

About the Master



Olivera (Olja) Finn, PhD, a native of the former Yugoslavia, is the University of Pittsburgh Distinguished Professor of Immunology and Surgery, and Founding Chair of the Department of Immunology, a position she held from 2001 to 2013. She was Program Leader of the Cancer Immunology Program at the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute from 1991 to 2014. Dr. Finn

received her PhD in Immunology at Stanford University in 1980 under the mentorship of Dr. Henry S. Kaplan. She then completed her postdoctoral training at Stanford in 1982 under the mentorship of Dr. Ronald Levy. Dr. Finn then assumed positions at Duke University, and in 1991 moved to the University of Pittsburgh.

Dr. Finn gained prominence through her original focus on transplantation biology and later through her basic and applied

research focused on tumor antigens and the development of cancer vaccines. She is the discoverer of the MUC1 tumor antigen, and for the last 25 years has published extensively and continuously on her basic and preclinical work on the development and evaluation of MUC1 cancer vaccines. She has been a coinvestigator on a dozen clinical trials of various MUC1 vaccines in pancreatic, colon, breast, prostate, and lung cancer. Dr. Finn and her team also identified cyclin B1 as a tumor antigen and published several papers on its excellent potential as a cancer vaccine. Her current efforts are focused on the development of preventative cancer vaccines.

She has an extensive track record of research accomplishments reported in over 170 peer-reviewed papers as well as numerous reviews and book chapters. Dr. Finn is on editorial boards of many cancer journals, including *Cancer Immunology Research*, and is on the advisory boards of many cancer centers and several companies. She has served on NCI study sections and was a member of the NCI Board of Councilors. She has been a member of the American Association for Cancer Research since 1983 and is Past Chair of the Steering Committee of the AACR Cancer Immunology (CIMM) Working Group. Dr. Finn was President of the American Association of Immunologists from 2007 to 2008 and in 2016 she received the AAI Lifetime Achievement Award. In 2017, Dr. Finn received the AACR-CRI Lloyd J. Old Award in Cancer Immunology, honoring her groundbreaking work identifying the first tumor-associated T-cell target antigen, MUC1.

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