In November, CSHL awarded Double Helix Medals to four extraordinary people who have positively influenced human health by conducting groundbreaking research or raising awareness and funds for research.

“Driven by passion, intellect and vision, our recipients have boldly participated in the fight to find cures for diseases that plague us,” said President Bruce Stillman at the 2009 gala.

The event raised $3.1 million to strengthen and expand research and education programs at CSHL. Medals for Scientific Research were presented to Herbert W. Boyer, Ph.D. and Stanley N. Cohen, M.D. who co-discovered recombinant DNA, thereby launching the biotechnology revolution and leading to synthetic human insulin for diabetes, as well as growth hormones, cancer treatments and more. This seminal discovery was the basis for Dr. Boyer’s founding of Genentech in 1976.

Kathryn W. Davis was honored for Humanitarianism. A lifelong philanthropist, Ms. Davis and her family established CSHL’s Davis Chair in Human Genetics to focus on uncovering the roots of genetic disorders. She also founded the Kathryn W. Davis RNAi Research Center at the Laboratory to support the understanding of how the RNAi machinery might be programmed to turn off genes that lead to cancer and other disorders.

Maurice “Hank” Greenberg was presented with the medal for Corporate Philanthropy. Mr. Greenberg’s $100 million commitment to the Starr Cancer Consortium has strengthened cancer research and collaboration among five area institutions — Weill-Cornell Medical College, Rockefeller University, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, the Broad Institute and Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory.

Chairs for the event were Mr. and Mrs. Eli Broad, Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Davis, Ms. Florence A. Davis, Mr. and Mrs. Edward E. Matthews and Dr. Richard H. Scheller. For more details and images from the event, visit http://doublehelixmedals.cshl.edu. Denise Lenci