



Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SITC Announces Creation of Steven A. Rosenberg, MD, PhD, Endowed Scholars Fund Supporting Cancer Immunotherapy Research; Names Eric Tran, PhD, Inaugural Recipient

MILWAUKEE – The Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC) is pleased to announce the creation of the Steven A. Rosenberg, MD, PhD, Endowed Scholars Fund. Established in honor of Dr. Rosenberg, this fund recognizes his many contributions to the field by supporting investigators, who are emerging leaders in immuno-oncology, focused on a novel approach to advancing the field of cancer immunotherapy.

After completing surgical residency training in 1974, Dr. Rosenberg became the Chief of Surgery at the National Cancer Institute (NCI) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH)—a position he still holds today. As Chief of Surgery, he oversees an extensive clinical program to translate scientific advances into effective immunotherapies for patients with cancer.

“Through his lab at the NCI, Dr. Rosenberg has engaged with hundreds of scientists, both young and old,” said SITC Vice President Patrick Hwu, MD, who worked with Dr. Rosenberg at the NIH. “He has focused on creating a whole new way to approach cancer through immune cells. His work is inspiring a whole new generation of physician scientists to put the patient first, tackle the tough problems and never give up.”

Dr. Rosenberg has saved thousands of lives. His work pioneered the first effective immunotherapies and gene therapies for patients with advanced cancers and his studies of cell transfer immunotherapy have resulted in durable complete remission in patients with metastatic melanoma. He has also trained hundreds of cancer researchers, many of whom are leaders in the field of immunotherapy.

“In my years with Dr. Rosenberg at the NCI, I grew to appreciate not just his brilliant approach to science, but his wisdom and passion, which has shaped my career trajectory,” said Arie Belldegrun, MD. “The impact of his mentorship to hundreds of fellows and professors continues to ripple throughout the field of immunotherapy and beyond to help millions of patients. This scholarship paves the way for the next generation of scientists to be inspired by Dr. Rosenberg’s extraordinary legacy to find cures for cancer.”

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Eric Tran, PhD (Earle A. Chiles Research Institute, a division of Providence Cancer Institute), was recognized as the inaugural recipient of the Dr. Steven A. Rosenberg Scholars Award for Cancer Immunotherapy Research at [SITC's 35th Anniversary Annual Meeting](#) on Wednesday, Nov. 11.

His research award project, titled “Enhancing cellular therapy against cancer neoantigens”, contributed to a paradigm shift in basic immunology by definitively demonstrating that neoantigens arising from patient-specific somatic mutations are a major class of antigens being targeted by tumor-infiltrating T cells in most patients with epithelial cancers. His work was also the first to demonstrate that immunotherapy with neoantigen-specific CD4+ or CD8+ T cells could mediate the regression of metastatic human epithelial tumors, which helped usher in a new wave of cancer treatment by immunologically targeting cancer mutations. [Learn more about Dr. Tran's research.](#)

Dr. Tran trained at the NCI with Dr. Rosenberg and has extensive experience in translational and clinical adoptive T-cell therapy against cancer and in evaluating the T-cell response against tumor neoantigens. Dr. Tran's goal is to develop novel and more effective T-cell based immunotherapies for patients with cancer.

Each year, SITC will seek the best and brightest to continue Dr. Rosenberg's legacy with research awards specifically for early career scientists focused on tackling challenges that face the field of cancer immunotherapy. Recipients will be picked through an abstract submission process and SITC's Award Review Committee will serve as the selection committee.

About the *Forward Fund*

In 2012, SITC established the [Forward Fund](#) in to stimulate the future of science through the development and application of cancer immunotherapy. Since then, more than \$4 million has been awarded by the *Forward Fund* to support early career scientists through research and education. Thanks to donors, hundreds of early career scientists' careers have been shaped by the *Forward Fund*. By providing fellowships, young investigator awards and the one-of-a-kind SITC Sparkathon, SITC is inspiring the next generation, advancing the science and tackling the hurdles facing the field.

About SITC

Established in 1984, the Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC) is a nonprofit organization of medical professionals dedicated to improving cancer patient outcomes by advancing the development, science and application of cancer immunotherapy and tumor immunology. SITC is comprised of influential basic and translational scientists, practitioners, health care professionals, government leaders and industry professionals around the globe. Through educational initiatives that foster scientific exchange and collaboration among leaders in the field, SITC aims to one day make the word “cure” a reality for cancer patients everywhere. Learn more about SITC, our educational offerings and other resources at sitcancer.org and follow us on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).

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