



# CHICAGO CONQUERS CANCER

## Leonidas Platanias provides world-class care to Chicagoans

**What type of cancer do you specialize in?**  
My clinical specialty is treating patients with acute leukemia. My molecular biology and biochemistry research focuses on finding new treatments for leukemia, but also extends to other types of cancer.

The ultimate goal of my research develops therapies that target pathways to treat malignancies.

**What do you love most about practicing in Chicago?**  
In my opinion, Chicago is the best city in the country. It combines everything. And, of course, with the Lurie Cancer Center and Northwestern Medicine, it has one of the leading cancer centers nationally and internationally.

**What are your favorite spots in Chicago?**  
Ravinia Festival and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra - we're so lucky to have them here. I also love the beaches in the summer and visiting the Chicago Botanic Garden with my family. Greek Islands is one of my favorite restaurants.

**How do the people of Chicago inspire your work?**  
As Director of the Lurie Cancer Center, I am proud of our exceptional growth and accomplishments. Chicago is a world-class city

and it deserves a world-class cancer center providing access to state-of-the-art research and treatment.

Our physicians, scientists, and care providers are committed to translating innovative research into unsurpassed cancer care. These accolades reflect their determination and expertise.

**In 1993 you received a Young Investigator Award grant from Conquer Cancer. What career success has followed?**  
My research has been funded continuously for many years by R01 grants from the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and a Merit Review grant from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

In 2013 I was honored to receive the Seymour & Vivian Milstein Award for Excellence in Cytokine Research, one the highest accolades for scientific achievements in cytokine and interferon research.

Leading Lurie Cancer Center as Director since 2014 has been a great honor and responsibility. I am particularly thankful to Ann Lurie for her unwavering support.

**What is the most challenging part of conquering cancer?**  
Cancer cells become "smart" and find ways to

evade the immune system. Our challenge is to "re-program" the immune system so cancer is prevented altogether. I believe that will happen. We are committed to making it happen.

*In 1964, seven oncologists created the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO), now a global network of over 40,000 cancer professionals. The Conquer Cancer Foundation of ASCO represents their commitment to fuel profound breakthroughs and share cutting-edge knowledge with patients and physicians to light the way forward for every cancer conqueror.*



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