

ALFRED B. SWANSON, MD, FACS



Dr. Swanson received his undergraduate and medical education at the University of Illinois and his training in orthopaedic surgery at the Universities of Illinois, North-western and Indiana. During the Korean war, he served in the U.S. Army as an orthopaedic surgeon before establishing his practice in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He has been particularly concerned with the care of crippled children, congenital malformations, impairment evaluation, surgical treatment for arthritis, training of physicians, international medicine and the environment.

Dr. Swanson is Director of the Grand Rapids Orthopaedic Surgery Residency Training Program, and Director of Orthopaedic Research and Hand Surgery Fellowship at Blodgett Medical Centre. He is Professor of Surgery at Michigan State University. He has trained more than 110 orthopaedic residents and 100 hand fellows from over 35 countries. Actively involved in medicine nationally and internationally, he is a member of numerous boards and societies. He has participated in 650 congresses in 56 countries, and has published upwards of 250 scientific papers and 50 book chapters, as well as a book.

He is Past-President of the ASSH (1979). He was Secretary General (1976-1983), President (1983-1989) and Historian of the IFSSH. He received the Kappa Delta Award for research from the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgery in 1982 and the Distinguished Alumnus of the Year Award of the University of Illinois in 1985.

Dr. Swanson has revolutionized the surgical treatment of the arthritic hand, upper extremity and forefoot since 1962 through his research and development of metal, silicone and other implants for joint reconstruction. He has pioneered the use of closed-circuit television for live surgical demonstrations. The Grand Rapids International Symposium on Implant Arthroplasty was established by him in 1973, and has been attended by thousands of physicians from more than 40 countries. Feeling that medicine has an important role in world peace and diplomacy, Dr. Swanson, in cooperation with Care-Medico and the American Society for Surgery of the Hand, organized a medical aid program for South Vietnam staffed by international volunteer surgeons from 1962 to 1975. He received the Medal of Honour from the South Vietnamese government for his care of the wounded and for organizing a polio immunization program. He organized a similar volunteer program for Peru. Realizing that future world problems are related to the environment, he is Founding Chairman of the Alternative Methods for International Stability (AMIS) and of the International Trees Corps.



Dr. Swanson is very proud of his family and his children Eric, Miles and Karin and their families, and especially of his wife Dr. Geneviève de Groot Swanson, who has been so important in his life and work.

For the enormous contribution to Hand Surgery nationally and internationally, Alfred B Swanson was awarded the "Pioneer of Hand Surgery" honour on 3 July 1995 at the Sixth International Congress of the IFSSH in Helsinki, Finland. Further recognition was given by the IFSSH in naming the keynote lecture at its triennial congresses the "Swanson Lecture"