

2015 Oliver Max Gardner Award Recipient
Dr. Pinku Mukherjee
UNC Charlotte

For more than two decades, Dr. Mukherjee's research has transformed the ways in which cancer is diagnosed and treated. She has designed innovative approaches to more accurately detect breast cancer early and is developing targeted therapy and imaging for pancreatic, ovarian, and colon cancers. Dr. Mukherjee's work identifies immunotherapeutic strategies for and immune tolerance associated with pancreatic cancer.

Thus far in her stellar career, Dr. Mukherjee has published more than 65 peer-reviewed journal articles that have been cited or referenced greater than 11,000 times. Her groundbreaking cancer research has produced one U.S. patent and has resulted in grants from the National Institutes of Health, the U.S. Department of Defense, and the Susan G. Komen Foundation totaling more than \$3.5 million as principal investigator and more than \$500,000 as co-investigator.

Dr. Mukherjee is an exceptional scientist as well as an astute entrepreneur. Using an innovative approach to cancer research as a basis, she and her team founded the biotechnology company OncoTab, Inc. in 2011 (previously CanDiag Inc.). A UNC Charlotte spinoff, OncoTab, Inc. develops and commercializes products that span the lifecycle of cancer, from initial diagnosis through treatment and recurrence monitoring. The company has an exclusive license to a patented technology platform that has successfully demonstrated diagnostic, imaging, and therapeutic capabilities with breast, prostate, and pancreatic cancers. The company already has won several awards including one from NCBiotech as well as the grand prize at the Charlotte Venture Challenge.

A recipient of the BioAchievement in Research Award from the North Carolina Biotechnology Center, Dr. Mukherjee has served on the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Advisory Council and the Integration Panel for the Department of Defense; has spearheaded the Charlotte Pancreatic Cancer Project, a collaborative partnership between UNC Charlotte and the Levine Cancer Institute; and was acknowledged by the Society of Asian American Scientists in Cancer Research.

Dr. Mukherjee joined UNC Charlotte in 2008 from Mayo Clinic. She received her bachelor's degree in microbiology from Bombay University, India, and her master's and doctoral degrees from Brunel University, in the United Kingdom.

In recognition of her lifelong mission to improve the quality of life for millions of people globally, the UNC Board of Governors takes great pride in presenting the 2015 Oliver Max Gardner Award to Dr. Pinku Mukherjee, Irwin Belk Endowed Professor of Cancer Research at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

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