

Laudatio

Your Magnificence, Rector, spectabiles, honorabiles, esteemed members of the Academic Boards, Academic Senates of the University and the Faculties, dear Professor Banach, dear guests, ladies and gentlemen!

Pursuant to Art. 2 par. 1, par. c) and Art. 4 par. 1, par. b Rules for the Award of the Honorary Degree of Doctor Honoris Causa, after prior approval by the Academic Board of the UPJŠ Faculty of Medicine in Košice and subsequent approval by the UPJŠ Academic Board in Košice, I have the privilege of introducing to you the candidate for the award of the honorary degree of "Doctor Honoris Causa", Prof. MUDr. Maciej Banach, PhD. of the Łódź Medical University (MUL) and the Polish Mother's Memorial Hospital (PMMHRI) in Łódź.

Maciej Banach was born in 1977 in Plock.

He attained his education at the second oldest Lyceum in Poland and at the Medical University of Łódź ((MUL), where he was awarded the degree in General Medicine in 2002. After completing his studies, he began specializing in Cardiology at the Clinic of Cardiology of the same University. In 2006, he successfully defended his Ph.D. dissertation thesis, became assistant professor in 2008 and soon after, in May 2014, he was awarded the **degree of full professor.**

From my point of view, almost incredible. You may say - at such a young age!

But I do not mean the speed with which he has earned the degree of Professor, as I know Professor Banach personally and very well. What he has accomplished is a result of his diligence, purposefulness, a desire to attain the impossible, an endeavour to prove that through work and toughness goals may be attained sooner. A well-known Polish film "Profesor Wilczur" crosses my mind now, where the famous Warsaw Professor evaluated the highly professional neurosurgery of the "medicaster" by saying, "I don't know anyone who could manage this, except for Professor ..."

If I was to paraphrase his statement, I would say that neither I know anyone in the field of Preventive Cardiology, who has done so much within such a relatively short period of time. I do not know a man of his age who would be admired and recognized by even much older colleagues.

Not long ago, the term "ageism" appeared in the legal terminology. For Professor Banach, something exactly the opposite is true - let's face it, many still find it difficult to accept that someone younger is also more successful. All the more I appreciate the decision of the UPJŠ Academic Board and their unanimous approval to confer the degree of Dr.h.c. to Professor Maciej Banach. For a young man who is already a person recognized worldwide.

Since 2014, Prof. Banach has been Director of the Research Institute at the Polish Mother's Memorial Hospital (PMMHRI) in Łódź, as well as the **Head of the Cardiovascular Research Centre at the University of Zielona Gora**. In addition, he has been **Head of the Department of Hypertension at the MUL in Łódź** since 2008 and full professor at the Department of Hypertension and Family Medicine, where he holds the position of Chief Physician for Nephrology and Hypertension at the WAM University Hospital in Łódź since 2009.

Professor Maciej Banach has published **over 1,500 scholarly papers, of which more than 1,000 were cited in the Web of Science and/or SCOPUS databases.** His current **Hirsch index, according to the SCOPUS database, is 46.** The number of citations exceeds 10,000 in many databases. **He ranks among 1% of the world's most cited scientists** in the field of Clinical Medicine, Pharmacology, and Toxicology. **According to ExpertScape, he is one of the 25 most recognized experts in the world** in statin therapy; LDL cholesterol; lipoproteins and HDL cholesterol.

The most significant scientific and professional achievements of Professor Banach include the leadership (or participation in the senior management) of broad authorial teams, which create the **Guidelines** for the diagnosis or treatment of risk factors for atherosclerosis, especially disorders of fat metabolism (hypercholesterolemia). He received the highest professional recognition in the most important professional societies in the world or in Europe. He became a member of the Executive Committee of the **European Atherosclerosis Society (EAS)** and a member of the Executive Committee of the **IAS - International Atherosclerosis Society**. In 2011, he founded the **Polish Lipid Association (PoLA)**, which is an official partner of the US NLA. A year later, he founded the **Lipid and Blood Pressure Meta-Analysis Collaboration (LBPMC)**, made up of more than 100 experts from around the world, focusing on research into the most important areas in the field of lipid disorders, hypertension, nutrition, and cardiovascular risk and simultaneously inspired the foundation of the **Association of Experts and National Expert Societies – ILEP - the International Lipid Expert Panel**, which has gained a prominent place in European preventive cardiology within a short time. **The objective of the ILEP, which also documents the scientific dimension of Professor Banach, is primarily to cover the unexplored, the so-called "gray zones" of guidelines** of the most important professional societies in Europe, the USA, and worldwide.

He is editor-in-chief of many journals, including registered and/or impacted journals. The most important is the **Archives of Medical Science**, which already has its sister journals, Archives of Medical Science - Civilization Diseases and Archives of Medical Science - Atherosclerotic Diseases and Cardiovascular Continuum. He is **regional editor for the European Heart Journal, a member of editorial boards of over 30 journals, including the most prestigious ones, such as Lancet Diabetes and Endocrinology, Circulation, the British Medical Journal, and the Journal of the American College of Cardiology (JACC).**

He was editor or author of 31 books, where he wrote 102 chapters. In addition, he is the **Scientific President of Termedia Publishing House**, a publishing house associating over 50 journals.

The Slovak Association of Atherosclerosis joined the ILEP scientific organization thanks to the initiative of prof. Banach, who, as its leader, has a huge impact on the introduction of modern diagnostic and treatment methods into practice, including Slovakia (currently, for example, research of new cholesterol-lowering drug - bempedoic acid - is also underway at UPJŠ).

Prof. Banach is an **honorary member of many European and US scientific societies in several fields of cardiology, angiology, and the Alliance for Biomedical Research. He has been a member of the Public Health Committee of the Polish Academy of Sciences and Chairperson of the Scientific Council of the Polish Ministry of Health since 2015 until nowadays. He has been an official expert of the European Medicines Agency since 2018.** He is laureate of a large number of professional and managerial awards. Professor Banach is one of the world leading **leaders in the development and testing of new drugs, especially in the treatment of fat metabolism disorders.**

Today, intensive cooperation with Prof. Banach is underway on the wide interdisciplinary KSC MR Study project, implementation is pending of several internships not just in his workplace, but also in the workplaces of closely cooperating companies associated in the ILEP Association.

The UPJŠ Academic Board proposed to award the honorary degree of "Doctor Honoris Causa" pursuant to Art. 2 par. 1, par. c) and Art. 4 par. 1, par. b Rules for the Honorary Degree of "Doctor Honoris Causa" to Dr.h.c. prof. dr. Maciej Banach, M.D., PhD., a worldwide recognized professor of Medical University of Lodz in Lodz, Poland, a leading European and world expert in Preventive Cardiology, as a prominent scientific personality from abroad, whose results are internationally acknowledged and who contributed to mutual cooperation in the scientific and professional education of UPJŠ employees on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the UPJŠ Faculty of Medicine and the 60th anniversary of the founding of Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice.

prof. MUDr. Daniel Pella, PhD., m. p.
UPJŠ FM Dean