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News From the Association of American Cancer Institutes | January 2021

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Awards & Honors | Grants & Gifts | Leadership Highlights | Research Highlights | Other News & COVID-19

AACI HEADLINES

Odunsi Named Director of the University of Chicago Medicine Comprehensive Cancer Center

Adekunle “Kunle” Odunsi, MD, PhD, FRCOG, FACOG, an expert in immunotherapy and vaccine therapy for cancer, has been appointed director of the University of Chicago Medicine Comprehensive Cancer Center, effective March 1. Dr. Odunsi will also serve as BSD Dean for Oncology and professor of obstetrics and gynecology at the University of Chicago. He joins UChicago from Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center, where he served as deputy director, executive director of the Center for Immunotherapy, and chair of the Department of Gynecologic Oncology. Read More

PCLI Welcomes New Steering Committee Members

Three new members have been selected to join AACI’s Physician Clinical Leadership Initiative (PCLI) Steering Committee: Carrie B. Lee, MD, MPH, UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Karen L. Reckamp, MD, MS, Cedars-Sinai Cancer; and Julie Ann Sosa, MD, MA, FACS, MAMSE, FSSO, UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center. The new members’ terms began January 1. Read More

Call for Abstracts for the 13th Annual AACI CRI Meeting

The AACI CRI Steering Committee is currently soliciting abstracts for the 13th Annual AACI CRI Meeting. This year’s meeting theme will focus on adapting cancer clinical research for 2021 and beyond. The purpose of the abstracts is to inform meeting attendees about clinical trials office challenges and solutions implemented at AACI cancer centers. The online submission tool will open in February. In the meantime, you may...
FY 2021 Budget a Mixed Bag for Cancer Research

Approved by the House and Senate on Monday, December 21, 2020, the final Fiscal Year 2021 budget deal includes a $1.25 billion increase in funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and a $119.5 million increase to the National Cancer Institute (NCI). While the additional funding does not meet levels requested by AACI, the association is grateful for the significant additional support approved by legislators on both sides of the aisle. The bill also addresses three of AACI's public policy priorities: the CLINICAL TREATMENT Act, the Removing Barriers to Colorectal Screening Act, and a ban on surprise medical bills.

Submit Your Cancer Center News for February

Thank you to the communications professionals who consistently provide AACI with news from their cancer centers. The February 2021 issue of AACI Update will be published on Monday, February 1. The deadline to submit your cancer center news is Wednesday, January 27. Please send your cancer center news to aaciupdate@aaci-cancer.org.

NEWS FROM THE CENTERS

AWARDS & HONORS

Mitchell Elected to Fellowship in Royal College of Physicians of London

Edith P. Mitchell, MD, FACP, FCPP, FRCP, associate director for diversity affairs at the Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson Health, has been recognized as a fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of London (RCP). The RCP was founded in 1518 by a royal charter from King Henry VIII.

Sadelain Receives Fondation ARC Award

Michel Sadelain, MD, PhD, director of the Center for Cell Engineering at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, was named a recipient of the 49th Fondation ARC Léopold Griffuel Award for Translational and Clinical Research.
McDonnell Elected to National Academy of Inventors
Duke Cancer Institute, Duke University Medical Center

Donald McDonnell, PhD, has been elected as a fellow to the National Academy of Inventors. Using a combination of genetics, biochemistry, and chemical biology, Dr. McDonnell explores fundamental mechanistic aspects of estrogen receptor signaling in breast cancer. Read More

Three Roswell Park Experts Acknowledged as Influential Researchers
Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center

Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center's Igor Puzanov, MD, MSCI, FACP, Andrew Hyland, PhD, and Maciej Goniewicz, PhD, PharmD, have all recently been recognized as global scientific pioneers on the 2020 Clarivate Plc Highly Cited Researchers list. Read More

Nir Named to New Endowed Professorship
University of New Mexico Comprehensive Cancer Center

Itzhak Nir, MD, has been appointed the first Elsie P. Barry/Cowboys for Cancer Research Endowed Professor in Hepato-Pancreatico-Biliary and Oncology Surgery at UNM Comprehensive Cancer Center. Dr. Nir served as surgical director in transplantation surgery at Hadassah University Hospital in Jerusalem and as a surgical oncology fellow at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. Read More

Wolchok Named ESMO Award Winner
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

Jedd Wolchok, MD, PhD, director of the Parker Institute for Cancer Immunotherapy at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, is the recipient of the European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO) Award for Immuno-Oncology 2020. Read More

Facilities Manager Recognized for Leadership
University of New Mexico Comprehensive Cancer Center

Stewart Livsie, manager of maintenance and construction at UNM Comprehensive Cancer Center, was recently named by the International Facility Management Association as one of its top 40 facilities managers under 40 years old for 2020. His leadership helped ensure that the center remained open during the pandemic. Read More
UPMC Hillman Rated Exceptional by NCI
UPMC Hillman Cancer Center

$25 Million Gift Received for Cancer Immunology and Metabolism Center of Excellence
Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey

$10 Million Gift Supports New Myeloma Research Center
The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center - James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute

Democratizing DNA-Based Health Risk Scores
Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center

Initiative Seeks to Extract Cancer Phenotypes from Electronic Health Records
Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center

Grant Bolsters Deep Tissue Imaging Research
Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center

Ultrasound Technology Research Leads to $2 Million NCI Grant
Cancer Center at Illinois

Cancer Pilot Projects Funded
Cancer Center at Brown University

LEADERSHIP TRANSITIONS

Interim Executive Director Announced
Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University

Adam Marcus, PhD, has been appointed interim executive director of Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University. Dr. Marcus assumes the role from Walter J. Curran, Jr., MD, while Emory University conducts a national search for Winship's next executive director. Read More

Wakelee Appointed Deputy Director
Stanford Cancer Institute
Heather Wakelee, MD, has been appointed deputy director of the Stanford Cancer Institute, effective January 2021. She has also been named as the new division chief of oncology in Stanford University School of Medicine’s Department of Medicine. Read More

Camp Named Chief of Surgical Oncology
Dan L Duncan Comprehensive Cancer Center at Baylor College of Medicine

E. Ramsay Camp, MD, FACS, has joined the Dan L Duncan Comprehensive Cancer Center at Baylor College of Medicine as professor and chief of surgical oncology in the Michael E. DeBakey Department of Surgery’s Division of Surgical Oncology. Read More

Hematologist/Stem Cell Biologist to Direct Hematology and Cellular Therapy
Cedars-Sinai Cancer

John P. Chute, MD, has been selected to direct the Division of Hematology and Cellular Therapy in the Department of Medicine at Cedars-Sinai Cancer. The physician-scientist also serves as director of the Center for Myelodysplastic Diseases Research and associate director of the Board of Governors Regenerative Medicine Institute in the Department of Biomedical Sciences. Read More

Multiple Myeloma Expert Joins Sylvester Leadership
Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, University of Miami Health System

Hematologic oncologist C. Ola Landgren, MD, PhD, is the inaugural leader of a new research program, experimental therapeutics, at Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, University of Miami Health System. Dr. Landgren was chief of myeloma service for the past six years at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. Read More

Tereffe Named Chief Medical Executive
The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center has named Welela Tereffe, MD, as chief medical executive. She assumed his new position...
New Division Chief of Blood and Marrow Transplantation Named
Stanford Cancer Institute

David Miklos, MD, PhD, has been appointed the new division chief of Blood and Marrow Transplantation in Stanford University School of Medicine’s Department of Medicine, effective January 2021. Dr. Miklos will be only the third chief in the more than 30-year history of the program, succeeding Robert Negrin, MD, after his 20 years in that role.

Halene Appointed Chief of Hematology
Yale Cancer Center, Yale School of Medicine

Stephanie Halene, MD, PhD, has been appointed chief of hematology at Yale Cancer Center, Smilow Cancer Hospital and the Yale School of Medicine Department of Internal Medicine. She received her medical degree and doctorate degree from Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen in Tübingen, Germany.

Smith Appointed Chief, Section of Hematology/Oncology
The University of Chicago Medicine Comprehensive Cancer Center

The University of Chicago Department of Medicine has announced that Sonali Smith, MD, an expert in lymphoma therapeutics, has been appointed as chief of the Section of Hematology/Oncology. Dr. Smith has been serving in an interim capacity since April 2019.

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Biomarker of Aggressive Childhood Cancer Discovered
Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins University
Clinical Trial Shows Microbubbles May Improve Effectiveness of Radiation Therapy for Liver Cancer
Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson Health

Key Driver of the Spread of Cancer to the Brain Discovered
VCU Massey Cancer Center

FDA Approval Granted for Prostate Cancer Imaging Technique
UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center

New Combination Therapy Could Help Fight Difficult-to-Treat Cancers With Common Mutations
UCLA Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center

Research Identifies Safe and Effective Method of Delivering Medicines to the Lungs
Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey

Sequencing Study Highlights Previously Unknown Myeloma Resistance Mechanisms
Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center

Scientists Discover Promising Key to Preventing Cancer Relapse After Immunotherapy
The Tisch Cancer Institute at Mount Sinai

Pod E-Cigarettes Less Harmful Than Regular Cigarettes, Study Finds
Cancer Center at Brown University

Study Shows Regional Variation in Prostate Cancer Genomic Testing
Yale Cancer Center, Yale School of Medicine

Drugs Create Balancing Act for Patients With Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer
Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins University

More Cancer Patients Could Benefit From Rehabilitation, Researcher Says
WVU Cancer Institute

Study: Potential Cancer Therapy May Boost Immune Response
Cedars-Sinai Cancer

Genomics, Mathematics Help Personalize Radiation Therapy for Lung Cancer
Cleveland Clinic Cancer Center

Homegrown Immunotherapy Trialed in Lung Cancer
Duke Cancer Institute, Duke University Medical Center

Immune Cell That Drives Breast Cancer Growth Could Be Effective Target in Immunotherapies to Treat the Disease
VCU Massey Cancer Center

Novel Antibody-Drug Conjugate Shows Promising Early Results in Rare Blood Cancer
The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

Big Data Powers Design of 'Smart' Cell Therapies
UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center
Prognostic, Predictive Markers Have Growing Importance in CLL Management
Fox Chase Cancer Center, Temple Health

Study Links Persistent Cough to E-Cigarette Use Among College Students
UK Markey Cancer Center

OTHER NEWS & COVID-19

Changes Needed to Address Financial Hardship From Cancer
University of Colorado Cancer Center

Cathy Bradley, PhD, deputy director of the University of Colorado Cancer Center, is the lead author of a paper that suggests that it is time to add routine screening for financial hardships after a cancer diagnosis as a quality measure in clinical practice. Read More

New Cancer Drugs Lead to Life-Threatening Financial Choices
Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center

A raft of studies by health outcomes researchers at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center illustrate the difficult choices cancer patients are forced to make regarding an expanding class of targeted drugs called tyrosine kinase inhibitors. Read More

Ohio State Announces Passing of Albert de la Chapelle
The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center – James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute

OSUCCC - James has announced the passing of Albert de la Chapelle, PhD, MD, a distinguished university professor in the Department of Cancer Biology and Genetics at Ohio State who played a key role in developing and leading the university’s human cancer genetics program to prominence. Read More

Researchers Discover Men Fighting Both Cancer and COVID-19 at Higher Risk Than Women
The University of Kansas Cancer Center

Men with cancer and COVID-19 may be at significantly higher risk for severe symptoms and even death as compared to females fighting both, a University of Kansas Cancer Center research team led by Anup Kasi, MD, MPH, has found. Read More
Study Provides Evidence for a 7-Day Quarantine for University Students Exposed to COVID-19

A new University of Kentucky study provides direct evidence for a testing strategy that could be used to support a shortened period of quarantine for university students who are exposed to COVID-19 but are asymptomatic. Jill Kolesar, PharmD, is principal investigator of the study. Read More

Virologist Part of Historic FDA Panel That Endorsed COVID-19 Vaccine

Patrick Moore, MD, MPH, distinguished professor of microbiology and molecular genetics at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, was a part of the small committee of scientists tasked by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration with reviewing the data provided by the pharmaceutical company Pfizer, which has developed a COVID-19 vaccine. Read More

Prostate Cancer Regulator Plays Role in COVID-19, Providing a Promising Treatment Lead

By taking a lesson from prostate cancer, researchers now have a promising lead on a treatment for COVID-19. Two proteins, ACE2 and TMPRSS2, help the coronavirus gain entry and replicate within cells. TMPRSS2 is well-known to Arul Chinnaiyan, MD, PhD. His lab discovered that TMPRSS2 fuses with the ETS gene to drive more than half of all prostate cancers. Read More

Newly Diagnosed Cancer Patients, African Americans More at Risk for COVID-19

Cancer patients, especially newly diagnosed and African-American patients, are significantly at risk for COVID-19 infection, hospitalization, and mortality, according to a new study published by researchers from Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine and the Case Comprehensive Cancer Center. Read More

Similar Factors Cause Health Disparities in Cancer, COVID-19


Income level, employment, housing location, medical insurance, education, tobacco and alcohol use, diet and obesity, access to medical care. These are some of the factors causing worse cancer outcomes in people who are Black. The same factors are also causing worse outcomes from COVID-19 in this population.

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**JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

**Neuro-Oncology Research Director**
Cedars-Sinai Cancer

**Associate Director of Translational Science/Associate Director of Clinical Trials - 2 positions**
Cedars-Sinai Cancer

**Chief of Surgical Oncology**
Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson Health

**Affiliate Research Consortium (ARC) Coordinator**
University of Florida Health Cancer Center

**Assistant Professor of Oncology**
Livestrong Cancer Institutes, The University of Texas at Austin, Dell Medical School

**Biostatistician**
Medical College of Wisconsin Cancer Center

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**AACI MEETINGS AND EVENTS**

**13th Annual AACI CRI Meeting**
SAVE THE DATE
July 13-15, 2021

**2021 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting**
SAVE THE DATE
October 17-19, 2021

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**MEMBER MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Cancer Disparities Symposium
CALL FOR ABSTRACTS
Case Comprehensive Cancer Center
March 4, 2021

Medical Arts Building
3708 Fifth Avenue, Suite 503
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