

Citation of the SMA Lecturer 2002, Professor Edison T. Liu

Delivered by Professor John Wong



*From left to right: Prof Low Cheng Hock,
Prof Edison Liu, Prof John Wong.*

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Mr President, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is with great pleasure and honor to introduce Professor Edison T. Liu, Executive Director of the Genome Institute of Singapore, who will be delivering the SMA lecture.

Ed was born in Hong Kong, and emigrated to the United States at the tender age of 7. He rapidly displayed his sheer academic talent with a bachelor's degree (Phi Beta Kappa) in chemistry and psychology from Stanford University, a M.D. also from Stanford, internship and residency in internal medicine at Washington University, St. Louis, and clinical cancer fellowships at Stanford University, and at the University of California at San Francisco. He then pursued post-doctoral studies in molecular oncogenesis at the University of California at San Francisco under the Nobel laureate Dr. J. Michael Bishop.

He was recruited to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he became one of the youngest

Professors of Medicine, if not the youngest. It was at Chapel Hill where he became renowned as a world expert in breast cancer, and medical genetics.

In 1996, he joined the National Cancer Institute as the Director of the Division of Clinical Sciences. In this capacity, he was responsible for the scientific and administrative direction for the intramural clinical research arm of the NCI overseeing over 100 principal investigators, 400 trainees, and 1,200 employees.

Ed has made tremendous contributions to our understanding of cancer, with one, determining the role of HER2neu in breast cancer, leading to an entire shift in the way patients are treated. Not many individuals have had such a profound influence on the outcome of the lives of millions of women around the world.

Ed has received numerous awards before his 50th birthday, including the Damon Runyon Cancer Research Fellowship, the Leukemia Society Scholar Award, the Brinker International Award for basic science research in Breast Cancer, and one of the highest awards for a cancer researcher, namely the Rosenthal Award from the American Association for Cancer Research. In his award, Ed was cited for his outstanding contribution to improving clinical care for patients with cancer.

Ed sits on numerous boards, and is the executive editor for the journal Breast Disease, an associate editor for Breast Cancer Treatment and Research, Breast Cancer Research,

Genome Biology, and Clinical Cancer Research. He has also been on the editorial boards of Breast, Leukemia, the Journal of Clinical Oncology, and Molecular Cancer Therapeutics. He has contributed more than 130 papers and reviews to the literature.

In 2001, Singapore asked Ed whether he would like to take the power of functional genomics, and answer the question: Why? in medical practice. We also asked one of America's leading scientists to be a mentor, guru, and guide, for Singapore's Biomedical Science Initiative. Ed had numerous other offers, all far more prestigious than what we could muster. Yet, his genuine desire to help Asia, and bring the best of American science and medicine to this part of the world, led him to accepting the position of Executive Director, Genome Institute of Singapore. Ed has also recently been appointed the first Chairman of a coordinated national program for cancer research called the Cancer Syndicate.

Ed is a true renaissance man. Besides being a clinical oncologist, biochemist, epidemiologist, microbiologist, and medical geneticist, he is also an accomplished pianist, and it is a real privilege to hear him perform.

Ladies and Gentlemen: We have seen many distinguished speakers before, but I know of no one more illustrious than Professor Edison Liu, who will be speaking on the topic "Genomics and Medicine in Singapore". ■