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Prominent scientist, surgeon honored at convention

by Alicia Di Rado

City of Hope supporters recently honored two leading faculty members at the institution's National Convention.

Chapter members and volunteers recognized Shiu'an Chen, Ph.D., director and professor in City of Hope's Department of Surgical Research, and Timothy G. Wilson, M.D., the Pauline and Martin Collins Family Chair in Urology, at a gala dinner on July 25 in Beverly Hills, Calif.

Chen received the Gallery of Achievement Award for Science for his contributions to breast cancer research, while Wilson garnered the Gallery of Achievement Award for Medicine for his outstanding work in urologic oncology.

Chen studies a natural enzyme in the body called aromatase. Blocking aromatase is an important way to control estrogen levels among postmenopausal women. Most postmenopausal women with breast cancer have tumors that depend on estrogen to grow.

However, tumors can become resistant to treatment and learn to grow in the presence of aromatase-blocking drugs. Chen's group seeks to understand how these tumor cells grow resistant, so scientists can find ways to get around cancer's defenses.



Photo by Markie Ramirez



Timothy G. Wilson, M.D.

On the medical side, Wilson has directed the Department of Urology & Urologic Oncology since 1992. Under his direction, the department has developed into a national leader.

Wilson, who also directs the Prostate Cancer Program, is a recognized expert in robotic-assisted laparoscopic prostatectomy. He is one of the top surgeons worldwide in volume of robotic prostatectomies performed.

Working with other physicians and scientists, he also has participated in translational research that recently was awarded a National Institutes of Health research grant to improve techniques for diagnosing prostate cancer.