

After completing a B.S. in agricultural chemistry at National Taiwan University, Leu-Fen Lin received her Ph.D. in biochemistry from the University of Minnesota. Dr. Lin completed her scientific training as a postdoctoral fellow with Nobel Laureate Konrad Bloch at Harvard University. She ascended the scientific ranks first as a scientist at the Shriver Centre for Mental Retardation in Waltham, Massachusetts, and fellow in Neurology at Massachusetts General Hospital, as a senior scientist at Synergen, Inc., to the present position of Laboratory Director of Protein Chemistry at CytoTherapeutics, Inc., Providence, Rhode Island.

Dr. Lin's research interests, as an enzymologist and protein chemist, have included the structure-function relationship of proteins in mitochondrial, microsomal and myelin membranes. In industry, Dr. Lin has focused particularly on neurotrophic factors that show pharmaceutical potential in treating neurodegenerative diseases. At Synergen, Inc., she was the principal discoverer of two neurotrophic factors - CNTF and GDNF. Both factors were discovered by classical protein purification methods based primarily on protein bioactivity. Three U.S. patents are on file for CNTF and one international patent is pending for GDNF based on Dr. Lin's findings. Currently, CNTF is in therapeutic clinical trials in Europe for amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (Lou Gehrig's disease) and GDNF is in therapeutic clinical trials for Parkinson's disease.



*"This [GDNF review] article is dedicated to Dr. Catherine Mytilineou from whom I learned the art of midbrain culture that helped lead to the discovery of GDNF."*



*Audrey Bott, M.D. 1996*