The Andrea Prader Prize was established as a Leadership Award of the European Society for Paediatric Endocrinology following a generous donation from KabiVi-trum. The Prize is awarded to a member of the Society in recognition of achievements within the field of Paediatric Endocrinology and for contributions to the working of the Society. The Prize was awarded for the first time in 1988 during the Annual Scientific Meeting of the Society held in Copenhagen. The recipient of the Prize this year was Prof. Milo Zachmann from Zurich.

Milo Zachmann received his early medical training in Basel and initially worked in paediatric surgery. His flirtation with this specialty was short-lived and he soon moved to North America to pursue training in metabolism and endocrinology. He subsequently returned to Switzerland where he started his long and fruitful association with Prof. Prader in the Kinderspital at Zurich. Prof. Zachmann was instrumental in establishing the National Pituitary Agency in Switzerland and was responsible for the extraction of pituitary growth hormone and initiating therapy for children with growth hormone deficiency. Later work in the field of growth has included the development of the nitrogen retention test using stable isotopes and studies of the investigation and assessment of treatment regimens to enhance growth in short children.

Prof. Zachmann, however, is best known for his work in the field of steroid biochemistry. He developed the hCG and hMG stimulation tests to assess pre-pubertal gonadal function and his thorough laboratory training in sophisticated gas chromatographic techniques led him into the area of steroid enzymatic defects. He and his colleagues first described the enzyme defect, 17,20-desmolase deficiency, and he has also described variants of the 11 ß-hydroxylase enzyme defect. His list of publications numbers around 200 and he continues to make innovative contributions in clinical steroid research.

Prof. Zachmann has also been very active in the affairs of the European Society for Paediatric Endocrinology. He is a past Secretary and Council Member and has recently been elected to represent the affairs of the Society in his capacity as an Associate Editor-in-Chief of the journal, Hormone Research. On behalf of the Society, it is my great pleasure to announce that Prof. Milo Zachmann has been awarded the 1988 Andrea Prader Prize and to introduce the following paper which is a transcript of his Andrea Prader Lecture entitled ‘Clinical Steroid Research: Is It Still Worthwhile?’

Dr. Ieuan Hughes
Secretary, European Society for Paediatric Endocrinology