



## NEWS RELEASE

# CONNECTICUT ACADEMY OF SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

---

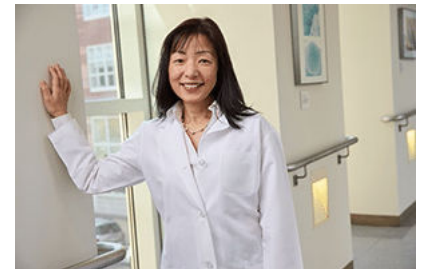
**CONTACT:** Karen Cohen, Associate Director  
(860) 282-4229; [kcohen@ctcase.org](mailto:kcohen@ctcase.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: APRIL 29, 2024**

*Celebrate, Inform, Promote in Service to CT*

## **Akiko Iwasaki From Yale School of Medicine To Present the Keynote Address at the 49<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering**

Akiko Iwasaki, PhD, will deliver this year's keynote address at the 49th Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering (CASE), to be held Tuesday, May 21, 2024, at The Woodwinds in Branford. Dr. Iwasaki is Sterling Professor of Immunobiology and Professor of Dermatology and of Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology and of Epidemiology (Microbial Diseases); Director of the Center for Infection and Immunity at Yale School of Medicine and an Investigator for the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. Earlier this month, she was named one of the 100 Most Influential People of 2024 by TIME Magazine.



In her keynote, Dr. Iwasaki will discuss the immunology of Post Acute Infection Syndrome. Additionally, her [2023 Connecticut Medal of Science](#) will be bestowed after being awarded in 2023.

She is recognized for her major discoveries in the areas of innate sensing of viruses, and instruction of adaptive anti-viral immunity. Her research focuses on the mechanisms of immune defense against viruses at the mucosal surfaces, and the development of mucosal vaccine strategies. She has laid the foundation for key concepts in viral immunity and introduced innovative approaches in vaccine design to combat COVID-19. Dr. Iwasaki currently leads investigations into the pathophysiology of long COVID, serving as co-lead investigator on Yale's LISTEN COVID-19 study and the COVID Recovery Study, which aims to determine the changes in the immune response of people with long COVID after vaccination. She also leads numerous other studies to interrogate the pathobiology of long COVID, both in patients, and through developing animal models of long COVID.

In a clinical study published earlier this year in the American Journal of Medicine, Iwasaki and fellow researchers including CASE member Harlan Krumholz, MD, SM, identified demographic and clinical characteristics associated with long COVID based on a study of individuals ages 18 and older who reported a positive COVID-19 test or doctor's diagnosis and reported symptoms of at least three months. The study found that middle age, female sex, lack of a college degree, and severity of acute COVID-19 infection were associated with long COVID. In contrast, non-Hispanic Asian and Black Americans were less likely to report long COVID compared with non-Hispanic White individuals.



## NEWS RELEASE

# CONNECTICUT ACADEMY OF SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

---

Dr. Iwasaki's discoveries have resulted in paradigm shifts in our understanding of the immune response to infection and vaccine design. She is an expert on immune responses to viruses that occur at mucosal sites of host entry and has made key contributions to our understanding of how the host detects viruses, innate host defense mechanisms, generation of specific acquired immune responses, and design of new and improved vaccine strategies. Her two-stage vaccination strategy called "prime and pull" informed the development of a vaccine currently in a clinical trial to treat women with precancerous lesions in the cervix to prevent cervical cancer.

Dr. Iwasaki earned a BS in Biochemistry, with a minor in Physics, and a PhD in Immunology, all from the University of Toronto, followed by a postdoctoral fellowship at the National Institutes of Health. In 2022, she was awarded a Sterling Professorship, the highest academic honor professors receive at Yale University.

She is an elected member of the American Association of Immunologists (AAI) and in 2023 was elected its president. She also is an elected member of council for the Howard Hughes Medical Institute and an elected member of the European Molecular Biology Organization, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Academy of Microbiology, the National Academy of Medicine, the National Academy of Sciences, and CASE. Iwasaki has received multiple awards to date, including the 2023 Connecticut Medal of Science, the Inspiring Yale Award, the Seymour & Vivian Milstein Award for Excellence in Interferon and Cytokine Research, the Charles W. Bohmafalk Teaching Award, AAI's Thermo Fisher Meritorious Career Award and BD Biosciences Investigator Award. To view Dr. Iwasaki's full Yale profile visit <https://medicine.yale.edu/profile/akiko-iwasaki/>

###

*The Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering was chartered by the General Assembly in 1976 to provide expert guidance on science and technology to the people and to the state of Connecticut, and to promote the application of science and technology to human welfare and economic well being. For more information about the Academy, please see [www.ctcase.org](http://www.ctcase.org).*