

Editor's Preamble to the Profile of Eric Olson

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In his classic fable, *The Gnat and the Bull*, Aesop (620 BC–560 BC)—that astute observer of human nature—teaches us the sad reality that the smaller the mind, the greater the conceit. One of the things I like about Eric Olson is that he embodies the notion that a truly great mind is free of conceit. Although he is one of the most successful scientists of our time and despite his extraordinary accomplishments and recognitions, Eric has managed to keep a simple, warm, genuine, down-to-earth style. I find this to be overwhelmingly refreshing, and almost as admirable as his scientific prowess.

I hope the readers will enjoy this foray¹ into the human dimension of Eric's rich and well-rounded personality—his life-long passion for science, his work ethics, his love of music, his views on science and faith, his concern for those who

entrust their career to him, and his total lack of arrogance. Eric is one of the best role models for young investigators to emulate, not only from a scientific but also from a human standpoint. Although now he is a veritable icon in cardiovascular research, he tells us that it was not easy to get to that point. This should be a good lesson for others. Indeed, it is never easy in science, for anybody. I hope that those who are at the inception of their careers will be inspired by reading how Eric overcame initial challenges and developed a stunning upward trajectory using the old-fashioned (and irreplaceable) virtues of hard work and perseverance.

Reference

1. Williams R. Eric Olson: Fulfilling a Dream of Freedom. *Circ Res.* 2010;106:621–624. doi: 10.1161/RES.0b013e3181d82df1.

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