Andrew C. Chan, MD/PhD ‘86, HS ’89

Alumni Achievement Award

Chan studies mechanisms that allow the immune system to fight pathogens and the havoc that occurs when the system runs amok. Early on, he discovered a protein that enables immune cells to tailor the body's response to specific pathogens. Mutations in this protein cause severe combined immunodeficiency syndrome, he showed. The discovery of another protein and its role in immune cell development made Chan a leader in the field of immune cell activation.

At Genentech, Chan has continued basic research while translating his team's findings into new therapies for immune diseases and other disorders. He co-invented ocrelizumab, which has profoundly impacted multiple sclerosis. He has overseen the early development of many other experimental therapies, including atezolizumab, which became part of the breakthrough in cancer immunotherapy. He has championed the idea that because inflammatory diseases have so many causes, a personalized medicine approach is required to treat them.

A loyal supporter of Washington University, Chan serves on the School of Medicine National Council. He also has been very committed to the Arthritis Foundation.

His honors include the Chairman's Award of Distinction from the American Federation for Aging Research and the Guin Warnock Award from the Arthritis Foundation–Northern California. He is a Pew Scholar, a member of the American Society for Clinical Investigation and the Association of American Physicians.

Chan earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Northwestern University in 1980 and his medical and doctoral degrees from Washington University in 1986. After an internship and residency at Barnes Hospital in St. Louis, he became a clinical and research post-doctoral fellow at the University of California, San Francisco, where he joined the faculty in 1992. Between 1994 and 2001, he was a Washington University faculty member and a Howard Hughes Medical Institute Investigator. Beginning in 2001, he also worked at Genentech in South San Francisco, where he now oversees the entire research portfolio. He also served on the clinical faculty at UCSF from 2002-2012.

The Washington University Medical Center Alumni Association is pleased to present its Alumni Achievement Award to Dr. Chan.