

Bio of Steven Chu

January 3, 2018

Steven Chu is the William R. Kenan, Jr., Professor of Physics and Professor of Molecular & Cellular Physiology in the Medical School at Stanford University. He has published over 280 papers in atomic and polymer physics, biophysics, biology, batteries, and other energy technologies. He holds 14 patents, and an additional 6 patent filings since 2015.

Dr. Chu was the 12th U.S. Secretary of Energy from January 2009 until the end of April 2013. As the first scientist to hold a Cabinet position and the longest serving Energy Secretary, he recruited outstanding scientists and engineers into the Department of Energy. He began several initiatives including ARPA-E (Advanced Research Projects Agency – Energy), the Energy Innovation Hubs, was personally tasked by President Obama to assist BP in stopping the Deepwater Horizon oil leak, and initiated in 2010 the annual Clean Energy Ministerial.

Prior to his cabinet post, he was director of the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, where he was active in pursuit of alternative and renewable energy technologies, and Professor of Physics and Applied Physics at Stanford University, where he helped launch Bio-X, a multi-disciplinary institute combining the physical and biological sciences with medicine and engineering and the Kavli Institute for Particle Astrophysics and Cosmology. Previously he was head of the Quantum Electronics Research Department at AT&T Bell Laboratories.

Dr. Chu is the co-recipient of the 1997 Nobel Prize in Physics for his contributions to laser cooling and atom trapping, and has received numerous other prestigious awards. He is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, the American Philosophical Society, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Academia Sinica, and is a foreign member of the Royal Society, the Royal Academy of Engineering, the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and the Korean Academy of Sciences and Technology. In 2018, he becomes the President Elect of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He received an A.B. degree in mathematics and a B.S. degree in physics from the University of Rochester, and a Ph.D. in physics from the University of California, Berkeley, as well as 32 honorary degrees.