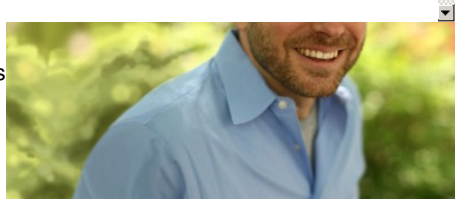

Scott N. Keeney

Scott N. Keeney , a member of the Molecular Biology Program within the Sloan Kettering Institute , was one of 56 researchers to be appointed a Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) investigator in 2008.

Dr. Keeney is an expert in the cellular process called recombination, which occurs when chromosomes exchange pieces of information during meiosis (the specialized cell division that is needed to produce eggs and sperm). He discovered the function of a protein called SPO11, which creates the double-strand breaks in DNA that are essential for recombination. Using both yeast and mice as model organisms, he has created organisms that have defective or missing SPO11 to learn more about how recombination occurs.

Dr. Keeney earned his PhD degree from the University of California, Berkeley, and completed postdoctoral training at Harvard University before joining Memorial Sloan Kettering in 1997. He is the recipient of many awards, including the 2004 Louise and Allston Boyer Young Investigator Award, presented at Memorial Sloan Kettering's Academic Convocation.

Established in 1953, the HHMI is a nonprofit medical research organization and one of the largest philanthropic organizations in the United States. This year's appointees "are poised to advance scientific knowledge dramatically in the coming years, and we are committed to providing them with the freedom and flexibility to do so," said Thomas R. Cech, president of HHMI.