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Memorial Sloan Kettering  
Cancer Center

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more than 700 people filled the [Rockefeller Research Laboratories](#) Auditorium in November 2010 for *Major Trends in Modern Cancer Research*. Held for the fifth consecutive year, the symposium was created to expose members of the public, especially high school students and their teachers, to cutting-edge research that is having a major impact on improving the understanding of cancer. ([Watch video from this event](#) .)

Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center President [Craig B. Thompson](#) welcomed the attendees and gave the first of the evening's three lectures.

"Ultimately our goal would be to put ourselves out of business," he told the audience, "to develop strategies to prevent cancer so that no one ever actually has to...come to a hospital like this and have this disease."



Memorial Sloan Kettering President Craig Thompson spoke about his research at the public symposium.

Dr. Thompson, who officially joined Memorial Sloan Kettering just a week before the symposium, focuses his research on how metabolic changes — the process by which normal cells and tumor cells take in and use nutrients — affect the origin and progression of cancer.

The next speaker was [Mary K. Baylies](#), a developmental biologist whose work is focused on the mechanisms underlying the development and maintenance of organ systems. Using fruit flies as a model, Dr. Baylies employs many laboratory techniques to identify and understand genes required for the formation of muscle tissue.

The final speaker was Timothy A. Chan, a radiation oncologist who specializes in treating patients with [brain tumors](#) and also runs a laboratory devoted to understanding the molecular basis of breast and brain cancers. His research focuses on identifying novel tumor suppressor genes — genes that can lead to tumor formation when they are disabled.

At the conclusion of each talk, the investigators took questions from the students and other members of the audience.

