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News From the Association of American Cancer Institutes | May 2025

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[Awards & Honors](#) | [Grants & Gifts](#) | [Leadership Transitions](#) | [Research Highlights](#) | [Other News](#)
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AACI HEADLINES

[Spring Filled With Advocacy Activities and Events for AACI](#)



As April transitioned to May, AACI participated in several government relations and advocacy activities to address the ongoing crisis in cancer research funding and other public policy issues impacting AACI cancer centers. These included a spring AACI Government Relations Forum in New York City, powerful testimony before the U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations on the importance of cancer research funding, and visits to congressional offices on Capitol Hill. [Read More](#)

[Register Today for the 2025 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting](#)



Registration is now open for the **2025 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting**, which will take place **October 19-21** at the Salamander Washington, DC. Preceding the meeting, on **October 18**, AACI will host the Impact Summit, in partnership with the American Cancer Society and the Cancer Center Network. [Register Today](#)

[Abstract Winners Announced for 17th Annual AACI CRI Meeting](#)

The AACI Clinical Research Innovation (CRI) Steering Committee, with the assistance of peer reviewers from CRI committees and volunteers, has selected three abstracts from 157 submissions for formal presentation at the **17th Annual AACI CRI Meeting, June 23-25**, at the Loews Chicago O'Hare Hotel in Rosemont, IL. [Read More](#)

DRIVING SOLUTIONS
TOGETHER



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17th Annual AACI CRI Meeting
June 23-25, 2025

Cancer Research Ally Award Recipients Announced



Representative **Jamie Raskin (D-MD)** and Senator **Susan Collins (R-ME)** will be honored with the Cancer Research Ally Award before the **2025 AACI/AACR Hill Day**, which will be held **Thursday, May 22** in Washington, DC. The awards will be presented during an evening reception on **Wednesday, May 21**. [Read More](#)

Cancer Center Leaders Sign on to AACI Letter on NIH Policy Change

On April 24, AACI submitted a **letter** to National Institutes of Health (NIH) Director **Jay Bhattacharya, MD, PhD**, which expressed concerns about the policy change proposed by NIH to move all grant reviews to the Center for Scientific Review beginning in January 2026. The letter was signed by AACI Executive Director Jennifer W. Pegher and by leaders from more than 40 NCI-Designated Cancer Centers. [Read the Letter](#)

Flatiron Joins AACI Tech Gold



AACI welcomes **Flatiron** to its **Tech Gold** members. Flatiron Health is a healthtech company expanding the possibilities for point of care solutions in oncology and using data for good to power smarter care for every person with cancer. Through machine learning and AI, real-world evidence, and breakthroughs in clinical trials, we continue to transform patients' real-life experiences into knowledge and create a more modern, connected oncology ecosystem. [Read More](#)

May is National Cancer Research Month



Initiated by the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR), National Cancer Research Month highlights the importance of lifesaving research to the millions of people around the world affected by the collection of devastating diseases we call cancer. [Read More](#)

[Chernoff Elected to Association of American Physicians](#)

[Fox Chase Cancer Center, Temple Health](#)



Fox Chase Cancer Center Director **Jonathan Chernoff, MD, PhD**, was recently elected to the Association of American Physicians (AAP). Founded in 1885 by Sir William Osler, who is considered the father of modern medicine, the AAP is an honorary medical society that fosters physician-led research across fields related to medicine and health. [Read More](#)

[Brown Inducted Into AIMBE College of Fellows](#)

[The Tisch Cancer Institute at Mount Sinai](#)



Brian Brown, PhD, director of the Icahn Genomics Institute at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, has been elected to the College of Fellows of the American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering (AIMBE). [Read More](#)

[Ruggero Receives Rare Renewal of ACS Professorship](#)

[UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)



Davide Ruggero, PhD, has received a rare renewal of his American Cancer Society (ACS) Professorship – one of the most selective honors in cancer research. Reserved for visionary scientists whose work has reshaped their fields, the ACS Professorship is awarded to only a handful of researchers nationwide. [Read More](#)

[Locke Honored as Researcher of the Year](#)

[Moffitt Cancer Center](#)

Each year, Moffitt Cancer Center recognizes outstanding faculty members with the W. Jackson Pledger Researcher of the Year Award. This year, the honor goes to **Frederick Locke, MD**, an expert in CAR T-cell therapy. Dr. Locke is a member of AACI's **Cellular Therapy Initiative** steering committee. [Read More](#)



[Four Cancer Center Members Named AAAS Fellows](#)

[University of Michigan Rogel Cancer Center](#)

Four Rogel Cancer Center members earned election to the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 2024. They are: **Kathleen Collins, MD, PhD**; **Andrzej Dlugosz, MD**; **David Markovitz, MD**; and **Arvind Rao, PhD**. [*Read More*](#)

[Mackall Receives AACR Award](#)

[Stanford Cancer Institute](#)



Crystal Mackall, MD, was announced as the recipient of the 2025 American Association for Cancer Research (AACR)-Cancer Research Institute Lloyd J. Old Award in Cancer Immunology. She is being honored for her contributions to cancer immunotherapy, including enhancing CAR T-cell therapies, defining resistance mechanisms, advancing consensus treatment algorithms, and leading clinical trials. [*Read More*](#)

GRANTS & GIFTS

[\\$2 Million Grant to Study How Cancer Cells Evade Immune System](#)

[University of New Mexico Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)



Eric Barteel, PhD, is studying how to use viruses to fight cancer. He has a \$2 million grant to study how cells detect and rid themselves of viruses and hopes to make oncolytic therapy more effective by studying how cancer cells evade the immune system. [*Read More*](#)

LEADERSHIP TRANSITIONS

[Rathmell Named CEO of The James](#)

[The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center - James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute](#)

W. Kimryn Rathmell, MD, PhD, has accepted the role of CEO of OSUCCC – The James. Pending approval by the university board of trustees, she will start on May 27. Dr. Rathmell served as the 17th director of the National Cancer Institute from December 2023 to January



2025. [Read More](#)

[Leach to Step Down as Director](#)

[Dartmouth Cancer Center](#)



Steven Leach, MD, director of the Dartmouth Cancer Center (DCC) has announced his intention to step down as director in early 2026. He has led the DCC through two successful National Cancer Institute Comprehensive Cancer Center renewals, increased total grant funding by more than 50 percent, and overseen a sevenfold increase in clinical trial accruals. Dr. Leach has been a member of AACI's Board of Directors since 2022. [Read More](#)

[OHSU Director Announces Departure](#)

[OHSU Knight Cancer Institute](#)



Thomas A. Sellers, PhD, MPH, has stepped down as director of the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute after a year in the position. **Lisa Coussens, PhD, FAACR, FAIO**, has been named interim director. Dr. Sellers has served on the AACI Board of Directors and AACI's Annual Meeting Program Committee. [Read More](#)

[Pounardjian Appointed to Administrative Leadership Roles](#)

[Rutgers Cancer Institute](#)



RWJBarnabas Health and Rutgers Cancer Institute have appointed **H. John Pounardjian, MBA**, as chief financial and administrative officer and deputy director for administration and planning. Pounardjian will take over for Linda Tanzer who will be retiring after 30 years in the position. [Read More](#)

[Parekh Named Director of the Center of Excellence for Multiple Myeloma](#)

[The Tisch Cancer Institute at Mount Sinai](#)



Samir Parekh, MD, a hematologist and researcher, has been named director of the Center of Excellence for Multiple Myeloma at The Tisch Cancer Institute at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. Dr. Parekh comes from a family of hematologists in Mumbai, India, and developed his passion for hematologic research and patient care at an early age. [Read More](#)

[Kummar Appointed Interim Chief Executive](#)

[OHSU Knight Cancer Institute](#)



Shivaani Kummar, MD, FACP, has been appointed as interim Knight Cancer Chief Executive of the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute. She fills the role previously held by Brian Druker, MD. Dr. Kummar will also serve in a newly established position as chief of the Cancer Business Unit. [Read More](#)

[Thompson Appointed Associate Director of Strategy](#)

[The University of Arizona Cancer Center](#)



Patricia Thompson, PhD, has been appointed to serve the University of Arizona Cancer Center as associate director of strategy. She will join the center's Scientific Leadership Council and will work closely with cancer center Director Dan Theodorescu, MD, PhD, and fellow associate directors to guide the implementation of a strategic roadmap for the cancer center. [Read More](#)

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

[New Target for Prostate Cancer Treatment](#)

[Duke Cancer Institute](#)

[Challenges and Opportunities in Training Cancer Researchers](#)

[Cancer Biology Cancer Consortium](#)

[Patient Navigators Improve Colonoscopy Rates After Abnormal Stool Tests, Study Shows](#)

[The University of Arizona Cancer Center](#)

[Scientists Publish Review of Groundbreaking Research Into Key Mechanism of Cancer](#)

[Fox Chase Cancer Center, Temple Health](#)

[Researchers Identify Gene That Could Lead to More Effective](#)

[Treatment for Patients With Ovarian Cancer](#)

[University of Maryland Marlene and Stewart Greenebaum Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)

[A Comprehensive Map of the Human Cell](#)

[UC San Diego Moores Cancer Center](#)

[Older Adults Respond Well to Immunotherapy Despite Age-Related Immune System Differences](#)

[Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins University](#)

[Tumor Byproduct Blocks Immune Cells From Fighting Cancer](#)

[The University of Chicago Medicine Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)

[Study Reveals Key Mechanism Behind Prostate Cancer Drug Resistance](#)

[UK Markey Cancer Center](#)

[Research Reveals a Hidden Vulnerability of Lung Cancer](#)

[Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)

[Positive Lung Cancer Screening Exams More Frequent in National Clinical Practice Than Research Trials](#)

[Duke Cancer Institute](#)

[Study Points to Strategy to Overcome Lung Cancer Drug Resistance](#)

[University of Florida Health Cancer Center](#)

[Markey Team Discovers Gut Hormone Role in Fatty Liver Disease](#)

[UK Markey Cancer Center](#)

[Reflecting on the FDA Approval of Palbociclib to Treat Most Common Type of Breast Cancer](#)

[UCLA Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)

[Editorial Supports Continued Immunotherapy After Surgery to Improve Outcomes for Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer Patients](#)

[Karmanos Cancer Institute, Wayne State University](#)

[New Research Points to a Promising Strategy for Treating Metastatic Medulloblastoma](#)

[Dan L Duncan Comprehensive Cancer Center at Baylor College of Medicine](#)

[RNA 'Typos' Can Highlight Leukemia Cells for Immune Attack](#)

[Fred Hutch Cancer Center](#)

[Scientists Create a Type of Catalog of Non-Cancerous Cells' Influence on Cancer](#)

[Stanford Cancer Institute](#)

[Space-Age Lessons Could Protect Childhood Cancer Survivor Bone Health](#)

[Comprehensive Cancer Center St. Jude Children's Research Hospital](#)

[How to Prime Tumors to Be Defeated by Cancer Immunotherapy](#)

[Quitting Menthol Cigarettes is Hard, But a New Study Will Test the Best Way to Do It](#)

[University of Michigan Rogel Cancer Center](#)

[Genetic Mutations Link Could Lead to New Therapies for AML](#)

[The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center - James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute](#)

[Mutated Blood Cells Define Clinical Risks in LCH, Paving Way for Better Diagnosis and Treatment](#)

[Dan L Duncan Comprehensive Cancer Center at Baylor College of Medicine](#)

OTHER NEWS

[Breaking Ground on a New Facility](#)

[Huntsman Cancer Institute at the University of Utah](#)



Huntsman Cancer Institute at the University of Utah broke ground on its second comprehensive cancer center on April 8. Situated in Vineyard, the new site will reduce travel time by more than an hour each way for thousands of patients. **Mary Beckerle, PhD**, (pictured) is chief executive officer of Huntsman. [Read More](#)

[Capital Projects to Expand Health Care Access Across West Virginia](#)

[WVU Cancer Institute](#)



The West Virginia University (WVU) Health System has unveiled a new round of projects totaling more than \$460 million that will further expand access to health care in West Virginia and create hundreds of jobs. The projects include a four-story, 127,000-square-foot outpatient cancer center affiliated with the WVU Cancer Institute in Wheeling. [Read More](#)

[YesRx, Karmanos and McLaren Partner to Help Michigan Cancer Patients](#)

[Karmanos Cancer Institute, Wayne State University](#)

Michigan residents impacted by cancer have a new resource to help address the financial burden and the waste of unused cancer medication. YesRx coordinates and supports Cancer Drug Repository Programs that help individuals with cancer get the medication they need for free and donate unused medication to others in need across Michigan. [Read More](#)

[Supporting Families Through Pediatric Cancer](#)

[The University of Kansas Cancer Center](#)



For pediatric psychologist **Carolyn Bates, PhD**, understanding how family life is upended during a child's cancer treatment has become her life's work, revealing the impact of disrupted routines on the well-being of both children and their families. [Read More](#)

[Cardio-Oncology Symposium Cultivates Innovative Research](#)

[University of Florida Health Cancer Center](#)

By bringing together clinicians, patient advocates, and researchers across disciplines, the UF Cardio-Oncology Symposium provided an engaging forum to spark new research collaborations. The event showcased how innovations in precision medicine, early detection, and multidisciplinary collaboration are ensuring that the cancer patient of today does not become the cardiac patient of tomorrow. [Read More](#)

[Frontiers Symposium Showcases Innovations in Cancer Care and AI](#)

[Huntsman Cancer Institute at the University of Utah](#)

Huntsman Cancer Institute's Frontiers Symposium on Transformation in Cancer Care Delivery brought together top researchers, clinicians, and industry innovators to explore transformative models in cancer care. [Read More](#)

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

[Chief Quality Officer](#)

[Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)

[Chief Administrative Officer/Associate Director Research Administration](#)

[Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University](#)

[Research Community Health Educator I](#)

[Moffitt Cancer Center](#)

[Assistant Director, BCC Programs](#)

[Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center](#)

[CCRO Medical Director](#)

[Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Jefferson](#)

[Chair, Department of Internal Medicine](#)

[Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)

[Chief Executive Officer](#)

[American Cancer Society](#)

[Director, Radiation Oncology](#)

[University of New Mexico Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)

[Associate Director, Administration](#)

[The University of Arizona Cancer Center](#)

[Manager, Programmatic Development](#)

[UCI Chao Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)

[Manager, Strategic Operations and Initiatives](#)

[UCI Chao Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)

[Program Head, Lung Cancer](#)

[Fred Hutch Cancer Center](#)

[Director, Developmental Therapeutics](#)

[Wilmot Cancer Institute, UR Medicine](#)

2025 AACI MEETINGS

[2025 AACI/AACR Hill Day](#)

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[May 22, 2025](#)

[Washington, DC](#)

[17th Annual AACI CRI Meeting](#)

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[Loews Chicago O'Hare Hotel](#)

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[Salamander Washington DC](#)

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