

## **LAUDATIO MELANIE LASZCZYK**

Dr. Melanie Laszczyk studied biotechnology at Mannheim Technical College.

During a term of work-experience as part of her diploma course, Melanie Laszczyk gained her first experience of triterpene extracts from birch and mistletoe at the Carl Gustav Carus-Institute. In 2004, she started research for her doctorate on the triterpenes from birch bark at the Faculty of Biology of the University of Freiburg, Germany, under the supervision of Dr. Martin. This involved interdisciplinary work at the company Birken GmbH, the Carl Gustav Carus-Institute and Freiburg University Skin Clinic. Because of the outstanding quality of her thesis, Melanie Laszczyk received her doctorate in 2007 with the prestigious award 'summa cum laude'.

Besides heading quality control of cosmetics in Birken GmbH, in 2008 she took on the direction of the Research & Development department there. In addition to the company's internal galenic development, this involved galenic, preclinical and clinical collaboration with partners in universities and medical centres.

Since 2009 she has led a project with three co-operating university partners that was supported by a central innovation programme (ZIM) of the German Ministry of Economy and Technology.

A feature of Melanie Laszczyk's work is that it involves different fields and draws on various scientific disciplines. In 2006 she published a paper on the characterisation of dry extracts of triterpenes and their potential galenic applications. Through cell culture studies she was able to confirm clinical findings with the extracts in actinic keratosis and helped prepare the clinical trials of the extract. She has co-authored several papers dealing with the preparation of pentacyclic triterpenes of plant origin, their extraction and galenic preparation as well as their use preclinically and clinically. Her focus is the application of triterpenes to the skin in the form of betulin emulsions. Preclinically this mainly involves anti-inflammatory, antioxidative, differentiation promoting and antiviral effects of the triterpenes. In clinical research the range of investigations extends from cosmetic applications for dry skin to the

treatment of skin that has been damaged, for example by radiotherapy, wounds or diseases such as neurodermatitis.

Melanie Laszczyk's literature research and her own findings on the potential for triterpenoids in tumour therapy is summarised in a review article which appeared in *Planta Medica* in 2009.

GA awarded the Egon Stahl Award in bronze to Dr. Melanie Laszczyk in recognition of her highly valuable contributions to pharmacognosy and analytical phytochemistry, in particular of her outstanding contributions to preclinical cell culture research, new galenic formulations and scientific steering of clinical studies.

Brigitte Kopp  
GA President