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CDB Scientist's Story Takes Film Prize

March 25, 2004 – A television program on the life and scientific research of Kiyokazu Agata (Group Director, Laboratory for Evolutionary Regeneration Biology) won the MEXT Minister's Prize in the Educational Video category at the 45th Science and Technology Film/Video Festival held by the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST). The awards ceremony will be held on April 16 in the JST Science Hall in Tokyo.

In the 29-minute program, Agata, who has authored a children's book on regeneration and stem cells in planaria and given many newspaper and television interviews to increase public understanding of these fields of research, describes how he first took an interest in biology as a junior high school student and his struggles to gain admission to Kyoto University after his graduation from high school. The program also features his research at the CDB, which focuses on the biological mechanisms underlying regeneration, using the planarian flatworm as his primary model system. Planarians are noted for their ability to regenerate entire new individuals from any body part when cut into sections. Agata has recently gained worldwide recognition for his identification of a gene, *nou-darake*, that restricts brain development to the head in these worms.

The award-winning program, titled "Learning the Secrets of Regeneration from Planaria" was first broadcast on the Japanese national Science Channel, a satellite and cable television station working to encourage public awareness of and interest in science and technology. The video can be viewed online (in Japanese) on the Science Channel website: <http://sc-smn.jst.go.jp/>.