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News From the Association of American Cancer Institutes | November 2023
Click here to read the full newsletter on our website.

Awards & Honors | Grants & Gifts | Leadership Highlights | Research Highlights | Other News
Job Opportunities | Meeting Announcements

AACI HEADLINES

Mesecar Named Director of Purdue Institute for Cancer Research

Andrew Mesecar, PhD, distinguished professor of biochemistry and the Walther Professor in Cancer Structural Biology, has been named assistant vice president for research and director of the Purdue Institute for Cancer Research after serving since August 2022 as interim director. Dr. Mesecar was chosen for the position after a nationwide search and his new role became effective September 1. Read More

Internationally-Recognized Thoracic Oncologist Named Executive Director of UMGCCC

Taofeek K. Owonikoko, MD, PhD, has been appointed executive director of the University of Maryland Marlene and Stewart Greenebaum Comprehensive Cancer Center (UMGCC). Dr. Owonikoko will also take on several faculty appointments at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, University of Maryland Medical Center, and the University of Maryland, Baltimore. He will begin his tenure in January 2024, taking over from Kevin J. Cullen, MD, who is stepping down as director after 20 years. Read More

Save the Date: AACI Leadership Diversity and Development Workshop

AACI will hold its 2024 Leadership Diversity and Development Workshop (LDDW) March 11-13, at Loews Chicago O’Hare Hotel in
AACI Joins Cancer Advocacy Organizations on Capitol Hill

AACI prioritizes engagement with key issues that impact our nation's cancer centers. Throughout October, AACI participated in meetings and advocacy events in Washington, DC, partnering with the Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association, One Voice Against Cancer, and United for Medical Research.

Pictured, top to bottom: Representative Steve Womack and Senator Shelley Moore Capito. Photo credit: Ollie Mae Nicholl for UMR. Read More

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Astound is your personal funding scout for all sources of non-federal research funding.

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- Improve care
- Embrace scientific advances
- Manage costs
- Deliver innovations

Learn more about how quality initiatives are driving improvements at the point of care and beyond. Watch Now

NEWS FROM THE CENTERS

AWARDS & HONORS

Merad Elected to National Academy of Medicine
Miriam Merad, MD, PhD, an immunologist at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, has been elected to the National Academy of Medicine in recognition of her pioneering contributions to the fields of immunology and cell biology. Read More

Emory Immunology Prize Established in Honor of Max Cooper
Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University

The newly established $100,000 Emory Max Cooper Prize in Immunology celebrates the groundbreaking contributions of Max D. Cooper, MD, a member of the Cancer Immunology Research Program at Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University, whose research and discoveries have changed our understanding of the adaptive immune system, including its impact on cancer. Read More

Ford Recognized as Top Diversity Leader
Hollings Cancer Center, Medical University of South Carolina

Marvella Ford, PhD, has been recognized by Modern Healthcare as one of 2023’s Top Diversity Leaders. Dr. Ford is associate director of Population Science and Community Outreach and Engagement for MUSC Hollings Cancer Center. Read More

Jagannath Receives International Myeloma Society Award
The Tisch Cancer Institute at Mount Sinai

Sundar Jagannath, MD, has been honored with the Waldenström Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Myeloma Society in recognition of his contributions to research and clinical advances in multiple myeloma. Read More

Astsaturov Inaugural Holder of Oncology Professorship
Fox Chase Cancer Center, Temple Health
Igor Astsaturov, MD, PhD, co-director of The Marvin and Concetta Greenberg Pancreatic Cancer Institute at Fox Chase Cancer Center, has been appointed inaugural holder of the Paul F. Engstrom Professorship in Oncology. Read More

Sawyer Awarded BioFlorida Entrepreneur of the Year
Moffitt Cancer Center
BioFlorida Inc., a statewide association linking more than 8,600 of Florida’s research organizations and establishments in the biopharma, MedTech, digital health and health systems, has named W. Gregory Sawyer, PhD, Moffitt Cancer Center’s chief bioengineering officer, its Entrepreneur of the Year. Read More

GRANTS & GIFTS

Vanderbilt-Ingram Earns NCI Merit Award
Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center

$38.7 Million Federal Grant Will Launch Program for Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Health
Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center

$20 Million Awarded to Put Science Behind Tobacco Product Regulation
The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center - James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute

$19 Million Awarded to Research Tobacco Regulation in Appalachia, Inform FDA
UK Markey Cancer Center

Neuro-Oncologist Receives Nearly $12 Million for Immunotherapy Research
Stanford Cancer Center

$10.9 Million SPORE Grant Supports Pancreatic Cancer Research
Siteman Cancer Center

$10.9 Million to Establish UH Pacific Center for Genome Research
University of Hawai‘i Cancer Center, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

$10.4 Million Received to Develop Treatment Strategies to Overcome Drug Resistance in Lung Cancer
Two NCI Grants Will Support Studies of Acute Myeloid Leukemia

The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center - James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute

$4.6 Million Awarded to Advance Liquid Biopsy Test for Early Lung Cancer Detection

UCLA Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center

Researchers Will Be PIs on a New Epidemiological Study of Asian Americans

Fox Chase Cancer Center, Temple Health

Team Receives Award From The Mark Foundation for Cancer Research

Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center

New Clinical Trial Tests Innovative Ways to Preserve Muscle Mass During Metastatic Prostate Cancer

Huntsman Cancer Institute, University of Utah

$2.4 Million Grant to Foster Next Generation of Translational Scientists

The University of Kansas Cancer Center

Researcher Receives $2.2 Million Grant for Metastatic Breast Cancer Study

Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center

Shaping the Future of Cancer Care Through Student Training Health Collaborative

Huntsman Cancer Institute, University of Utah

Walker Foundation Pledges $1 Million for Radiation Oncology Center

UAMS Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute

IU Cancer Center Receives Training Grant for Cancer Drug Discovery

Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center

LEADERSHIP TRANSITIONS

Kidney Cancer Physician-Scientist to Lead Precision Oncology Effort

Hollings Cancer Center, Medical University of South Carolina

MUSC Hollings Cancer Center has recruited Thai Ho, MD, PhD, to lead the development of the Precision Oncology Program and a precision oncology tumor board. Dr. Ho treats patients with genitourinary cancers and runs a lab focused on researching a mutation in the gene SETD2 that occurs in kidney cancer. Read More
Breast Center Director Named
**Dan L Duncan Comprehensive Cancer Center at Baylor College of Medicine**

Xiang "Shawn" Zhang, PhD, has been named director of the Lester and Sue Smith Breast Center at Baylor College of Medicine after serving as interim director since March 2022. Dr. Zhang is a professor of molecular and cellular biology and a McNair Scholar at Baylor. *Read More*

Cancer Biology Researcher to Chair Dermatology Department
**University of Virginia Cancer Center**

The University of Virginia School of Medicine has named Lu Q. Le, MD, PhD, a cancer biology researcher, to chair its Department of Dermatology. He will begin January 29, 2024. Dr. Le joins UVA from the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. *Read More*

Reagan Named Director of BMT and Cellular Therapies Program
**Wilmot Cancer Institute, UR Medicine**

Patrick M. Reagan, MD, associate professor of medicine, has been named director of the Blood & Marrow Transplant and Cellular Therapies program at Wilmot Cancer Institute. Since Wilmot's BMT program started in 1989, it has performed more than 4,400 transplants. *Read More*

Interim Associate Director for Cancer Workforce Equity Named
**The University of Kansas Cancer Center**

Simon Craddock Lee, PhD, MPH, chair and Sosland Family Professor
Breast Reconstructive Surgeons Work as a Team to Help Patients Reclaim What They Lost

University of New Mexico Cancer Center

For Gladys Tsao-Wu, MD, and Jennifer Chan, MD, reconstruction is as much about helping patients recover emotionally as it is about physical restoration. After more than a decade working together in private practice, the duo has joined UNM Comprehensive Cancer Center to help breast cancer survivors reclaim what cancer took from them. Read More

Gynecological Oncologist Joins GWU

GW Cancer Center

Jennifer Vaz, MD, has joined the GW University Cancer Center and the GW Medical Faculty Associates as a gynecological oncologist. She specializes in malignant and benign tumors of the pelvis, including ovarian, uterine, cervical, and vulvar/vaginal malignancies. Read More

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Tumor-Destroying Sound Waves Receive FDA Approval for Liver Treatment in Humans

University of Michigan Rogel Cancer Center

Lung Cancer Cells Covertly Thrive in Brain Under Guise of Protection

Stanford Cancer Institute

Rapid, Comprehensive Blood Test Licensed to Agilent

Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center

Researchers Discover New Role of RNA Modification in Lung Cancer Cell Growth

University of Florida Health Cancer Center
UIC Joins National Trial of Blood Test for Multi-Cancer Screening  
University of Illinois Cancer Center

An Updated Look at Prostate Cancer Disparities  
Cedars-Sinai Cancer

Genetics Help Explain Mortality Risk From Second Cancer Among Childhood Cancer Survivors  
Comprehensive Cancer Center St. Jude Children's Research Hospital

Novel Molecule Disrupts Several Molecular Pathways That Lead to Cancer Growth  
Dan L Duncan Comprehensive Cancer Center at Baylor College of Medicine

Research Reveals What Potentially Causes a Leukemia to Become More Aggressive  
City of Hope Comprehensive Cancer Center

Black, Hispanic Women More Likely Than White Women to Get Routine Mammograms  
UAMS Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Center

Drug-Filled Nanocapsule Helps Make Immunotherapy More Effective in Mice  
UCLA Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center

New Resource Developed to Aid Cancer Surveillance at Cancer Centers  
UK Markey Cancer Center

Researchers Report Protein Mutation Creates Super T Cells With Potential to Fight Off Cancer and Infections  
Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins University

UF Health Expands Research Programs to Enhance Discoveries  
University of Florida Health Cancer Center

For Some Prostate Cancer Patients, PSMA PET May Be Better for Initial Staging of Disease  
UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center

OTHER NEWS

Reminder: Register Today for PCLI Survivorship Webinar  
Association of American Cancer Institutes

The AACI Physician Clinical Leadership Initiative (PCLI) will host “A Practical Approach to Building a Survivorship Program” at 1:00 pm eastern time on Tuesday, November 14. Panelists will review the core aspects of a survivorship program and considerations for sustainability.

Pictured, clockwise from top right: Webinar panelists Dr. Julie Vose, Dr. Laura Tenner, and Rachael Schmidt Read More
Register for CADA Conference by December 3

VCU Massey Comprehensive Cancer Center

VCU Massey Comprehensive Cancer Center will present the 1st Annual Catchment Area Data (CADA) Conference: Beyond Definition, December 7-9, in Richmond, VA. The conference is open to AACI members and all eligible staff, faculty, students, and post-doc trainees from cancer centers who provide education, resources, and support within their defined catchment area. Registration closes Sunday, December 3. Read More

Free Online Tool Helps Prostate Cancer Patients Save on Out-of-Pocket Drug Costs

University of Michigan Rogel Cancer Center

A free online tool could save some prostate cancer patients more than $9,000 in out-of-pocket drug costs. Researchers from the University of Michigan Rogel Cancer Center found that the Medicare Part D Plan Finder, funded by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, can identify significant savings for patients taking abiraterone or enzalutamide for advanced prostate cancer. Read More

Program Evolves Into New Department of Indigenous Cancer Health

Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center

A program launched at Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center three years ago to advance health equity and access by strengthening connections between cancer researchers and Indigenous communities has grown into a broad-based team of Indigenous experts with an expanded scope and purpose. Read More

Comprehensive Head and Neck Tumor Center Established

Siteman Cancer Center

Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis and Barnes-Jewish Hospital have established a comprehensive Head & Neck Tumor Center at Siteman Cancer Center. Among the first of its kind in the country, the center emphasizes individualized, patient-centered care with complementary research programs. Read More

Coalition Unites Three Cancer Center to Reduce Cancer Health Disparities
The Philadelphia Communities Conquering Cancer (PC3) coalition consists of the Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson Health; Abramson Cancer Center of the University of Pennsylvania; and Fox Chase Cancer Center, Temple Health. A conference held this summer brought together key stakeholders to create a city-wide research roadmap for the three cancer centers to tackle cancer disparities in Philadelphia. Read More

**JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

**Brief Behavioral Therapy for Cancer-Related Insomnia (BBT-CI) Interventionists**  
Wilmot Cancer Institute, UR Medicine

**Healthy Eating Education Learning (HEAL) Interventionists**  
Wilmot Cancer Institute, UR Medicine

**Assistant Director, Community Outreach and Engagement**  
University of Colorado Cancer Center

**Education Program Manager**  
Sandra and Edward Meyer Cancer Center at Weill Cornell Medicine

**Assistant, Associate, or Full Professor, Cancer Epidemiology**  
Wilmot Cancer Institute, UR Medicine

**Research Assistant Professor**  
UPMC Hillman Cancer Center

**Associate Director, Basic and Translational Research**  
UMMC Cancer Center and Research Institute

**Physician-in-Chief**  
Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center

**MEMBER MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**1st Annual Catchment Area Data Conference: Beyond Definition**  
REGISTER TODAY  
December 7-9, 2023  
Richmond, VA

**AACI MEETINGS AND EVENTS**

**AACI Leadership Diversity and Development Workshop**  
SAVE THE DATE  
March 11-13, 2024  
Loews Chicago O'Hare Hotel  
Rosemont, IL

**2024 AACI/AACR Hill Day**  
SAVE THE DATE  
May 16, 2024  
Washington, DC

**16th Annual AACI CRI Meeting**
SAVE THE DATE
June 24-26, 2024
Loews Chicago O'Hare Hotel
Rosemont, IL

2024 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting

SAVE THE DATE
October 20-22, 2024
Loews Chicago Hotel
Chicago, IL

17th Annual AACI CRI Meeting

SAVE THE DATE
June 23-25, 2025
Loews Chicago O'Hare Hotel
Rosemont, IL

2025 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting

SAVE THE DATE
October 19-21, 2025
Salamander Washington DC