The Alzheimer’s Association named Dr. John C. Morris of Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis the recipient of its 2013 Medical and Scientific Award.

The award, presented at the Chicago Rita Hayworth Gala on May 11, 2013, honors him for a career of advancing Alzheimer’s research, treatment and care.

Morris, the Harvey A. and Dorismae Hacker Friedman Distinguished Professor of Neurology and director of the Charles F. and Joanne Knight Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center (Knight ADRC), has made diverse contributions to Alzheimer’s research in his career. Currently, he and his colleagues at the Knight ADRC are at the forefront of developing biological methods to detect Alzheimer’s disease before symptoms emerge.

“His work has the potential to dramatically accelerate the discovery of innovative drugs and treatment strategies,” said Stacy Tew-Lovasz, President of the Alzheimer’s Association St. Louis Chapter. “Being able to combat Alzheimer’s before individuals experience effects of the disease could delay or halt the disease’s progression.”

The Alzheimer’s Association is the largest nonprofit funder of Alzheimer’s research, awarding more than $300 million to 2,100 scientists since 1982. Through partnerships and funded projects, the Association has been involved with every major research advancement over the past 30 years. In 2012, the Association awarded Morris its largest research grant, nearly $4.2 million over four years, for the Dominantly Inherited Alzheimer’s Network-Therapeutic Trials Unit (DIAN-TTU) based at the Knight ADRC. Morris directs DIAN, which brings together research centers throughout the world to investigate drug treatments and biomarkers in individuals with a rare, dominantly inherited, younger-onset version of Alzheimer’s disease. The hope is that findings from DIAN can be used to improve treatment for all individuals with Alzheimer’s, not only the small population studied.