Betty Tsao, PhD, was recruited in 2015 from UCLA as the SmartState® and Richard M. Silver Endowed Chair in inflammation research. Dr. Tsao received her PhD from the University of Pittsburgh and completed postdoctoral training at the Scripps Clinic & Research Foundation, Indiana University School of Medicine, and UCLA, where she rose through the ranks to Professor.

Dr. Tsao is the recipient of numerous awards including the Arthritis Foundation’s 50th Anniversary Research Hero Award, the James Klinenberg Award of Excellence in Research of the Arthritis Foundation, Southern California Chapter, and Research Hero from the Lupus Foundation of American.

Dr. Tsao’s research interest is on the pathogenesis of systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE). She has authored more than 130 peer-reviewed research papers and over 30 book chapters/reviews. Her current research includes investigations in genetics, epigenetics, biomarkers and targeted treatment of SLE. She is a founding member of the international SLE genetic consortium and has actively worked on the identification of SLE risk loci, the localization of underlying risk variants, and the characterization of functional consequences leading to disease manifestations.

Her most recent work, showing an association between causal genetic variant in the NCF1 gene and multiple autoimmune diseases, is published in the January 2017 issue of the prestigious journal Nature Genetics. The manuscript is titled: “A missense variant in NCF1 is associated with susceptibility to multiple autoimmune diseases” and authors include collaborators at MUSC and several other institutions (http://www.nature.com/ng/journal/vaop/ncurrent/full/ng.3782.html).