Structural Biology Program Chair Nikola P. Pavletich and immunologist Alexander Y. Rudensky join 11 researchers from Memorial Sloan Kettering who already are National Academy of Sciences members.

"The National Academy of Sciences is our country's most prestigious scientific society and election to membership is an acknowledgment by the scientific community that an individual has made truly groundbreaking discoveries," says Thomas J. Kelly, Director of the Sloan Kettering Institute. "Nikola Pavletich has contributed in a major way to our current understanding of how cells control their growth and maintain the integrity of their genomes. Sasha Rudensky has provided new insight into how immune responses are regulated to prevent autoimmunity. I'm delighted that our colleagues have received this recognition for their pioneering work."

Nikola P. Pavletich

Dr. Pavletich is a structural biologist whose work is focused on the pathways that are altered in cancer, especially on proteins related to the cell-division cycle and those that control the cell's response to DNA damage.

His laboratory uses x-ray crystallography to investigate the three-dimensional structure (shape) of proteins, generating "snapshots" that reveal how these proteins interact with each other and with DNA. Their research has improved the understanding of how these proteins function and how they repair damaged DNA. One DNA repair protein he has studied extensively is BRCA2, which is linked to many breast and ovarian cancers.

The Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator earned his PhD degree in molecular biology and genetics from the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. He joined Memorial Sloan Kettering in 1993 and was named Chair of the Sloan Kettering Institute's Structural Biology Program in 2003.

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Alexander Y. Rudensky

Dr. Rudensky is a member of the Sloan Kettering Institute's Immunology Program . His laboratory studies the development of white blood cells called T lymphocytes, which play a role in the immune system response to infection.

Specifically, his research is focused on a subset of T lymphocytes called regulatory T cells, which are believed to suppress the immune system's ability to fight tumors. Understanding how regulatory T cells function has many potential applications in the clinic, including the development of therapies for autoimmune diseases and cancer that act by boosting or targeting these cells.

The Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator earned his PhD degree in immunology from the Gabrichevsky Research Institute of Epidemiology and Microbiology, in Moscow. He joined Memorial Sloan Kettering in 2009, after more than 16 years on the faculty of the University of Washington School of Medicine.

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