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Dr. Trapp received his Ph.D. from the Loyola University Stritch School of Medicine in Chicago, IL. He received postdoctoral training at the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS), National Institutes of Health (NIH), Bethesda, MD. Following his tenure at the NIH, Dr. Trapp became an Assistant Professor and subsequently an Associate Professor of Neurology at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore, MD. He joined the Cleveland Clinic as Chairman of the Department of Neurosciences in 1994.

Dr. Trapp is the recipient of the Jordi Folch-Pi Award from the American Society of Neurochemistry, The Weil Award from the American Association of Neuropathologists, the Harry Weaver Neuroscience Scholar Award from the National Multiple Sclerosis Society (NMSS), the Jacob Javits Award in Neuroscience from NINDS, the John Dystel Prize for MS Research from the American Academy of Neurology/NMSS, the Stephen C. Reingold Research Award from the NMSS, the Scientific Achievement Award in Basic Science and the Award for Excellence in Science from the Cleveland Clinic, and he is a member of the NMSS Volunteer Hall of Fame for Scientific Researchers. He is also a Fellow of the AAAS.

Dr. Trapp holds numerous multi-year grants from various funding institutions, including NINDS and the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), the NMSS, and the State of Ohio. His research investigates the cause of neurological disability in multiple sclerosis patients, cellular mechanisms of brain repair in neurodegenerative diseases, the molecular biology of myelination in the central and peripheral nervous systems, and mechanisms of glial neuroprotection. He is internationally known for his work on mechanisms of neurodegeneration and repair in multiple sclerosis and has published over 230 peer-reviewed articles and over 40 book chapters.