



Alan Bernstein PhD

Alan Bernstein is a world renowned health leader, researcher and mentor. He made important discoveries in stem cell and cancer research, publishing more than 225 papers. His work on the KIT gene is classic, still often cited, and is the basis for important advances in cancer therapy. Dr. Bernstein received his Honours BSc in Mathematics and Physics from Innis College, University of Toronto in 1968, receiving both the Innis College Award and the James Loudon Gold Medal in Physics. He completed his PhD at the University of Toronto and completed postdoctoral research in London at the Imperial Cancer Research Fund, where he first began working on retroviruses.

Dr. Bernstein returned to Canada in 1974 to join the faculty of the Ontario Cancer Institute. In 1985, he was appointed to the new Samuel Lunenfeld Research Institute at Mount Sinai Hospital in Toronto, was named associate director in 1988 and then director of research (1994-2000). He attracted outstanding scientists and expanded the institute's reputation and impact.

In 2000, Dr. Bernstein led the transformation of health research in Canada as the founding president of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), and oversaw a close to three-fold increase in Canada's budget for health research, enabling researchers to investigate significant health issues facing Canadians. During his seven year term, CIHR refocused and energized Canada's health research community.

Dr. Bernstein then served as the executive director of the Global HIV Vaccine Enterprise in New York, an international alliance of researchers and funders charged with accelerating the search for an HIV vaccine. Since 2012, he has served as President & CEO of the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research (CIFAR), where he is leading this important global institution in new directions as it brings together close to 400 of Canada's and the world's top researchers to address questions of global importance that face humanity.

Dr. Bernstein has been honoured with numerous awards for his contributions to science, including six honorary degrees, the 2008 Gairdner Wightman Award, the McLaughlin Medal from the Royal Society of Canada and the Robert L. Noble Award from the National Cancer Institute of Canada. He is a Senior Fellow of both Massey College (University of Toronto) and the Munk School of Global Affairs. In 2002, he was named an Officer of the Order of Canada.