

2024 Commencement Speaker

Lydia Villa-Komaroff, PhD '75

Lydia Villa-Komaroff, PhD '75, was one of the early group of scientists who first used the ability to join DNA from animals to DNA from bacteria to make useful proteins and to study biological processes and human diseases, including diabetes.



This watershed discovery of inducing bacteria to produce insulin changed the biotechnology industry forever—and the lives of millions who rely on insulin to manage their illness.

Villa-Komaroff has had many roles in addition to scientist. She's served as Vice President for Research at Northwestern University and the Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research just next door to us here at MIT. She has been Chief Scientific Officer and CEO of Cytonome, a company that designs cell sorters and is a member of its Board of Directors. She served on the boards of Transkaryotic Therapies (TKT), later purchased by Shire, and of the American Type Culture Collection (or ATCC). She was a founding member of the Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science, or SACNAS, and still serves as a senior advisor, inspiring the next generation.

Her numerous awards and honors include the Hispanic Engineer National Achievement award, induction into the Hispanic Engineer National Achievement Hall of Fame, National Hispanic Scientist of the Year from The Museum of Science and Industry, and the Women of Distinction award from the American Association of University Women.



MIT
COMMENCEMENT

20
24

MIT School of Science

Advanced Degree Ceremony

Wednesday, May 29, 2024

3:00 p.m.

Kresge Auditorium

Lord Swraj Paul PC '52 and Angad Paul '92 Theater

MIT Massachusetts
Institute of
Technology

Welcome

Dean Nergis Mavalvala

Curtis (1963) and Kathleen Marble Professor of Astrophysics

Commencement address

Lydia Villa-Komaroff, PhD '75

Conferring of degrees

Master's recipients

Department of Biology

Doctoral recipients

- Investiture by Mary Gehring, David Baltimore Chair in Biomedical Research and Professor of Biology

Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences

Doctoral recipients

- Investiture by Mriganka Sur, Director, Simons Center for the Social Brain, Newton Professor of Neuroscience

Department of Chemistry

Doctoral recipients

- Investiture by Elizabeth Nolan, Associate Department Head and Ivan R. Cottrell Professor of Immunology

Department of Earth, Atmospheric and Planetary Sciences

Doctoral recipients

- Investiture by Rob van der Hilst, Department Head and Schlumberger Professor of Earth and Planetary Sciences

Department of Mathematics

Doctoral recipients

- Investiture by Michel Goemans, Department Head and RSA Professor of Mathematics

Department of Physics

Doctoral recipients

- Investiture by Deepto Chakrabarty, Department Head and Professor of Physics

MIT-Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution

Doctoral recipients

- Investiture by Mick Follows, MIT Director of the MIT/WHOI Joint Program, Professor of Earth, Atmospheric and Planetary Sciences

Accessible seating and accommodations provided by MIT Disability and Access Services. Scan this QR code for a closed caption stream provided by MIT Audiovisual Services.



Diplomas

Please visit commencement.mit.edu for a list of degree recipients. For more information about diplomas, please visit: registrar.mit.edu/transcripts-records/diplomas.

Advanced degree recipients may pick up their diplomas in the Stata building 32-124:

- Thursday, May 30: 10:00am to 6:00pm
- Friday, May 31: 10:00am to 3:00pm

Reception

A reception for all School of Science graduates and their guests will take place outside Kresge.