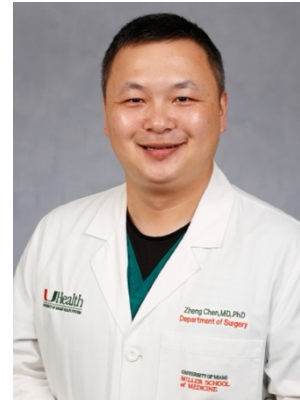


## **Michael F. Price Memorial Grant from DeGregorio Family Foundation Awarded to Overcome Immune Cell Suppression in Gastroesophageal Cancer**

NEW YORK, Feb. 19, 2025 – [The DeGregorio Family Foundation](#) with support from the Torrey Coast Foundation Gastro Esophageal Investigator Network Initiative ([GEMINI](#)) has awarded \$100,000 to Zheng Chen, MD, PhD, Assistant Professor of Surgery, DeWitt Daughtry Family Department of Surgery at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine. The Grant is named in memory of Michael F. Price, the noted value investor and philanthropist, who was an early supporter of the DeGregorio Family Foundation.



Gastric cancer is one of the deadliest malignancies globally, with a five-year survival rate of about 32 percent and a dismal prognosis for patients diagnosed at stage IV. While immune checkpoint blockade therapies, a type of immunotherapy that uses drugs to block specific proteins on immune cells called “checkpoints” from fully attacking cancer cells, have shown efficacy in other cancers, their success in gastric cancer has been limited. The response rate is around 30 percent and even worse in “immune desert-type tumors,” which have a low number of T cells and a reduced immune response.

Dr. Chen’s work addresses this critical need by investigating FDA-approved drugs that target specific molecular features within immune desert-type gastric cancer, aiming to enhance therapeutic response to immune checkpoint blockade therapies to overcome immune suppression within the tumor microenvironment.

“Receiving this award is a tremendous honor and a crucial step toward translating our research into meaningful clinical impact for gastroesophageal cancer patients,” said Dr. Chen. “With the resources and collaboration made possible by this award, we are one step closer to bringing new, personalized treatment options to patients who currently have limited therapeutic choices.”

“Enhancing immunotherapy in gastroesophageal cancer is a great opportunity. We are excited about this grant and the possibilities for crucial advancements in the field,” concluded Lynn DeGregorio, President and Founder of the DeGregorio Family Foundation.

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact:

Lynn DeGregorio  
President & Founder  
212-616-7755  
[lynn@degregorio.org](mailto:lynn@degregorio.org)



Research & Education for Stomach & Esophageal Cancer

*The DeGregorio Family Foundation, founded in 2006 after a 10th member of the DeGregorio family died of stomach cancer, has raised more than \$12 million to fund innovative research to cure gastric and esophageal cancers. It is the only public foundation solely focused on funding research grants for both of these cancers.*



***The DeGregorio Family Foundation is the only public foundation solely focused on funding research grants for both gastric and esophageal cancers—[click here to donate](#) and...***

***Help us turn fact into fiction™.***