

BioAsia 2020 announces Genome Valley Excellence Award

13 February 2020 | News

BioAsia 2020 Announces the Genome Valley Excellence Award to Dr. Carl H June & Dr. Vas Narasimhan



BioAsia, Asia's largest annual global Biotechnology and Life Sciences forum organized by the Government of Telangana, has announced that the prestigious Genome Valley Excellence Award will be bestowed upon Dr. Carl H June, CAR-T Cell Therapy Pioneer, Richard W. Vague Professor in Immunotherapy, Dept. of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, University of Pennsylvania, USA for his pioneering work in the field of immunotherapy; breakthrough research in developing CAR-T therapy for treatment of Cancer and development and commercialization of world's first FDA-approved gene therapy and Dr. Vas (Vasant) Narasimhan, CEO of Novartis for inspiring the world with the bold new vision to reimagine the pharmaceutical business including embracing digital technology and transforming healthcare; his extensive work on a range of public health issues particularly in developing countries and exemplary work in development of over 20 novel medicines, including advances cell and gene therapies as well as vaccines. The award will be presented to them during the 17th edition of BioAsia which will be held between February 17 to 19, 2020 at HICC, Hyderabad.

Dr. Carl H June is an American immunologist and Oncologist. He is the pioneer in the field of immunotherapy and globally acknowledged for the development of T-Cell Therapy for Cancer. His findings have helped to develop and commercialize the first FDA approved gene therapy called Tisagenlecleucel. CAR-T Cell therapy, a form of immunotherapy that uses specially altered T-Cells (a part of the immune system) to fight cancer. A sample of patient's T-Cells is collected from the blood and then modified to produce special structures called Chimeric Antigen Receptors (CARs) on their surface. Dr. June is Richard W. Vague Professor in Immunotherapy, Dept. of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, University of Pennsylvania, USA.

Dr. Vasant Narasimhan, popularly known as *Vas Narasimhan*, is the CEO of a global pharmaceutical company – Novartis. He is an Indian American Physician and has led a strategic and cultural transformation at Novartis to build a leading medicines company globally powered by advanced therapy platforms and data science. Dr. Narasimhan joined Novartis in 2005 and he served as the Global Head of Development before he assumed charge of CEO of the company in 2017. Dr. Narasimhan previously served as Global Head of Biopharmaceuticals and Oncology injectables at Sandoz International. He is a member of the US National Academy of Medicine. With his ancestral roots at Tamil Nadu, Dr. Narasimhan completed his graduation in biological sciences from University of Chicago and did his MD from Harvard Medical School. He also completed his master's degree in Public Policy from John F Kennedy School of Government, US.

Genome Valley Excellence Award was constituted in 2004 to recognize and honour eminent individuals and organizations for their exceptional contribution to the Life Sciences research and public health. The Government of Telangana presents this special award to eminent leaders every year after a careful examination and technical consideration by the reputed jury committee appointed by it.

Speaking on 2020 Genome Valley Excellence Award, Mr Jayesh Ranjan, Principal Secretary, Dept of Industries & Commerce, Govt. of Telangana, said, "We are pleased to announce the prestigious Genome Valley Excellence Award 2020 to Dr. Carl H June and Dr. Vas Narasimhan for their remarkable contributions to the life sciences sector which would further revolutionize the whole public health across the globe. BioAsia, attracts lot of the best minds of the life sciences industry across the world and is an excellent platform for industry, academia, scientific community and startups to interact, network and build relationships towards the core objectives of their respective fields. The Government of Telangana has always been supportive of innovations in Life Sciences and is committed to helping the industry to grow by providing it the world-class infrastructure while ensuring time-bound approvals to improve the ease of doing business in the state".

Elaborating the significance of Genome Valley Excellence Award, Mr. Shakthi Nagappan, CEO, BioAsia & Director (Life Sciences and Pharma), Government of Telangana, said, "Presenting the Genome Valley Excellence Award is one of the highlights of the BioAsia summit organized every year. We have been conferring the prominent scientists, industry leaders and organizations who are inspiring the leaders to join the mission of improving human life and made significant contributions to the Life Sciences sector across the globe. Over the years, the Genome Valley Excellence Award has been gaining tremendous esteem among the global lifesciences community as several Nobel laureates are also among the recipients of this prestigious award".

BioAsia 2020 is set to host eminent global industry leaders from the life sciences sector including Dr. Vas Narasimhan, CEO, Novartis, Dr. Carl June, CAR-T Expert, University of Pennsylvania, Dr. Peter Piot, Director, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, and Co-Discoverer of Ebola, Mr. Ajay Piramal, Chairman, Piramal Group, Mr. Dilip Shanghvi, Chairman, Sun Pharma, Mrs. Kiran Mazumdar Shaw, CMD, Biocon, Mr. K Satish Reddy, Chairman, Dr. Reddy's Laboratories, among others.