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Dr. Eckert received his PhD at the University of Illinois, Urbana, and completed post-doctoral research training in the Department of Cell Biology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and in the Department of Physiology and Biophysics at Harvard Medical School. He was a Professor at Case Reserve University School of Medicine until 2006 when he joined the University of Maryland, School of Medicine as Professor and Chair of the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. Dr. Eckert is an internationally recognized investigator who has made pioneering discoveries in the area of surface epithelial biology – specifically focusing on the human epidermis. His studies have led to enhanced understanding of normal skin biology and to insights regarding the mechanisms that drive skin diseases including cancer and psoriasis. He also has a long-term interest in the prevention of skin cancer by natural biological agents. Dr. Eckert has published 200+ journal articles and reviews, and his trainees have presented as many meeting abstracts. He serves as an editorial board member and reviewer for a host of cancer journals, and has served on numerous grant review panels and society boards. He is a University of Wisconsin Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award recipient, an elected member of the Board of the Society for Investigative Dermatology, a standing member of the review panel of the American Institute for Cancer Research, and has served on the Board of Scientific Counselors of the NIAMS and on numerous NIH study sections. Dr. Eckert holds patents from the United States Patent Office, and has been continuously funded by the National Institutes of Health as a principal investigator since 1989. He is currently principal investigator on multiple RO1 grants from the National Institutes of Health and grants from private foundations. He has also been supported by the Department of the Navy, the American Cancer Society, the Dermatology Foundation, and the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program Breast Cancer Research Program and the Maryland Stem Cell Fund.