

STILL MAKING A MARK

Two former Wigner Fellows have achieved distinction in their respective fields after leaving ORNL. One is A. Baha Balantekin, who came to Oak Ridge as a Wigner Fellow in 1984-86 and now, somewhat ironically, holds the Wigner Chair at the University of Wisconsin, where the Nobel Laureate Eugene P. Wigner was once a professor.

A second is Mike Ramsey, who came to ORNL in 1979 as a Wigner Fellow. He became an ORNL corporate fellow in 1997 after inventing the "lab on a chip" and pioneering the new field of microfluidics. Ramsey left ORNL in 2004 to become the Minnie N. Goldby Distinguished Professor of Chemistry with positions in the Department of Chemistry, the Institute for Advanced Materials, Nanoscience and Technology, and the Carolina Center for Genome Sciences at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Balantekin, a native of Turkey, earned his Ph.D. degree in physics from Yale University. At ORNL he worked on understanding anomalies observed in heavy-ion collisions. After leaving Oak Ridge he made important contributions in mathematical physics and neutrino physics. "I am now involved in efforts to build an underground laboratory where neutrino physics experiments will be carried out," he says.

Ramsey's lab on a chip was honored by R&D magazine as one of the 40 top innovations since 1963. The technology also was recognized by the Department of Energy as among the top 23 developed by agency funding. Two companies are selling devices based on his invention that they hope will lead to discoveries of better therapeutic drugs.

