

Annual Heritage Presentation

Honoring Donald L. Morton, MD: Society of Surgical Oncology President, 1992–1993

William C. Wood, MD

The Heritage Award was established in 2001 to honor a past president of our society whose contributions to oncology reflect our heritage and illustrate in particular ways the field of surgical oncology. I had the great pleasure of selecting the third recipient of the Heritage Award, with the concurrence of the Executive Committee of the Society of Surgical Oncology. It is a particular pleasure to honor Dr. Donald L. Morton, our society's president during 1992–1993 (Figs. 1–4).

Donald Morton has long been convinced that human cancers could be cured by immunological methods. He chose melanoma as an early focus of his research because of the occasional spontaneous remissions observed and because of the growing frequency of melanoma

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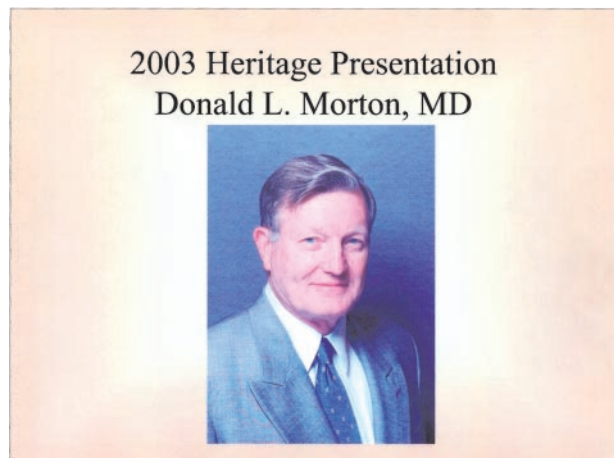


FIG. 1. Dr. Donald L. Morton, President of the Society of Surgical Oncology, 1992–1993.



FIG. 2. Some of Don's favorite pastimes have been skiing and ocean kayaking.

worldwide. His fundamental discoveries during the last 40 years, published in over 600 articles in peer-reviewed journals, have made him among the best-funded clinical



FIG. 3. Don is shown here with his youngest daughter, Danielle.



FIG. 4. Dr. Morton is accompanied by his wife, Lorraine, their oldest grandchild, and their children.

investigators in the world and changed the face of surgical oncology to the benefit of our patients. After graduating from Berea College, in West Virginia, Don received his medical degree from the University of California San Francisco, followed by a medical internship and surgical residency there, which were interrupted by a fellowship at the National Cancer Institute. He returned to the National Cancer Institute as a senior investigator in the Surgery Branch. There he became head of the Tumor Immunology Section and served in that capacity from 1969 to 1971 (Figs. 5 and 6).

In 1971, he returned to California to become Professor and Chief of the Division of Surgical Oncology at the UCLA School of Medicine, where he currently holds the post of Professor of Surgery Emeritus. In 1991, he became Medical Director and Surgeon-in-Chief of the John Wayne

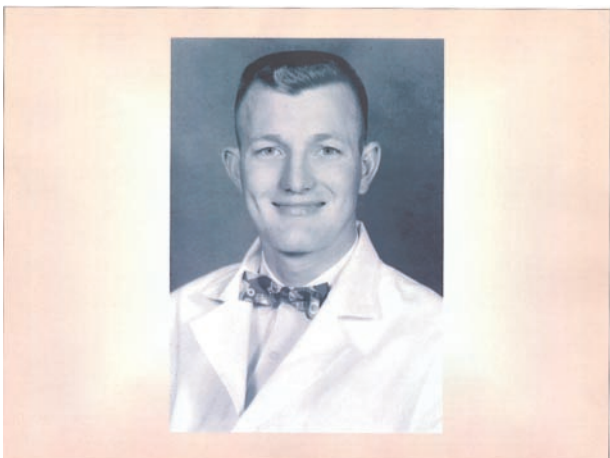


FIG. 5. The crewcut Dr. Morton sported during his intern year became a trademark for decades to come.




FIG. 6. In 1960 Dr. Morton served as National Institutes of Health Clinical Associate at the National Cancer Institute, Surgery Branch, with Dr. Alfred Ketchum, also a former president of the Society of Surgical Oncology.

Cancer Institute in Santa Monica, California (Fig. 7). He serves as editor or on the editorial boards of 21 publications.

In the 1960s, he and colleagues first demonstrated two classes of antigens on spontaneous murine mammary tumors and defined the mechanisms by which specific immunity had previously gone undetected in that familiar experimental system. In the 1970s, he and colleagues demonstrated serum antibodies in melanoma patients directed against tumor-specific cell surface antigens. He, with Dr. Rishab Gupta, went on to show that these melanoma-associated antigens were protein or ganglioside in nature. This led to a major ongoing program in vaccine development, directed against such melanoma



FIG. 7. This 1984 photo shows Don with actor Lloyd Bridges at a fundraiser to support basic cancer research at the John Wayne Cancer Institute of UCLA.



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Top Funded Clinical, Social Science PIs
(Investigator-initiated grants, centers only)

Investigator	Institution	No. of Grants	Main Topic	NIH Grants (\$M)
1. Donald Morton	John Wayne Cancer Institute	3	Cancer vaccine, surgery trials	11.9
2. J. Richard Udry	U. of North Carolina	1	Adolescent health survey	8.4
3. David Alberts	U. of Arizona	2	Cancer prevention trials	6.3
4. Thomas Coates	UC San Francisco	3	AIDS behavioral prevention	5.8
5. Fred. Appelbaum	Fred Hutchinson Cancer Res. Ctr.	1	Adult leukemia research	5.7
6. Igor Grant	UC San Diego	4	AIDS neurology, tissue bank	5.2
7. Kenneth Manton	Duke University	5	Demographics of aging	5.1
8. Walter Willett	Harvard University	3	Diet and disease risk	5.1
9. Robert Hobson	U. of Med/Dent New Jersey	1	Vascular surgery trial	5.1
10. Carl Grunfeld	UC San Francisco	1	HIV and metabolism	4.7

"I'm just euphoric that my scientific peers have given me the opportunity," says Donald Morton (Left), a cancer researcher at the John Wayne Cancer Institute in Santa Monica, California, who tops *Science's* list of the best funded clinical researchers. Morton manages \$12 million worth of trials, including \$7.8 million for a cancer vaccine that he's worked on since the 1960s.

FIG. 8. In June 2001, *Science* (vol. 292, no. 15) listed the clinical investigators receiving the most funding from the National Institutes of Health, and Dr. Morton was at the top of the list.

antigens. His pioneering work with bacille Calmette-Guerin, or BCG, for nonspecific melanoma immunotherapy, particularly intralesional injections that produced regression and sometimes specific immunity, laid a foundation for the use of BCG in superficial bladder cancer.

In 1990, his lymphatic mapping for melanoma led to the introduction of sentinel node mapping for melanoma. Subsequently, with his colleague, Dr. Armando Guillano, he began sentinel node mapping for breast cancer. These have revolutionized the clinical questions about elective lymph node dissection for both staging and control.

Don has been awarded many well-deserved honors, including his citation in *Cancer Research* as a pioneer of tumor immunology in 1973, citation in *Current Contents*

SURGICAL ONCOLOGY FELLOWS OF DONALD L. MORTON, M.D.

Name	Present Affiliation	Name	Present Affiliation
William Wood, M.D. **	Emory Univ. School of Medicine	Stephen Swisher, M.D.	UT MD Anderson Cancer Center
Frederick R. Eilber, M.D.	UCLA School of Medicine	Kristin Skinner, M.D.	New York University
E. Carmack Holmes, M.D. **	UCLA School of Medicine	Richard Essner, M.D.	John Wayne Cancer Institute
Melvin Silverstein, M.D.	USC School of Medicine	J. Michael Guenther, M.D.	Cincinnati, Ohio
Arthur W. Boddie, M.D. *	University of Illinois	Daniel M. Kirgan, M.D. *	University of Nevada
Jack Roth, M.D., Ph.D. *	UT MD Anderson Cancer Ctr	Lorraine Taffa, M.D.	Annapolis, Maryland
David S. Robinson, M.D.	Kansas City, MO	Paul S. Dale, M.D. *	Mercer University
Marshall Uriel, M.D. *	University of Alabama	Arnold M. Comfort, M.D.	Mercer University
Courtney Townsend, M.D. **	University of Texas, Galveston	Terry Sarantou, M.D.	Hickory, North Carolina
H. Stevens Mosley, M.D.	University of Oregon	Ralph C. Jones, M.D. *	Nat. Naval Med. Ctr & USHS Bethesda
Armando E. Guillano, M.D. *	John Wayne Cancer Institute	David W. Cella, M.D. *	University of North Carolina
William Rees, M.D.	University of Utah	Mark C. Kelley, M.D. *	Vanderbilt University
James Goodnight, M.D., Ph.D. *	UC Davis Medical Center	Peter J. Bosick, M.D.	Louisiana State University
Dean Obachian, M.D.	Boise, Idaho	Anton J. Bilchik, M.D., Ph.D.	John Wayne Cancer Institute
David Mathewson, M.D.	Henry Ford Hospital	Eddy C. Hsueh, M.D.	John Wayne Cancer Center
James F. Hulth, M.D. *	UT Southwestern Medical Center	Pond R. Keleman, M.D.	Saint Louis University
Maryn W. Burk, M.D. *	State Univ. of NY, Stony Brook	Anthony Lucci, M.D.	Baylor College of Medicine
Thodore X. O'Connell, M.D. *	Kaiser Permanente Medical Center	Jeffrey Zavoitsky, M.D.	Patih Ambury, New Jersey
Larry R. Kaiser, M.D. **	University of Pennsylvania	Arden Chan, M.D.	Naval Medical Center, San Diego
Sanford Finck, M.D.	Mayo Clinic	Kyo U. Chu, M.D.	University of Virginia
Berry Mann, M.D.	Medical College of Pennsylvania	Philip I. Haigh, M.D.	Kaiser Permanente, Med Ctr, Los Angeles
Sam Abu, M.D.	UCLA School of Medicine	L. Andrew Difronzo, M.D.	Kaiser Permanente, Med Ctr, Los Angeles
Marilyn Laitch, M.D. *	UT Southwestern Medical Center	Nizar Habib, M.D.	Greenville, North Carolina
Carl Bertelsen, M.D.	San Jose, California	D. Michael Ross, M.D. *	Kessler AFB Medical Center
Vernon Sondak, M.D.	University of Michigan	Perry Shen, M.D.	Wake Forest University
David Krag, M.D. *	University of Vermont	Bret Taback, M.D.	John Wayne Cancer Institute
Jan H. Wong, M.D. *	University of Hawaii	Matthew H. Chung, M.D. *	Tripler Army Medical Center
Stephen Colquhoun, M.D.	UC Davis	George J. Tsioulfas, M.D.	Mount Sinai School of Medicine
David Dulmus, M.D.	UT Southwestern Medical Center	Thomas F. Wood, M.D.	UCLA School of Medicine
James S. Economou, M.D., Ph.D. *	UCLA School of Medicine	David A. Litvak, M.D.	Michigan State University, East Lansing
Leiland J. Foshag, M.D.	John Wayne Cancer Institute	Deen T. Nora, M.D.	Kaiser Permanente Med. Ctr, Woodland Hills
Kelly Hunt, M.D.	UT MD Anderson Cancer Center	Carlos A. Perez, M.D.	Kaiser Permanente Med. Ctr, Sacramento

FIG. 9. Surgical oncology fellows of Donald Morton. Asterisks denote division chiefs, and double asterisks denote department chairs.

among the most widely courted living scientists, and the MD Anderson Jeffrey Gottlieb Memorial Award for Cancer Therapeutic Research. He has served as President of the Society of Surgical Oncology, President of the World Federation of Surgical Oncology Societies, and President of the International Sentinel Node Society (Fig. 8).

During his career at the National Cancer Institute, at UCLA, and currently at the John Wayne Cancer Institute, Dr. Morton has trained many young surgeons in research related to the surgical treatment of cancer. The majority of his trainees are on university or cancer institute faculties around the world (Fig. 9).

As one of Dr. Morton's many former fellows, it is a particular pleasure for me to introduce him as the recipient of this year's Annual Heritage Award.