

In the Spotlight

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College of pharmacy faculty member named National Academy of Inventors Fellows By Terry Hastings, Office of Research

The National Academy of Inventors has named a University of Georgia College of Pharmacy faculty member to the 2015 class of NAI Fellows.

David Chu, Distinguished Research Professor in the College of Pharmacy, joins an elite group of 582 innovators representing more than 190 prestigious research universities and governmental and nonprofit research institutions.

Election to NAI Fellow status is a professional distinction accorded to academic inventors who have demonstrated a prolific spirit of innovation in creating or facilitating outstanding inventions that have made a tangible impact on quality of life, economic development and the welfare of society. Five UGA faculty members have been named NAI Fellows since the honor was established in 2013.

"The election of David Chu as NAI Fellow highlights the innovative research conducted at UGA," said David Lee, UGA vice president for research. "We join NAI in celebrating his contributions to science and society."

Chung K. "David" Chu is a Distinguished Research Professor Emeritus in the department of pharmaceutical and biomedical sciences. His research focuses on nucleoside and carbohydrate chemistry, antiviral chemotherapy, cancer chemotherapy, structure-based drug design and molecular modeling and antiviral drug discovery for bioterrorism. His antiviral drug clevudine, marketed under the trade names Levovir and Revovir, is used in the treatment of chronic hepatitis B infections in South Korea and the Philippines.

"Dr. Chu is one of the most prolific and productive inventors at the University of Georgia," Lee said. "His work has led to dozens of inventions and patents, and his development of clevudine has improved the lives of countless individuals suffering from hepatitis B."

He is the recipient of numerous prestigious awards, including the NIH Merit Award, the UGA Inventor of the Year Award and the John A. Montgomery Award, which is given biannually to an outstanding scientist in recognition of a contribution that results in significant advances in chemotherapy.

Chu holds 63 U.S. patents and more than 130 international patents that have been licensed to 10 companies. He is a co-founder of both Pharmasset, which was acquired by Gilead for \$11 billion in 2011, and, more recently, he co-founded Atea Pharmaceuticals to explore novel antiviral therapeutics.

Chu has published over 315 peer-reviewed journal articles and served on the editorial advisory board for the journal Nucleoside, Nucleotide and Nucleic Acids. He is a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, a national board member of Florida A&M University's College of Pharmacy, a Dean's Advisory Council member of Idaho State University's College of Pharmacy and a National Institutes of Health advisory committee member.

Although officially retired, Chu maintains an active research program on drug synthesis and is currently developing treatments for hepatitis B and C infections.



