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## Penn Researchers Organize Conference in Greece on Innate Immunity

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PHILADELPHIA—Two University of Pennsylvania professors are serving as organizers of the [Ninth International Conference on Innate Immunity](#), to be held June 23-28 in Ixia, Greece, on the island of Rhodes.

[John Lambris](#), Dr. Ralph and Sallie Weaver Professor of Research Medicine at the [Perelman School of Medicine](#), and [George Hajishengallis](#), a professor in the [Department of Microbiology](#) in Penn's [School of Dental Medicine](#), will bring together researchers and students from around the world to share their research findings. It's the only major conference in the world devoted exclusively to the innate immune system.

"Innate immunity is one of the key defense mechanism that our body has," Lambris said. "It's the system that is activated immediately when you come into contact with a pathogen."

Lambris is a leader in the study of the innate immune system, specializing in research on the complement system, which reacts to pathogens by launching cascades of proteins to clear the body of invaders. Hajishengallis has also focused on the innate immune system in work that traces the mechanisms by which inflammation and infection lead to gum disease.

The conference is expected to draw 120 attendees who will present on subjects from biological mechanisms of innate immunity to therapeutics that rely on the innate immune system to fight infection.

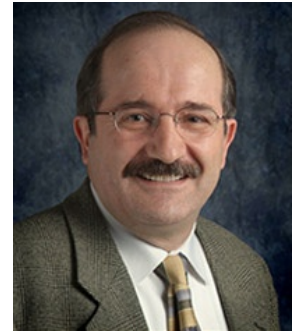
While a typical conference presentation is usually only minimally interactive, Lambris has embraced his Greek roots to implement a conference schedule relying on the Socratic method, with ample time devoted to participant interaction. The intimate scale of the conference also lends itself to relationship building, which can lead to productive scientific partnerships.

"At small meetings, people spend a lot of time together and are more relaxed in that kind of environment," Lambris said. "It's conducive to setting up collaborations."

Added Hajishengallis, "These are highly interactive meetings. Personally, I have had several productive collaborations initiated in these conferences with top leaders in the field."

The conference is sponsored by [Aegean Conferences](#), a non-profit educational organization of which Lambris is founder and executive director. Aegean Conferences has held 69 scientific meetings since being formed in 1999, including several organized by Penn faculty.

Additional information is available at [www.aegeanconferences.org](http://www.aegeanconferences.org).



John Lambris



George Hajishengallis

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