

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## American Association of Immunologists Honors Senator Susan Collins and Dr. Katherine Wu with 2024 Public Service Award

The American Association of Immunologists (AAI) is pleased to announce Senator Susan Collins (R-ME) and journalist Dr. Katherine Wu as the recipients of the 2024 AAI Public Service Award. This prestigious award is presented to individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the advocacy and support of basic biomedical and immunologic research.

Senator Collins, the Ranking Member, and soon to be Chair, of the Senate Appropriations Committee, has been instrumental in promoting bipartisan support for critical health and research funding. Her leadership, particularly alongside Chairwoman Patty Murray (D-WA), was vital in advancing all 12 appropriations bills in 2023, including the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (Labor-HHS) appropriations bill. This legislation provided a needed increase to the NIH budget and protected essential programs from significant proposed cuts. Senator Collins has also co-sponsored the Next Generation Researchers Act, which led to NIH's Next Generation Researchers Initiative, significantly enhancing support for early-stage investigators.

AAI also recognizes Dr. Katherine Wu for her impactful contributions to science journalism. Dr. Wu, currently a staff writer for *The Atlantic*, has emerged as a trusted and articulate voice on public health issues, particularly throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Her clear and accurate explanations of complex scientific concepts have helped broaden public understanding of immunology and biomedical research. With a Ph.D. in microbiology and immunobiology from Harvard University, Dr. Wu's work at *The Atlantic* and on *The Story Collider* podcast exemplifies her commitment to making science accessible, insightful, and relatable to diverse audiences.

"We are honored to recognize both Senator Susan Collins and Dr. Katherine Wu with the 2024 AAI Public Service Award," said AAI Chief Executive Officer, Loretta Doan, Ph. D. "Senator Collins has been a steadfast advocate for biomedical research, working across party lines to protect the future of the biomedical research enterprise. Dr. Wu, through her insightful reporting, has bridged the gap between complex science and the public, helping millions understand the importance of immunology and public health. Both have made invaluable contributions, and we are proud to celebrate their achievements with this award."

The AAI Public Service Award was established to honor individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the advocacy and support of biomedical research. Past recipients include leaders in science, public affairs, policymaking, and journalism.

### About The American Association of Immunologists





The American Association of Immunologists (AAI) is one of the world's largest organizations of immunologists and scientists in related disciplines. Our mission is to improve global health and well-being by advancing immunology and elevating public understanding of the immune system. AAI members are responsible for some of the most significant biomedical discoveries of the past century, including the development of life-saving cancer immunotherapies, antibody therapies, transplant technologies, and vaccines. We support scientists across the field of immunology through knowledge dissemination, community building, advocacy, and public outreach.

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