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News From the Association of American Cancer Institutes | April 2024
Click here to read the full newsletter on our website.

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

AACI HEADLINES

OHSU Knight Cancer Institute Announces Leadership Transition

After serving as director for more than 17 years, Brian Druker, MD (left), will take on a new role as the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute’s chief executive officer. In this newly created position, Dr. Druker will focus on long-term vision and strategic planning, fundraising, and donor engagement, as well as research and clinical growth. Before being recruited to Knight Cancer Institute in 2023, Tom Sellers, PhD, MPH (right), the institute’s new director, served in key leadership roles at the Mayo Clinic Comprehensive Cancer Center and Moffitt Cancer Center. 
Read More

Patient Advocate Anne Marie Mercurio to Keynote CRI Meeting

Patient research advocate Anne Marie Mercurio will present the opening keynote at 12:00 pm central time on Monday, June 24, during the 16th Annual AACI Clinical Research Innovation (CRI) Meeting in Rosemont, IL. Mercurio empowers patients to be partners with their physicians and is passionate about patient-centered care. In addition to co-chairing the Patient Advocate Committee at SWOG Cancer Research Network and chairing the Patient Insights Board at Medidata, she serves on advisory boards at several cancer centers. 
Read More

Elevating the Next Generation of Cancer Center Leaders

AACI extends its gratitude to the cancer center colleagues who attended the 2024 AACI Leadership Diversity and Development Workshop, March 12-13. The workshop drew nearly 100 attendees from 85 cancer centers, who reflected the diverse pool of talented emerging leaders who are accelerating progress against cancer at AACI’s member institutions.
CARDS Webinar: Communicating Catchment Area Data Using R

Catchment Area Research and Data Science (CARDS) will host a webinar, titled "Communicating Catchment Area Data Using R," at 1:00 pm eastern time on Wednesday, April 17. The webinar will be moderated by Todd Burus, MAS, UK Markey Cancer Center and Christopher McNair, PhD, Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson Health. Presenters are Daniel Antonio, MPH, Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University; Sam Pepper, The University of Kansas Cancer Center; and Phil Bowsher, Posit.

AACI Holds Spring GR Forum, Visits Capitol Hill

On Tuesday, March 19, AACI held its annual spring Government Relations (GR) Forum at 101 Constitution in Washington, DC. The meeting gave AACI government relations representatives and sustaining members an opportunity to network and discuss cancer-related public policy topics. AACI leadership, government relations staff, and cancer center members also attended several meetings on Capitol Hill to advocate for cancer research funding.

Biden Cancer Moonshot Introduces New Billing Codes for Patient Navigation

In January 2024, the Biden Cancer Moonshot delivered six codes to report navigation services for payment. The Cancer Moonshot team recently hosted a Q&A during which several resources were shared with further information on the Principal Illness Navigation (PIN) codes. AACI has compiled highlights of these resources for our cancer center members.

CMS Seeks Feedback on Research Data Request and Access Policy Changes

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is announcing two changes to the current research data request and access policies. CMS has issued a request for information (RFI) from stakeholders to assist with planning and implementing this policy change. The RFI is open for comment until May 15, 2024.

Paid Advertisement: Prevent Cancer Foundation

Call for Research Grant and Fellowship Applications

The goal of the Prevent Cancer Foundation's research program is to identify and fund innovative projects with the potential to make substantial contributions to cancer prevention or early detection. The application period opens Tuesday, April 2. The deadline to apply is...
11:59 pm eastern time on Friday, June 14.
Read about the impact of the research program and awarded researchers to discover projects driving key advancements in the field. Learn More and Apply for a $100,000 Award

**NEWS FROM THE CENTERS**

**AWARDS & HONORS**

**Sparano Receives Clinical Cancer Research Award**
*The Tisch Cancer Institute at Mount Sinai*

Joseph Sparano, MD, deputy director of The Tisch Cancer Institute, was selected as recipient of the 2024 AACR-Joseph H. Burchenal Award for Outstanding Achievement in Clinical Cancer Research by the American Association for Cancer Research. Dr. Sparano is being recognized for clinical cancer research focused on improving therapeutic options for the treatment of breast cancer and HIV-associated cancers. Read More

**Tobacco Researcher Honored by American Society of Preventive Oncology**
*Hollings Cancer Center, Medical University of South Carolina*

Matthew Carpenter, PhD, co-leader of the Cancer Control Research Program at MUSC Hollings Cancer Center, was recently honored with the Joseph W. Cullen Memorial Award by the American Society of Preventive Oncology. Read More

**Salahudeen Named NCI EIAP Scholar**
*University of Illinois Cancer Center*

University of Illinois Cancer Center member Ameen Salahudeen, MD, PhD, was recently named to the third cohort of the National Cancer Institute’s (NCI) Early Investigator Advancement Program (EIAP). Dr. Salahudeen is part of a 25-member cohort in the program designed to support the development of early-stage and new investigators in cancer and cancer health disparities research. Read More

**Three UCLA Physicians Elected to the Association of American Physicians**
*UCLA Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center*
Lillian Gelberg, MD; Roger Lo, MD, PhD; and Jeffrey Saver, MD, have been elected to the Association of American Physicians in recognition of their exceptional contributions to the advancement of basic or translational biomedical research. 

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**GRANTS & GIFTS**

**Utah Legislature Allocates $75 Million to Vineyard Cancer Research Center**
Huntsman Cancer Institute at the University of Utah

**Researcher Tapped for Global Project to Address Cancer Inequities**
Winship Cancer Institute at Emory University

**Siteman-Led Team Receives $25 Million to Study Young-Onset Colorectal Cancer**
Siteman Cancer Center

**$11.48 Million Awarded for Center for Molecular Interactions in Cancer**
UAMS Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute

**$1.4 Million Grant Secured to Develop Peptide Therapy for Prostate Cancer**
The University of Kansas Cancer Center

**$1 Million Gift Endows New Prostate Cancer Professorship**
Winship Cancer Institute at Emory University

**Researchers Look at Ways to Target Early Breast Cancer Progression**
The University of Kansas Cancer Center

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**LEADERSHIP TRANSITIONS**

**Senior Director of Programs to Enhance Diversity Named**
Huntsman Cancer Institute at the University of Utah

Gita Suneja, MD, MS, has been named the first senior director of Programs to Enhance Diversity at Huntsman Cancer Institute. Dr. Suneja, a radiation oncologist, is tasked with improving workforce diversity and increasing equitable access to cancer research. 

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**Chief Medical Officer, Four New Chiefs Appointed**
Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center
Roswell Park's latest slate of promotions includes Julia Faller, DO, as chief medical officer. Aleodor "Doru" Andea, MD, MBA, is chief of dermatopathology and director of molecular dermatopathology; Kenan Onel, MD, PhD, is chief of clinical genomics and founding director of the Center for Precision Oncology; Jenny Romero, MD, is chief of head & neck/plastic & reconstructive surgery and general medical oncology; and, Zhongbo "Jerry" Yang, MD, is chief of cytopathology. Read More

**Study Seeks to Determine if Fallopian Tube Sonograms Can Help Detect Ovarian Cancer at Early Stage**
*Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center*

**Combination Urothelial Cancer Treatment Nearly Doubles Patient Survival in International Trial**
*Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins University*

**AI Tools Tackle Soft Tissue Sarcomas, Identify New Treatment Strategies**
*Stanford Cancer Institute*

**Addressing Depression in Cancer Patients From Underserved Communities**
*The University of Arizona Cancer Center*

**Data Published on AI Models Predicting Patient Response to Immunotherapy**
*Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center*

**Psychological Distress Both a Contributor to and Consequence of Cancer Treatment Delay**
*Fox Chase Cancer Center, Temple Health*

**Adding Ribociclib to Hormone Therapy Reduces the Risk of Breast Cancer Recurrence**
*UCLA Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center*

**Pioneering Immunotherapy Brain Tumor Study Published**
*City of Hope Comprehensive Cancer Center*

**Genetic Germline Variations Influence Expression of Cancer Cell Genes**
*Dan L Duncan Comprehensive Cancer Center at Baylor College of Medicine*

**Targeted Drug Shows Promising Ability in Treating Rare Head and Neck Cancers**
*University of Michigan Rogel Cancer Center*

**Updated Genomic Landscape for Pediatric Acute Myeloid Leukemia Enables New Treatment Possibilities**
*Comprehensive Cancer Center St. Jude Children's Research Hospital*

**Circulating Tumor DNA Levels Predict Treatment Outcomes**
*Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins University*

**Large-Scale Study Explores Genetic Link Between Colorectal Cancer and Meat Intake**
Advancing Technology to Improve the Therapeutic Effect of Radionuclide Therapy for Cancer

Stony Brook Cancer Center

Florida Cancer Innovation Fund Awards to Propel Novel Cancer Research

University of Florida Health Cancer Center

Less Chemoradiation is Possible for Some Cancer Patients

University of Michigan Rogel Cancer Center

Study Shows Early Success of a Novel Drug in Treating a Rare and Chronic Blood Cancer

The Tisch Cancer Institute at Mount Sinai

Diabetes and Liver Cancer Study Suggests New Screening Guidelines

Stanford Cancer Institute

New Method to Prevent Prostate Cancer Chemoresistance

The University of Arizona Cancer Center

Research Uncovers Potential Pathway for Breast Cancer Treatment

UK Markey Cancer Center

Cell Therapy Approach Harnesses the Immune System in a Different Way to Stop Cancer

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

Researchers Find Genetic Variant Contributing to Disparities in Childhood Leukemia Risk

USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center

Academic Performance of Chatbots Evaluated

University of Florida Health Cancer Center

Study Finds That Non-Hispanic Black Patients With Locally Advanced Rectal Cancer Have Less Favorable Outcomes

Fox Chase Cancer Center, Temple Health

OTHER NEWS

Cedars-Sinai Launches Singapore Office

Cedars-Sinai Cancer

In its latest global expansion, Cedars-Sinai International announced the opening of its new global office in Singapore. Cedars-Sinai representatives in Singapore will work with patients and their families seeking care at Cedars-Sinai in Los Angeles, offering access to Cedars-Sinai experts in cardiology, oncology, neurology, and other specialty areas. Read More
Siteman-WashU Join NCI Clinical Trials Network for Cancer Screening
Siteman Cancer Center
Siteman Cancer Center and Washington University School of Medicine have joined a new clinical trials network launched by the National Cancer Institute to investigate emerging technologies for cancer screening. They are among seven inaugural network members that will evaluate a blood test to detect multiple cancers. Aimee James, PhD, MPH, co-leads the Siteman-WashU effort. Read More

Fred Hutch to Lead New Federal Cancer Screening Research Network
Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center
Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center is at the helm of a new clinical trials consortium, the Cancer Screening Research Network, or CSRN, created by the National Cancer Institute, part of the National Institutes of Health, to advance President Joe Biden’s Cancer Moonshot by improving early detection of cancers. Read More

Conference to Introduce Middle Schoolers to STEM, Oncology Career Paths
University of New Mexico Comprehensive Cancer Center
The UNM Comprehensive Cancer Center Continuing Umbrella for Research Experience (CURE) program will, for the first time, include middle schoolers. Its first-ever day-long "Empowering Young Minds: Exploring Cancer and STEM Pathways" conference is targeted specifically for seventh- and eighth-graders. Middle schoolers are at a prime age to get interested in science, says Jennifer Gillette, PhD. Read More

Clinical Trials Network Named a Spoke in ARPA-H Hub
LSU LCMC Health Cancer Center
The Gulf South Clinical Trials Network has been named a spoke in the ARPA-H Customer Experience Hub, one of three regional hubs that comprise ARPANET-H—a nationwide health innovation network—and is dedicated to the needs of people. Read More
Assistant, Associate, or Full Professor in the Non-Tenure Line (Research), Department of Surgery
Stanford Cancer Institute

Nurse Scientist (Faculty Position)
Hollings Cancer Center, Medical University of South Carolina

Senior Vice President, Hospital Transformation
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Harvard Medical School

Associate Director of Cancer Clinical Affairs/Division Director of Medical Oncology
UMMC Cancer Center and Research Institute

Chair, Cancer Medicine
Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist Comprehensive Cancer Center

Multiple Faculty Positions - Cancer Population and Community Health Scientists
Louisiana Cancer Research Center

Associate Director for Community Outreach and Engagement
UC San Diego Moores Cancer Center

Deputy Director for Administration
UC San Diego Moores Cancer Center

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS

CARDS Webinar | Communicating Catchment Area Data Using R
REGISTER TODAY
April 17, 2024
Webinar

2024 AACI/AACR Hill Day
REGISTER TODAY
May 16, 2024
Washington, DC

16th Annual AACI CRI Meeting
REGISTER TODAY
June 24-26, 2024
Loews Chicago O’Hare Hotel
Rosemont, IL

The Cancer Prevention Research Conference
Presented by the American Cancer Society, the National Cancer Institute, and Cancer Research UK
REGISTER TODAY
June 25-27, 2024
Boston Marriott Copley Place
Boston, MA

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