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News from the Association of American Cancer Institutes

February 2018

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MISSION

The Association is dedicated to reducing the burden of cancer by enhancing the impact of the nation's leading academic cancer centers.

ABOUT UPDATE

AACI *Update* is an e-newsletter for the cancer center directors and key contacts at AACI member institutions as well as individuals interested in the cancer center-related activities of AACI. AACI *Update* reports on the progress of AACI initiatives along with other AACI endeavors that benefit the cancer community and highlights important news and events at AACI member institutions.

SUBMISSIONS

AACI encourages member institutions to submit cancer center highlights to AACI *Update*. News briefs are linked to

Headlines

LIVESTRONG Cancer Institutes is Newest AACI Member

AACI welcomes its first new member of 2018, The **LIVESTRONG** Cancer Institutes at the Dell Medical School at The University of Texas at Austin. S. Gail Eckhardt, MD, is director. The **LIVESTRONG** Cancer Institutes was created in 2014 with a \$50 million pledge from the **LIVESTRONG** Foundation.



S. Gail Eckhardt, MD

The work of the Institutes builds on the knowledge gained from **LIVESTRONG**'s almost 20 years of unique work with cancer patients and survivors. **LIVESTRONG**'s survivor summits, survey data, community outreach, support programs, and direct navigation services are informing the innovative design of the Dell Medical School cancer clinics to meet the needs, preferences, and values of patients and their families, and to create a new model of cancer care for the country. [more...](#)

Register Today for Annual Hill Day, April 24

Registration is now open for AACI's annual Hill Day, set for Tuesday, April 24, in Washington, DC. AACI will partner with the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) to bring advocates to Capitol Hill to request stable, predictable investments for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Cancer Institute (NCI).

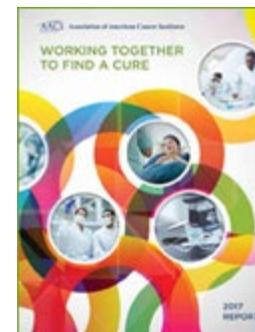


The annual Hill Day brings cancer center directors, administrators, researchers, physician-scientists, cancer survivors and other patient advocates to Capitol Hill to build support for biomedical research in general, and cancer research in particular.

Registration and accommodation information can be found [here](#). Please contact [Jennifer Pegher](#) with questions. [more...](#)

2017 AACI Report Now Available Online

AACI's **2017 Report**--an overview of programs and initiatives from the past year--is now posted on AACI's website. The publication includes three profiles of cancer patients who spoke at AACI meetings, describing their inspiring stories of perseverance and the superior care they received at AACI member centers.



The report includes details about established AACI programs like the Clinical Research Initiative and the Physician Clinical Leadership Initiative, and ongoing AACI member services like the Government Relations Forum and the AACI Corporate Roundtable. [more...](#)

PCLI Webinar - Challenges and Opportunities of Outreach Clinics

AACI's Physician Clinical Leadership Initiative (PCLI) will host its next webinar, "[Challenges and Opportunities of Outreach Clinics](#)", on Wednesday, February 7, at 11:00am EST. The webinar will be hosted by AACI and facilitated by PCLI steering committee member Dan Mulkerin, MD, medical director of oncology services at the University of Wisconsin Carbone Cancer Center, and guest presenter, Sam J.

complete stories posted on individual cancer center websites. Please e-mail materials to aaciupdate@aaci-cancer.org. AACI reserves the right to decide whether or not materials are appropriate for inclusion.

To subscribe to AACI *Update*, please send an e-mail to aaciupdate@aaci-cancer.org with your name, title, and telephone number asking to be added to the AACI's distribution list. To unsubscribe, please send an email with "unsubscribe" in the subject line.

FIND US ON:



Lubner, MD, FACP, fellowship director at the University of Wisconsin Carbone Cancer Center. [more...](#)



Sam J. Lubner, MD, FACP

Call for Abstracts for the 10th Annual AACI CRI Meeting



The AACI Clinical Research Initiative (CRI) Steering Committee is soliciting abstracts for the 10th Annual AACI CRI Meeting, July 11-12, in Chicago. This year's meeting theme will focus on adapting to changes in clinical research. The purpose of the abstracts is to inform the CRI meeting audience about clinical trials office challenges and solutions implemented at the cancer centers.

The 2018 CRI abstract FAQs, template and scoring guidelines can be found at www.aaci-cancer.org/cri_meeting/callforabstracts.asp. [more...](#)

AACI CRI Hosts Strategic Planning Meeting

The Clinical Research Initiative is one of the most successful programs AACI offers to its members and the engagement of the cancer centers is evidenced by the growth of CRI's annual meeting from 75 attendees in 2009 to 335 in 2017.

As CRI approaches its 10th year, the time is ripe to reassess its goals to ensure that the initiative continues to meet the needs of the cancer centers and is contributing to the success of cancer center clinical research operations. To do this, AACI is developing a new five-year strategic plan for CRI. [more...](#)

News from the Centers

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

Awards & Honors



Huntsman Director Honored by National Cancer Institute

Huntsman Cancer Institute

Mary Beckerle, PhD, CEO and director of Huntsman Cancer Institute at the University of Utah, is this year's recipient of the Alfred G. Knudson Award in Cancer Genetics from the National Cancer Institute (NCI). The award is named after Alfred G. Knudson, MD, PhD, a physician and researcher whose work added major insights to the understanding of the genetic basis of cancer. The award is presented by NCI each year to a scientist who has made significant research contributions to the field of cancer genetics. [more...](#)



Willman Named an NAI Fellow

University of New Mexico Comprehensive Cancer Center

Cheryl L. Willman, MD, Director & CEO of the University of New Mexico Comprehensive Cancer Center, has been named a Fellow of the National Academy of Inventors (NAI). Election to NAI Fellow status is the highest professional accolade bestowed solely to academic inventors who have demonstrated a prolific spirit of innovation in creating or facilitating outstanding inventions that have made a tangible impact on quality of

life, economic development, and welfare of society. Dr. Willman will be inducted on April, 5, 2018. [more...](#)



Four Siteman Members Named 2017 AAAS fellows

Siteman Cancer Center

Four Washington University School of Medicine faculty members at Siteman Cancer Center have been selected as fellows by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), the world's largest general scientific society. The four are: Timothy J. Eberlein, MD, Siteman's director (pictured); Graham A. Colditz, MD, DrPH; John A. Cooper, MD, PhD; and Michael L. Gross, PhD. [more...](#)



DiPersio to Lead American Society for Blood and Marrow Transplantation

Siteman Cancer Center

John DiPersio, MD, PhD, deputy director of Siteman Cancer Center at Barnes-Jewish Hospital and Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, has been elected to the top leadership post in the American Society for Blood and Marrow Transplantation (ASBMT). He will take over the role during the society's meetings in Salt Lake City in February. [more...](#)



National Academy of Sciences Awards Kovalenko Medal to Allison

University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

Cancer immunotherapy innovator Jim Allison, PhD, chair of Immunology at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, will receive the 2018 Jessie Stevenson Kovalenko Medal for outstanding research in medical sciences, the National Academy of Sciences has announced. Dr. Allison's basic research on the mechanisms of immune response led Allison to invent immune checkpoint blockade as a cancer therapy. This approach treats the immune system and frees it to attack the tumor by blocking a brake on immune response, rather than by targeting the cancer directly. [more...](#)

Lay Navigation Program Honored with Innovator Award

UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center

The University of Alabama at Birmingham Comprehensive Cancer Center has received a national Innovator Award from the Association of Community Cancer Centers (ACCC) for its Patient Care Connect Program (PCCP). The award is given only to ACCC members who are recognized as forward-thinking in creating replicable solutions to improve access, quality and value of patient care. PCCP was selected for demonstrating creativity, innovation and teamwork in delivering cancer care. [more...](#)

Grants & Gifts

Winship to Benefit from Large Woodruff Foundation Gift

Winship Cancer Institute

The Robert W. Woodruff Foundation has pledged \$400 million to find new cures for disease, develop innovative patient care models and improve lives while enhancing the health of individuals in need. The gift is the largest ever received by Emory University. Through a new Winship Cancer Institute Tower in Midtown and a new Health Sciences Research Building on Emory's Druid Hills campus, the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation's generosity will help advance new solutions for some of medicine's most challenging diagnoses. [more...](#)

KU Cancer Center Consortium Partner Children's Mercy Receives \$150 Million

The University of Kansas Cancer Center

Two of Kansas City's iconic families have joined together to donate \$150 million to Children's Mercy Kansas City. The Hall Family Foundation and the Sunderland Foundation each donated \$75 million to kickstart the



construction of the future home of the Children's Research Institute and accelerate the recruitment of top researchers from around the globe. [more...](#)

Nearly \$25 Million NIH Grant to Accelerate Clinical and Translational Research

The University of Kansas Cancer Center

The University of Kansas has announced a five-year nearly \$25 million grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) that will fund Frontiers: University of Kansas Clinical and Translational Science Institute (KU CTSI). This grant currently is the largest at the university, and the second-largest all time. The institute is part of a network of 57 such hubs nationwide that are funded with a grant from the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences of the NIH that work to improve the translational research process. [more...](#)



Kirsch Leads First Trial of Immune Checkpoint Inhibitors For Non-Metastatic Sarcoma

Duke Cancer Institute

A multi-institutional team of researchers led by Duke Cancer Institute radiation oncologist David Kirsch, MD, PhD, has been awarded an eight-year, \$2.5 million grant from Stand Up to Cancer. The funds support a clinical trial to investigate the efficacy of treatment of patients with high-risk soft-tissue sarcoma with radiotherapy and immunotherapy. [more...](#)

Huntsman Selected as NCI Center for Patient-Derived Model Development

Huntsman Cancer Institute

Huntsman Cancer Institute (HCI) at the University of Utah has been awarded a \$2.4 million, two-year grant from the National Cancer Institute (NCI) to help continue its research in breast cancer. Alana Welm, PhD, and Bryan Welm, PhD, investigators at HCI, along with Michael Lewis, PhD, a colleague at Baylor College of Medicine, will use this new funding to serve as a Breast Cancer Patient-derived xenograft Development and Trials Center to research and test new drugs for breast cancer. This new Center is only one of four such Centers in the nation. [more...](#)

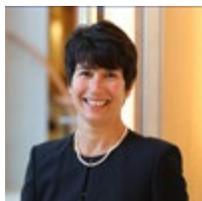
Leadership Transitions



Stem Cell Transplantation Physician-Scientist Recruited from Australia

Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center

Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center is appointing blood stem cell transplantation physician-scientist Dr. Geoffrey Hill to be director of Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplantation, effective July 1. Dr. Hill, an Australian hematologist who leads the bone marrow transplantation and cancer programs at the QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute in Brisbane, is one of the foremost authorities on graft-vs.-host disease, or GVHD, a potentially fatal complication of stem cell transplantation. He also treats stem cell and bone marrow transplant patients at Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital in Australia. [more...](#)



Kharasch Named Director of Research Administration and Operations

Duke Cancer Institute

Karen Kharasch was recently named director of Research Administration and Operations for the Duke Cancer Institute (DCI). From 2001 through October 2017, Ms. Kharasch served as executive director for the Siteman Comprehensive Cancer Center at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. In her role as executive director, Ms. Kharasch was responsible

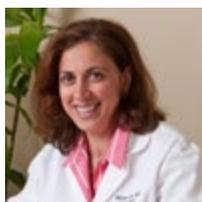
for fiscal and managerial administration of research facilities, information systems, philanthropy funding, human resources and day-to-day operations. [more...](#)



Fox Chase Adds Director of Translational Medicine Operations

Fox Chase Cancer Center, Temple Health

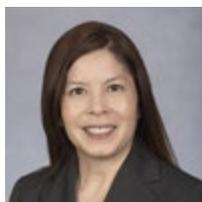
Fox Chase Cancer Center has hired Attila Seyhan, PhD, for the newly created position of Director of Translational Medicine Operations. Dr. Seyhan will work closely with Wafik S. El-Deiry, MD, PhD, FACP, Deputy Cancer Center Director for Translational Research, to manage and promote multiple initiatives, including development of investigator-initiated clinical trials and other translational protocols, protocol writing and manuscript preparation, organization of translational medicine events, support for translational requests for application (RFAs), and grant preparation and submissions. [more...](#)



Tabar Named Chair of the Department of Neurosurgery

Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

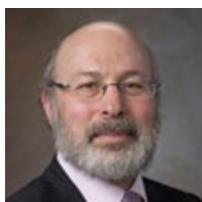
Viviane Tabar, MD, has been named the new Chair of the Department of Neurosurgery at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (MSK). Dr. Tabar has been a vital faculty member at MSK for more than 15 years and is currently the Theresa C. Feng Chair for Neurosurgical Oncology and the Vice Chair for Neurosurgical Research and Education. She is also the founding Director of the Multidisciplinary Pituitary and Skull Base Tumor Center at MSK. [more...](#)



Lin Joins Massey as Chief Administrative Officer

VCU Massey Cancer Center

In October, VCU Massey Cancer Center welcomed Michelle Lin, MBA, as the new chief administrative officer and associate director for administration. She will oversee all of Massey Cancer Center's administrative and business operations related to research and education. Ms. Lin joined Massey from University of Miami Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center in Florida, where she has spent two decades in varying roles within cancer center research administration. [more...](#)



Clinical Trials Expert Enhances Research Focus

Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey

Further enhancing a commitment to cutting-edge clinical research efforts, Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey and RWJBarnabas Health welcome Howard S. Hochster, MD, an internationally recognized leader in the development of cancer clinical trials, gastrointestinal oncology and early phase cancer drugs. Dr. Hochster assumes the role of associate director for clinical research and chief of gastrointestinal medical oncology at Rutgers Cancer Institute, as well as director of cancer clinical research for oncology services at RWJBarnabas Health. [more...](#)



New Vice Chair of Systems Biology Announced

City of Hope Comprehensive Cancer Center

Jianjun Chen, PhD, has joined the Beckman Research Institute of City of Hope as a professor and vice chair of the Department of Systems Biology. Before joining City of Hope Dr. Chen served as an associate professor of cancer biology at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine. He was the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society Researcher of the Year in 2017. [more...](#)

Research Highlights

More Evidence of Link Between Severe Gum Disease and Cancer Risk

Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center

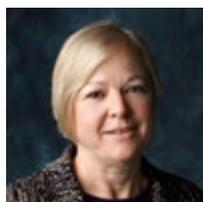
Data collected during a long-term health study provides additional evidence for a link between increased risk of cancer in individuals with advanced gum disease, according to a new collaborative study led by researchers at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Johns Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Center and Tufts University School of Medicine and Cancer Center. [more...](#)



Recommended Radiation Omitted from Breast Conservation Therapy for Some Women

Fox Chase Cancer Center, Temple Health

Nearly ten percent of eligible women in a recent study did not receive radiation therapy after breast conservation surgery, although it is proven to reduce the risk of recurrence. The researchers, from Fox Chase Cancer Center and the Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University, also sought factors that led to omission of radiation in these women. Richard Bleicher, MD, is senior author of the study. [more...](#)



Research Sees Link Between Smoking, Sex Hormones and Lung Cancer

Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center

There is increasing evidence that women are more susceptible to lung cancer than men, particularly if they smoke. A Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center research team led by Christine Ambrosone, PhD, recently added support to the estrogen hypothesis of lung cancer development by identifying a link among smoking, sex, and hormones in patients with non-small cell lung cancer. [more...](#)

Study Uses Genetic Testing to Personalize Treatment for Deadly Blood Cancer

University of Maryland Marlene and Stewart Greenebaum Comprehensive Cancer Center

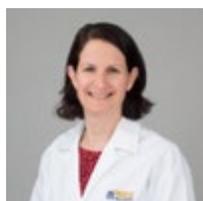
A clinical trial using genetic testing to match acute myeloid leukemia patients with new therapies is now open at the University of Maryland Marlene and Stewart Greenebaum Comprehensive Cancer Center. The center is one of seven cancer centers nationwide participating in the Beat AMLA® Master Trial, sponsored by the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. [more...](#)



Specific Microbes in Digestive Tract Can Boost Success for Cancer Immunotherapy

The University of Chicago Medicine Comprehensive Cancer Center

Researchers from the University of Chicago Medicine show that specific strains of commensal bacteria - the swarms of microorganisms naturally dwelling in the intestines - can improve the response rate to immunotherapy for patients being treated for advanced melanoma. Although these immune system boosting drugs have revolutionized treatment of certain cancers, only about 35 percent of melanoma patients who receive them get a significant benefit. Thomas Gajewski, MD, PhD, is the study director. [more...](#)



Study Suggests Hope for a Longer Life for Patients With Rare Autoimmune Disorder

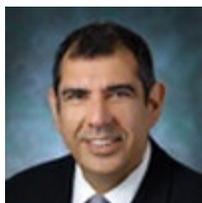
University of Virginia Cancer Center

An unusual autoimmune disease that causes skin and lung damage can be treated effectively by stem cell transplant, a new study has found. The approach could represent the first new treatment to improve survival in patients with severe scleroderma in more than four decades. Karen Ballen, MD, a co-investigator on the study, is director of stem cell transplantation at the University of Virginia Cancer Center. [more...](#)

Single Blood Test Screens for Eight Cancer Types

Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center

Johns Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Center researchers have developed a single blood test that screens for eight common cancer types and helps



identify the location of the cancer. CancerSEEK is a unique noninvasive, multianalyte test that simultaneously evaluates levels of eight cancer proteins and the presence of cancer gene mutations from circulating DNA in the blood. The test is aimed at screening for eight common cancer types that account for more than 60 percent of cancer deaths in the U.S. Five of the cancers covered by the test currently have no screening test. Nickolas Papadopoulos, PhD, is senior author of the study reporting the findings. [more...](#)



Presurgical Targeted Therapy Delays Relapse of High-Risk Stage 3 Melanoma

University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

A pair of targeted therapies given before and after surgery for melanoma produced at least a six-fold increase in time to progression compared to standard-of-care surgery for patients with stage 3 disease, researchers at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center report. Patients who had no sign of disease at surgery after combination treatment did not progress to metastasis. Rodabe Amaria, MD, is the lead author of the study. [more...](#)



New Approach Attacks 'Undruggable' Cancers from the Outside In

UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center

Cancer researchers have made great strides in developing targeted therapies that treat the specific genetic mutations underlying a patient's cancer. However, many of the most common cancer-causing genes are so central to cellular function throughout the body that they are essentially 'undruggable'. Now, researchers at UC San Francisco have found a way to attack one of the most common drivers of lung, colorectal, and pancreatic cancer by targeting the proteins it produces on the outside of the cell. James Wells, PhD, is senior author on the study. [more...](#)

Study Finds Emojis Promising Tool For Tracking Cancer Patients' Quality Of Life

Mayo Clinic Cancer Center

In findings presented to the American Society of Hematology, Mayo Clinic researchers found that using emojis instead of traditional emotional scales were helpful in assessing patients' physical, emotional and overall quality of life. Researchers found that using iPhones and Apple Watches were favored by patients, and the technology helped collect study data accurately and efficiently. [more...](#)



Cells Found that May be Responsible for Prostate Cancer Recurrence

Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center

Although men with prostate cancer usually respond to standard treatment with hormone therapy or chemotherapy, many will eventually experience progression or recurrence despite treatment - particularly those with high-risk or aggressive forms of the disease. In preclinical laboratory research, a team led by Dean Tang, PhD, has discovered a unique population of normal stem cells that are intrinsically resistant to conventional treatments and may enable prostate cancer relapse. The team's development of a novel preclinical model allows not only the labeling but also the purification of this rare but persistent population of prostate stem cells, which are dormant and, strikingly, resemble high-risk prostate cancer at the molecular level. [more...](#)

Study Provides New Guidelines for Assessing Severity of Head and Neck Cancers

Samuel Oschin Comprehensive Cancer Institute

Cedars-Sinai investigators have developed a new, more accurate set of guidelines for assessing the severity of head and neck cancers and predicting patient survival. The new

guidelines center around counting the number of malignant lymph nodes found in each patient. [more...](#)



Guidance Provided on Genetic Counseling, Testing for Hereditary Prostate Cancer

Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center at Thomas Jefferson University

To date, there have been few recommendations to guide physicians about when to offer men genetic consultation for prostate cancer risk. Now, an international and inter-specialty panel of experts convened at the Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center at Thomas Jefferson University have developed a comprehensive set of recommendations. Veda N. Giri, MD, is lead author of the study. [more...](#)

A Common Virus May Inform Treatment Planning for Stem Cell Transplant Patients

VCU Massey Cancer Center

Most healthy people barely notice infection with the human cytomegalovirus, a form of the herpes virus that has evolved with humans over thousands of years and usually lays dormant in the body after initial infection. Now, in a new study, a team of scientists from VCU Massey Cancer Center have shown a genetic relationship between the reactivation of hCMV and the onset of graft-versus-host disease, a potentially deadly condition in which the immune system attacks healthy tissue following a bone marrow or stem cell transplant. [more...](#)

Novel RNA Nanotech Invented to Decorate Exosomes for Effective Cancer Therapy

The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center

James Cancer Hospital & Solove Research Institute

A new study shows that attaching antibody-like RNA nanoparticles to microvesicles can deliver effective RNA therapeutics such as small interfering RNA (siRNA) specifically to cancer cells. Researchers used RNA nanotechnology to apply the RNA nanoparticles and control their orientation to produce microscopic, therapy-loaded extracellular vesicles that successfully targeted three types of cancer in animal models. [more...](#)

VUMC Researchers Find a Way to 'Starve' Cancer

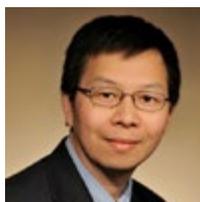
Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center

Researchers at Vanderbilt University Medical Center have demonstrated for the first time that it is possible to starve a tumor and stop its growth with a newly discovered small compound that blocks uptake of the vital nutrient glutamine. Their findings lay the groundwork for development of potential "paradigm-shifting" therapies targeting cancer cell metabolism that could be monitored non-invasively by positron-emission tomography imaging. [more...](#)

For Women With Genetic Risk, Bi-annual MRI Beats Mammograms

The University of Chicago Medicine Comprehensive Cancer Center

Intensive surveillance including a dynamic contrast-enhanced magnetic resonance imaging exam every six months was far more effective in detecting breast cancer in younger women with a high-risk genetic profile than an annual mammogram, according to a research team based at the University of Chicago Medicine and the University of Washington, Seattle. The results suggest that for this population, intensive efforts to "downstage" aggressive breast cancer by finding small early lesions in women with high-risk mutations are crucial to improving outcomes. [more...](#)



Study Finds Biomarker Targets to Make Drugs More Effective in Fighting Cancer

UK Markey Cancer Center

A new study led by University of Kentucky Markey Cancer Center researcher Qing-Bai She, PhD, identifies biomarker targets that may make existing drugs more effective in fighting certain cancers. The mTOR protein is a central regulator of cell growth and division. Abnormal activation of mTOR protein results in limitless cell division in many human cancers. Though mTOR-targeted drugs exist, their effectiveness has so

far been limited, possibly due to the loss of the mTOR downstream effector 4E-BP1, a key repressor of protein production. [more...](#)

How a Gene Linked With Parkinson's Disease May Lead to New Breast Cancer Strategies

Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey

Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey research stemming from multiple scientific groups further elucidates a tumor suppression mechanism behind the human Parkin gene - which could help inform treatment decisions for breast cancer patients who have a Parkin mutation or loss of Parkin expression. Rutgers resident research members Zhaohui Feng, MD, PhD and Wenwei Hu, PhD, are co-corresponding authors of the work. [more...](#)

Physicians Present New CAR-T Cell Therapy Study Results

City of Hope Comprehensive Cancer Center

New blood cancer breakthroughs - including several involving CAR T cell therapy - were announced by City of Hope physicians at the American Society of Hematology (ASH) annual meeting in Atlanta. Among the announcements, City of Hope doctors revealed that patients whose acute myeloid leukemia was no longer responding to standard therapies, along with a patient with a rare blood cancer called blastic plasmacytoid dendritic cell neoplasm, achieved a complete response after undergoing treatment with CAR T cell therapy. The results from the phase 1 clinical trial were reported at ASH. [more...](#)

Immune Cells Share Their Insides With Tumors to Promote Cancer Spread

Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center

A new study using mice and tiny transparent fish as models of human cancer has shed light on the very first stages of metastasis in the skin cancer melanoma. Led by Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center postdoctoral fellow Minna Roh-Johnson, PhD, the study revealed that certain migrating immune cells known as macrophages share their internal contents directly with cancer cells - and that cellular mind-meld transfers the immune cells' ability to migrate through the body to the tumor itself. [more...](#)

Gene Test to Predict Breast Cancer Recurrence Less Cost Effective in Real World Practice

Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center

The most commonly used gene expression profile test used to help predict breast cancer recurrence may not be as cost-effective as once thought, say a team of researchers led by Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center. Their study is the first to look at the cost-effectiveness of the test Oncotype DX® in "real world" circumstances. [more...](#)

How Defeating THOR Could Bring a Hammer Down on Cancer

University of Michigan Comprehensive Cancer Center

Researchers at the University of Michigan Comprehensive Cancer Center uncovered a novel gene they named THOR while investigating previously unexplored regions of the human genome -- the dark matter of the human genome. They characterized a long non-coding RNA (lncRNA) that is expressed in humans, mice and zebrafish. It's unusual for this type of RNA to be conserved throughout species like this. The team's thinking was that if the RNA plays a role in other animals and species besides humans, it must be important. [more...](#)

Other News



NCI Director Surveys Cancer Research Landscape in AACI Commentary

Association of American Cancer Institutes

The latest AACI *Commentary* features perspectives from National Cancer Institute Director Norman E. Sharpless, MD. Dr. Sharpless highlighted AACI's work in identifying problems and best practices in the clinical-trials enterprise through its Clinical Research Initiative. He also sees AACI "playing a key role in raising awareness across cancer centers and encouraging investigators to apply for Cancer Moonshot research funding opportunities." Assessing the unusually large turnover of cancer center directors in the past year, Dr. Sharpless said that it could lead to a loss of

"continuity, experience, and tremendous talent," but that NCI will work to ensure that "being a cancer center director remains a wonderful and enriching position, with time for scientific leadership and strategic thinking." [more...](#)



Van Dang Named Editor-in-Chief of Cancer Research Journal

American Association for Cancer Research

The American Association for Cancer Research has appointed Chi Van Dang, MD, PhD, as editor-in-chief of its *Cancer Research* journal. Published under different titles in its early years, *Cancer Research* was the first English-language journal to be published in the field of oncology. Dr. Dang is the scientific director of the Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research and professor in the Molecular and Cellular Oncogenesis Program at The Wistar Institute in Philadelphia. [more...](#)



Online Training Teaches Patients, Advocates About Clinical Trials

Friends of Cancer Research

Friends of Cancer Research (Friends) has created a new, online training program to help patients and advocates learn about clinical trials and how the FDA reviews and regulates new therapies. Through this program, patients and caregivers will gain deeper knowledge about the role that drug researchers, developers, and regulators play as clinical trials are conducted and new treatments approved. Friends is excited to provide this resource to AACI and NCI-designated cancer centers as a tool for caregivers, nurses, and nurse navigators to provide to patients and their loved ones. To find out more about ProgressForPatients.org and sign up to take the course, visit progressforpatients.org. [more...](#)

GW Advances Global Research and Educational Partnerships During Spain Summit

GW Cancer Center

Drawing on the success of two previously held international scientific summits, the GW Office of International Medicine Programs and the School of Medicine and Health Sciences organized a third in December; this time convening GW researchers with colleagues in Madrid to focus on increasing research collaborations between the United States and Spain and developing the global physician-scientist workforce.

The summit was developed by the GW Cancer Center, GW School of Medicine and Health Sciences researchers, and IMP, alongside Spanish co-sponsors Puerta de Hierro Hospital and Research Institute and the Universidad Autonoma de Madrid. Researchers from the Cajal Institute and the Catholic University of Valencia also participated. [more...](#)

FCC, NCI Working with Markey to Improve Rural Cancer Care via Broadband Access

UK Markey Cancer Center

The Federal Communications Commission's Connect2Health Task Force has announced that the FCC and the National Cancer Institute have joined forces, signing a memorandum of understanding that will focus on how increasing broadband access and adoption in rural areas can improve the lives of rural cancer patients. As an inaugural project under the memorandum of understanding, the agencies have convened a public-private collaboration that includes the University of Kentucky Markey Cancer Center to help bridge the broadband health connectivity gap in Appalachia, taking another concrete step toward closing the digital divide. [more...](#)

Proton Therapy Center Construction to Start in Early 2018

UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center

The University of Alabama at Birmingham and Proton International have secured funding for the UAB Proton Therapy Center, a significant step toward beginning construction. The facility will be the first proton therapy center in the state of Alabama. With the financial closing complete, UAB and Proton International expect to break ground in January 2018 and open the facility in approximately two years. [more...](#)



UAMS Expert Releases First Book on Castleman Disease

UAMS Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute

Castleman disease, a rare disorder of the lymph nodes and related tissues, was identified and named more than a half-century ago but, until recently, no one had written a book exclusively about it. Frits van Rhee, MD, PhD, professor of medicine and director of developmental and translational medicine at the Myeloma Institute at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS), has changed that. [more...](#)

Job Opportunities

Associate Director for Administration and Finance
The University of Colorado Cancer Center

[more...](#)

Clinical Research Coordinator
UF Health Cancer Center

[more...](#)

Clinical Investigator
The University of Kansas Cancer Center

[more...](#)

Director of the Division of Quantitative Sciences
UF Health Cancer Center

[more...](#)

Senior Director of Clinical Research Administration
Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center

[more...](#)

Assistant Research Manager
Samuel Oschin Comprehensive Cancer Institute at Cedars-Sinai

[more...](#)

Associate Center Director for Population Sciences and Policy
GW Cancer Center

[more...](#)

Precision Medicine Informatics Faculty
UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center

[more...](#)

Chief Administrative Officer
UCLA Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center

[more...](#)

Administration Director, Supportive Oncology & Survivorship
UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center

[more...](#)

Senior Director, Clinical Trials Office
Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center

[more...](#)

Lead Research Analyst - Pre-Award
Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center

[more...](#)

Assistant Vice President
Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center

[more...](#)

Meeting Announcements

Advances in Cancer Immunotherapy - Durham, NC

Feb. 9, 2018

8:00am - 2:00pm

Millennium Hotel Durham, 2800 Campus Walk, Durham, NC 27705

Designed by the Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC), the Advances in Cancer Immunotherapy (ACI) programs are introductory, CME-, CNE- and CPE-certified programs, presented by leading, local authorities in tumor immunology and cancer immunotherapy. This program, organized by Sanjiv S. Agarwala, MD FAAEM, Kate Kalinowski, RN, MSN, H. Kim Lyster, MD and Michaels Morse MD, MHS, will provide an understanding of basic cancer immunotherapy principles, current and emerging drugs, and the latest concepts in the clinical application and management of cancer patients.

For more information [click here](#).

Advances in Cancer Immunotherapy - Charleston, SC

Feb. 24, 2018

8:00am - 2:00pm

Charleston Marriott: 170 Lockwood Boulevard, Charleston

Designed by the Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC), the Advances in Cancer Immunotherapy (ACI) programs are introductory, CME-, CNE- and CPE-certified programs, presented by leading, local authorities in tumor immunology and cancer immunotherapy. This program, organized by Zihai Li, MD, PhD and Michele Taffaro-Nesky, will provide an understanding of basic cancer immunotherapy principles, current and emerging drugs, and the latest concepts in the clinical application and management of cancer patients.

For more information [click here](#).

6th Annual Lung Cancer Symposium

Witness experts in the fields of Medical and Radiation Oncology, Surgery, and Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine deliver updated approaches to the diagnosis and treatment of lung cancer. Engage in lively interactive case-based discussions and critical deliberations on the state of current knowledge, clinical findings, differential diagnoses and management plan options.

This course is designed for healthcare professionals whose practice focuses on the screening, diagnosis, management, and treatment of lung cancer.

Course Webpage: cme.jefferson.edu/content/lungcancer2018

Advances in Cancer Immunotherapy - Dallas, TX

March 3, 2018

8:00am - 2:00pm

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Dallas - Campbell Center

Designed by the Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC), the Advances in Cancer Immunotherapy (ACI) programs are introductory, CME-, CNE- and CPE-certified programs, presented by leading, local authorities in tumor immunology and cancer immunotherapy. This program, organized by Sanjiv S. Agarwala, MD, Rolf Brekken, PhD and Joseph Fay, MD, will provide an understanding of basic cancer immunotherapy principles, current and emerging drugs, and the latest concepts in the clinical application and management of cancer patients.

For more information [click here](#).

2018 Cancer Center Administrators Forum & CCAF-IT

March 18-20, 2018

Portland, Oregon

For more information visit: pdxforum.com

Advances in Cancer Immunotherapy - Buffalo, NY

March 24, 2018

8:00am - 2:00pm
Embassy Suites by Hilton Buffalo

Designed by the Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC), the Advances in Cancer Immunotherapy (ACI) programs are introductory, CME-, CNE- and CPE-certified programs, presented by leading, local authorities in tumor immunology and cancer immunotherapy. This program, organized by Igor Puzanov, MD, MSCI, FACP, Marc Ernstoff, MD and Una Hopkins, DNP, RN, FNP-BC, will provide an understanding of basic cancer immunotherapy principles, current and emerging drugs, and the latest concepts in the clinical application and management of cancer patients. Learn the latest in cancer immunotherapy from leaders like Saby George, MD, FACP, and Dan P. Zandbery, MD.

For more information [click here](#).

2018 NACCCDO/PAMN Annual Conference

March 26-29, 2018
Seattle, Washington
For more information visit: [NACCCDO/PAMN](#)

AACR Annual Meeting 2018

April 14-18, 2018
McCormick Place North/South
Chicago, Illinois
www.aacr.org

AACI/AACR Hill Day

AACI will co-host its annual Capitol Hill Day with the American Association for Cancer Research.
April 24, 2018
Washington, DC
[Register](#) to attend today!

2018 ASCO Annual Meeting

American Society of Clinical Oncology
Friday, June 1, 2018 to Tuesday, June 5, 2018
Chicago, Illinois
www.asco.org

Call for Abstracts! 10th Annual AACI CRI Meeting

Abstract FAQs, template and scoring guidelines can be found on the [AACI website](#).
10th Annual AACI CRI Meeting
July 11-12, 2018
Loews Chicago O'Hare Hotel
Rosemont, IL

2018 Pan Pacific Lymphoma Conference

July 16-20
Hyatt Regency Maui Resort & Spa, Maui, Hawaii
Join us for a 5-day comprehensive educational conference with expert faculty from around the globe presenting the most up-to-date clinical advances in lymphoma and transplantation. Registration deadline is June 22.
unmc.edu/panpacificlymphoma

2018 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting

Save the Date!
September 30 - October 2, 2018
Loews Chicago Downtown Hotel
Chicago, IL