

Brief Biography

Ross J. Baldessarini, M.D., M.A. (hon.), D.Sc. (hon.), DLFAPA, FACP, FACNP, FCINP

Dr. Baldessarini was born in western Massachusetts in 1937 and graduated from Williams College with highest honors in chemistry in 1959. He completed medical education at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in 1963, where he began training in neuroscience with Professor Vernon Mountcastle in neurophysiology, as well as spending a year at the National Institutes of Health with Drs. Seymour Kety, Julius Axelrod, and Irwin Kopin in neuropharmacology. After graduation, he completed internship at Boston City Hospital in internal medicine and then returned to the NIMH for additional training in biochemical neuropharmacology in 1964–66. In 1966 he returned to Johns Hopkins Hospital for clinical training in psychiatry with Professor Joel Elkes, and was Chief Resident Psychiatrist of the Henry Phipps Psychiatric Clinic there in 1968–69.

He moved to Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) in 1969 to help Professor Seymour Kety establish the Laboratories for Psychiatric Research (LPR), which he directed after Dr. Kety's retirement in 1983, following a move to the new Mailman Research Center at McLean Hospital in 1977. In 1988, Professor Baldessarini was named permanent Director of the LPR as well as the founding Director of a new Bipolar & Psychotic Disorders Program at McLean Hospital, where in 1989 he also became Co-Director of Psychopharmacology and Psychopharmacology Training. He founded the International Consortium for Mood & Psychotic Disorders Research there in 1995 with colleagues from the US, Canada, South America, Europe, and Asia. He has also served as consultant to numerous scientific, industrial, and clinical organizations. He was one of the founders of the International Society for CNS Drug Trials Methodology in 2005. Currently he continues to direct the International Consortium for Mood & Psychotic Disorders Research, at the Mailman Research Center of McLean Hospital. He is a tenured Professor of Psychiatry and in Neuroscience at Harvard Medical School and Senior Consulting Psychiatrist at Massachusetts General Hospital.

Dr. Baldessarini is an internationally known neuroscientist and research neuropsychopharmacologist who has made many contributions related to the basic scientific understanding of central monoaminergic neurotransmitter systems, their involvement in the pathophysiology of neuropsychiatric disorders, and the actions of antipsychotic and mood-altering medicines. His later laboratory interests focused on dopaminergic systems of the brain and their relevance to the actions, adverse-effects, development and clinical application of antipsychotic and antimanic drugs and radiotracers for use in brain imaging. He has also contributed extensively in collaborative clinical studies of the course and treatment of major affective and psychotic disorders, and to the therapeutics of these disorders and of suicide. He was a Career Investigator of the NIMH from 1970 to 2001. He has over 3300 publications, that included the chapters on psychopharmacology in Goodman & Gilman's standard American textbook of pharmacology from 1980 to 2012, as well as his own monograph *Chemotherapy in Psychiatry: Principles and Practice* (Third Edition, New York: Springer Press, 2013), and he has served on editorial boards of 45 leading neuroscience, pharmacology, and psychiatric journals.

His recognitions include election to the Scholars of Johns Hopkins University, the Efron Research Prize from the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology (ACNP), the Falcone Prize for Bipolar Disorders Research of the American National Alliance for Research in Schizophrenia and Depression (NARSAD), the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) Research Prize on antisuicide effects of lithium, the first McLean Hospital Cataldo Prize for Mentoring, the Harvard Medical School Silen Lifetime Mentoring Award, the ISI list of most often cited authors in pharmacology and psychiatry, the Mogens Schou Award for lifetime teaching and training on bipolar disorder for the International Society of Bipolar Disorders (ISBD), and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the University of Rome.

He has been very active the education of a generation of medical trainees and psychiatrists in psychopharmacology and other biological aspects of psychiatry, as well as training over 170 laboratory and clinical investigators. He is widely regarded as having an unusually broad and critical perspective on the integration of basic research in neuroscience and pharmacology with problems in clinical research and contemporary psychiatric practice. He and his wife Frances live in Waban, Massachusetts. Their daughter Anne Finegan, LICSW, is a clinical social worker in Baltimore, Maryland, with a young son (Jack) and daughter

(Caroline). Son John Baldessarini, MEd is a mental health family and youth crisis-intervention counselor in Framingham, Massachusetts, and has a daughter (Lillian) and son (James).
