

Preface

The biological revolution of the late twentieth century has fundamentally changed the way in which cancer is being understood, diagnosed, treated, and prevented; yet, it is now evident that the challenge to eliminate the suffering and death from cancer by 2015 issued in 2002 by Andrew von Eschenbach, then director of the National Cancer Institute, will not be met soon. I remember being in the audience, then a postdoctoral research fellow just having entered the cancer research arena, when attending my first AACR meeting held in San Francisco in 2002, where this challenge was made during a memorable plenary session with von Eschenbach serving as a keynote speaker. I left impressed and inspired, and even today, over 12 years later, it is the extraordinary boldness and exhilarating aspiration of the very possibility that this challenge might be fulfilled one day that overpowers the fact that this goal will not have been met by 2015. Ultimately, it is the grandness of our aspirations that determines how far we will go.

It is now understood that dysregulated cell stress response pathways play a critical role in tumorigenesis, and a refined mechanistic understanding of this phenomenon at the molecular level promises to open novel avenues for targeted therapeutic strategies that may benefit cancer patients in the near future. The comprehensive coverage of cell stress response pathways in cancer as presented for the first time in this book is intended to provide a state-of-the-art perspective that is of interest to both basic researchers focusing on fundamental cancer biology and translational biomedical health care professionals.

With the completion of this project I would like to express my gratitude to those who were instrumental in its creation. First, and foremost I would like to thank my co-authors from five continents that have graciously contributed their talent, expertise, and time to assemble this first-in-kind perspective on cancer stress response pathways. Secondly, I am indebted to my department head Terrence Monks for allowing me to pursue this project and to my friends and former postdoctoral mentors Mike and Elaine Jacobson for bringing me to San Francisco that day. Moreover, I am grateful for this outstanding opportunity and the expert support provided by Melania Ruiz and Ilse Hensen-Kooijman at Springer Science + Business Media B.V.

Finally, I would like to thank my family, Claudia, Gil, Philip, and Annie, for letting me divert precious time and energy from them in pursuit of this book project and for sharing my hope that the research presented here will move us closer to take on von Eschenbach's challenge one day.

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