Biography dr. Olufunmilayo Olopade

Walter L. Palmer Distinguished Service Professor of Medicine and founding director of the Center for Clinical Cancer Genetics and Global Health at the University of Chicago Medicine, Olopade's research is focused on gaining a better understanding of the root causes of breast cancer in diverse populations. She has published extensively on genetic and non-genetic risk factors for breast cancer and is internationally renowned for her work in young-onset breast cancer and clinical expertise in early detection and prevention of the disease. In the laboratory, Olopade maps genes frequently altered in cancer and has characterized the molecular pathways defining aggressive forms of breast cancer in women of African ancestry across the diaspora.

A distinguished scholar and mentor, Olopade has been elected to the most prestigious academies and societies, including member of the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Medicine, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the American Philosophical Society. Olopade served for six years as a member of the National Cancer Advisory Board and Chair of the Sub-Committee on Global Cancer Research. She has received numerous honors and awards, including honorary degrees from several universities, the Franklin Roosevelt Freedom from Want Medal, The Order of Lincoln, Officer of the Order of the Niger, Gregory Mendel Medal, and a MacArthur Fellowship for "translating findings on the molecular genetics of breast cancer in African and African-American women into innovative clinical practices in the United States and abroad." An advocate for social justice and equity, she serves as director on several civic and corporate boards.

Dr. Olopade earned her medical degree from the University of Ibadan College of Medicine in Nigeria. She trained in Internal Medicine at Cook County Hospital in Chicago and in combined Hematology/Oncology and Cancer Genetics at the Joint Section of Hematology and Oncology at The University of Chicago.