

## The Robert G. Townley Memorial Lectureship

Saturday, February 24, 2024

2701 Keynote Lecture: Roles of Neuronal TRP Channels in Neuroimmune Interactions:  
Relevance to the Allergist/Immunologist

Convention Center, Level 2, Hall D, 3:30-4:30 PM

**Lecturer: Laura Van Gerven, MD, PhD**

Recent Updates on the Link Between RSV Infection and Asthma

### Robert G. Townley, MD FAAAAI



Following completion of residency in Internal Medicine and Fellowship in Allergy Asthma and Immunology in Boston, MA, Dr. Robert G. Townley joined the faculty of Medicine and was Assistant Chief, Department of Asthma-Allergy, National Jewish Hospital, located in Denver, CO. Dr. Townley subsequently returned to Creighton University in Omaha, NE and started an allergy asthma and immunology division in the department of medicine and initiated their allergy fellowship training program.

Dr. Townley has helped train more than 50 fellows in allergy as well as 32 postdoctoral fellows from Japan, who had already finished their clinical training in allergy. He has helped initiate and carry out studies both in bench and animal research in allergy/immunology as well as clinical trials. His preclinical and clinical studies focused on airway hyperresponsiveness and inflammation. Five students have obtained their PhD with the allergy division. He has helped editor co-edit 3 textbooks pertaining to asthma and inflammation, airway smooth muscle, and Immunopharmacology of allergic diseases. He had also been successful in obtaining 3 NIH RO1 grants and an Allergic Disease Centre Grant.

Dr. Townley's allergy program was one of the clinical sites involved in the study of the IL-13 antagonist Lebrikizumab in the treatment in adults with asthma. This study was supported by Genentec and showed that the asthma subjects with high levels of the Periostin gene demonstrated significantly greater improvement in their FEV1 in those subjects treated with Lebrikizumab. (Corren, J., R.F. Lemanske et al 2011. Lebrikizumab treatment in adults with asthma. N. Engl. J. Med).

Sadly, with Dr. Townley's passing on Friday, September 9, 2016, this lectureship has been renamed the Robert G. Townley Memorial Lectureship. The lectureship will help to preserve the memory of Dr. Townley and all his wonderful accomplishments and contributions during his lifetime.

## Laura Van Gerven, MD, PhD



Laura Van Gerven graduated as a medical doctor in 2009 and as an otorhinolaryngologist in 2017 at the KU Leuven, Belgium. In 2014, she obtained a doctoral degree in biomedical sciences (KU Leuven) with a thesis on the pathophysiology of non-allergic rhinitis. She completed a Fellowship in endoscopic sinus surgery and skull base surgery at the University Hospital of Barcelona, Spain. Since October 2017, she has been a staff member within the ENT-department at the University Hospitals of Leuven, Belgium. Her specialty is rhinology, endoscopic sinus surgery and skull base surgery.

Since 2018, she is assistant Professor at the KU Leuven, Belgium. Her current research is mainly focused on the different endotypes of rhinitis and rhinosinusitis and olfactory dysfunction in COVID-19.