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On the cover: The Roberto Clemente Bridge, in Pittsburgh, home base of AACI.

Photo credits: Pages 2-6, 7 (audience), 9-11, 16-17, 19-20 Randy Belice; pages 12-13, 14 (group) Tyrone Bowie; page 15, Ollie Mae Nicholl for UMR; page 25, Montefiore Einstein Comprehensive Cancer Center/ Jason Torres (Chu), Sarah Park (DuBois), Kata Sasvari (Sanchez)
A ffectionately deemed “the city of bridges,” Pittsburgh is home to nearly 450 bridges, connecting the city's diverse neighborhoods across three major rivers. Though AACI is headquartered in Pittsburgh, that is not the only reason we chose “building bridges” as the theme of this report. It’s also an apt summary of AACI’s work throughout 2023, in which the association served as a central hub linking cancer centers with government agencies, pharmaceutical and tech companies, cancer advocacy organizations, and—most importantly—each other.

The past year saw the introduction of a new meeting and AACI presidential initiative – both focusing on “bridge-building” of a sort. In March, AACI co-hosted the inaugural Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Summit in partnership with the American Cancer Society and the Cancer Center DEI Network. The two-day event convened more than 80 attendees to discuss strategies for implementing DEI initiatives at their institutions. In September, a second DEI Summit was held in conjunction with the 2023 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting. Attended by over 90 cancer center leaders, the summit allowed attendees to brainstorm methods for effective change, including external partnerships and public policy.

Also preceding the annual meeting, AACI hosted the second annual New Directors Meeting, which was attended by 30 cancer center directors. An offshoot of the Leadership Diversity and Development Initiative led by Dr. Caryn Lerman, the meeting provided a venue for a frank, open dialogue about a range of topics, including communicating and collaborating with institutional leaders.

Before taking the reins of the AACI presidency from Dr. Lerman, VCU Massey Comprehensive Cancer Center Director Dr. Robert A. Winn shared plans for his AACI presidential initiative dedicated to “inclusive excellence.” The initiative is focused on collaborative efforts to create opportunities for research, training and education, and patient navigation.

In 2023 AACI grew its network of collaborators, welcoming LSU LCMC Health Cancer Center and Prevent Cancer Foundation as cancer center and sustaining members, respectively. This was also a year of metaphorical bridge-crossing, marked by significant leadership transitions within the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Cancer Institute (NCI), two agencies that are pillars of support within the United States’ cancer research ecosystem.

AACI endorsed the appointment of Dr. Monica Bertagnolli as the new director of the NIH, citing Dr. Bertagnolli’s comprehensive National Cancer Plan as a key example of her expertise. Just weeks later, AACI shared its enthusiastic support for President Biden’s nomination of Dr. W. Kimryn Rathmell as the 17th director of the NCI – and the second woman to fill the role. We look forward to continuing to work with the Biden administration, the NIH, and the NCI to advance our common goals.

We also look forward to continued partnerships with AACI's members and corporate and nonprofit partners. Your steadfast support helps advance our mission of accelerating progress against cancer and promoting cancer health equity, and we thank you.
MEETINGS
2023 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting

With a focus on promoting institutional diversity goals, nearly 500 cancer center colleagues, exhibitors, and supporters, representing 97 AACI member centers, gathered in Washington, DC, for the 2023 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting. The three-and-a-half days of networking, presentations, and panel discussions underlined both the unique and complementary strengths of AACI’s member cancer centers, and the need to speak with a unified voice to optimize these attributes while accelerating progress against cancer.

The meeting opened on October 1 with a keynote presentation by Dr. Philip E. Castle, director of the National Cancer Institute’s (NCI) Division of Cancer Prevention (DCP). Dr. Castle provided an update on DCP initiatives, focusing on the benefits and challenges of cancer prevention; screening, including multi-cancer detection; and symptom management and care.

The meeting program was distinct in its breadth and depth. General sessions ranged from dismantling barriers to cancer care and enhancing diversity at AACI cancer centers, to research at basic science centers, the federal Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H) program, and ways to improve protocol activation timelines.

A panel discussion led by incoming AACI President Dr. Robert A. Winn, examined the impact of the U.S. Supreme Court’s 2023 affirmative action ruling. Panelists were Dr. David Acosta, chief diversity and inclusion officer for the Association of American Medical Colleges, and Kevin Williams, Esq., director of the National Institutes of Health Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

A session on ways to improve cancer center interactions with elected officials and federal agencies was moderated by Erik Fatemi, a principal with Cornerstone Government Affairs. Fatemi’s colleague, panelist Laura Bozelli, urged cancer center leaders to develop long-term relationships with congressional staff since they are a key information conduit for legislators.

Dr. Patrick Loehrer, of the Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center, moderated a session on global oncology, which included details on the NCI’s Global Oncology Survey.

The meeting’s final day included a presentation by Dr. Ileana Hancu, program manager for ARPA-H, and a session on clinical trial activation, moderated by Dr. Suresh Ramalingam, executive director of the Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University.

The meeting concluded with the NCI Director’s Report, delivered by NCI Principal Deputy Director Dr. Douglas R. Lowy, on behalf of NCI Director Dr. Monica Bertagnolli. Dr. Lowy emphasized both the need for cancer centers and their supporters to work together to battle cancer, and the interconnectedness of NCI’s budget and program components: research funding, training, and workforce development; resources for researchers; operating expenses; and cancer centers and clinical trials.
INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE PRESIDENTIAL INITIATIVE

AACHI President Dr. Robert A. Winn’s presidential initiative aims to promote “inclusive excellence” by examining ways that AACHI members can foster partnerships with like-minded organizations, government agencies, and other institutions. Dr. Winn introduced the plan at the 2023 AACHI/CCAF Annual Meeting, starting with a review of AACHI’s history and accomplishments. Noting how far the association has come in size, scope, and diversity since its founding in 1959, Dr. Winn acknowledged the significance of his presidency, saying, “I stand here today as the first person of color to be your president.”

In November, Dr. Winn traveled to the White House to meet with staff from the Office of the First Lady to discuss his presidential initiative, particularly its patient navigation component. Later that month, the initiative’s steering committee held its first meeting. Unique among AACHI committees, the Inclusive Excellence Steering Committee includes two community advocates. These members bring valuable perspectives and experiences to the initiative.

Dr. Caryn Lerman passes the gavel to Dr. Robert A. Winn

PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION

Dr. Caryn Lerman passed the gavel—and the AACHI presidency—to Dr. Robert A. Winn at the close of the 2023 AACHI/CCAF Annual Meeting. Dr. Lerman’s presidential initiative, focused on developing and diversifying cancer center leadership, will continue as a standing AACHI program. AACHI Executive Director Jennifer W. Pegher credited Dr. Lerman with her leadership and bringing a much-needed program to AACHI.

Dr. Winn urged AACHI members to help him achieve his ambitious goals for the association. His call to action echoed remarks by NCI Principal Deputy Director Dr. Douglas R. Lowy, who cited the African proverb, “If you want to walk fast, walk alone. If you want to walk far, walk together.”

Inclusive Excellence Steering Committee

Chair: Robert A. Winn, MD
VCU Massey Comprehensive Cancer Center

Wafik S. El-Deiry, MD, PhD, FACP
Legorreta Cancer Center at Brown University

Rudene Haynes, JD
Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP

Loriana Hernández-Aldama
ArmorUp for LIFE®

Robert S. Mannel, MD
Stephenson Cancer Center
University of Oklahoma

Stephen D. Nimer, MD
Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center
University of Miami

Ze’ev Ronai, PhD
Sanford Burnham Prebys Medical Discovery Institute

Joann B. Sweasy, PhD
Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center

Cornelia Ulrich, MS, PhD
Huntsman Cancer Institute at the University of Utah
NEW DIRECTORS MEETING

The day before the 2023 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting, 30 cancer center directors attended AACI’s second annual New Directors Meeting. The program featured a series of panel discussions to prepare the new directors for their leadership roles, with experienced directors offering their perspectives on challenges— and opportunities—that all centers face. Conversation topics included how to enhance the impact of clinical research at cancer centers, how clinical trials offices work with their centers, and advice on effective collaboration.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION SUMMIT

In partnership with the American Cancer Society and the Cancer Center DEI Network, AACI co-hosted the inaugural Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Summit in March. The two-day event convened cancer center leaders, researchers, and administrators to share insights on how institutions are enhancing DEI efforts, and to address barriers that cancer centers face in implementing DEI initiatives.

With over 80 individuals participating, the summit featured sessions on advancing a culture of institutional excellence and approaches to managing data and metrics reporting requirements in the Plan to Enhance Diversity section of the NCI’s Cancer Center Support Grant (CCSG) application. In September, a second DEI Summit was held preceding the 2023 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting. The meeting included panel sessions on ways that cancer centers can enhance partnerships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and Minority-Serving Institutions, and how states are navigating policy changes related to DEI.

Attended by over 90 cancer center leaders, the summit concluded with a brainstorming session for cancer center directors and DEI experts with the goal of effecting positive change at their institutions.

15TH ANNUAL AACI CLINICAL RESEARCH INNOVATION (CRI) MEETING

AACI’s Clinical Research Innovation (CRI) provides a network for cancer center clinical research leaders to share best practices around clinical trials office operations. The 15th Annual AACI CRI Meeting drew almost 500 in-person attendees and 71 virtual, representing 83 cancer centers. Attendees included clinical research office leaders, medical directors, cancer center administrators, patient advocates, and representatives from government and industry.

Several meeting sessions focused on collaboration and building solid teams in the clinical trials office (CTO) and expanding clinical trials in the community. Other meeting topics included diversity, equity, and inclusion; artificial intelligence in oncology; communication gaps between clinical care and research operations; and preparing for the NCI’s CCSG application process. Please see page 7 for more on CRI.
Patient advocate Mel Mann speaks at the 15th Annual AACI CRI Annual Meeting
ACI’s initiatives and programs provide platforms for managing member services and activities that offer numerous opportunities for interactions with AACI and among cancer center leaders and staff.

Clinical Research Innovation (CRI)

CRI’s mission is to collect, evaluate, and share best practices that promote the efficient and effective operation of cancer clinical research offices, and to interact with key stakeholders to inform policy decisions and advocate for improvement in the national clinical trials enterprise.

Highlights of the year included publication of a paper in JNCI Cancer Spectrum, focused on the impact of COVID-19 on cancer center workload. The study was authored by Drs. Thomas J. George, Jr.; Tara L. Lin; and Theresa L. Werner and 10 past and present CRI steering committee members. An AACI white paper, developed in conjunction with AACI Corporate Roundtable partners, provided recommendations on how to improve trial activation timelines.

To establish metrics and measure growth in clinical trials offices (CTO), a benchmarking survey examining budgets, accruals, staffing, and other CTO components was distributed to AACI members in May with the goal of publishing findings in early 2024.

CRI also oversees a portfolio of programs aimed at improving cancer center clinical trial operations:

CRI Education and Operations Subcommittee

The Education and Operations Subcommittee provides a platform to discuss CTO challenges related to education and training. In 2023, the subcommittee identified gaps in competencies for oncology research staff and created a template for using Attributable, Legible, Contemporaneous, Original, and Accurate (ALCOA+) principles for good documentation practices. A template was also developed to better identify and report protocol deviations. Beginning in 2024, these templates will be available in the AACI resource library for members to use when onboarding employees or assessing their competencies.

CTO Medical Directors, CTO Administrative Directors, and Associate Directors of Clinical Research Forums

CTO administrative and medical directors held roundtables every other month as well as quarterly discussions with their respective groups. The Associate Directors of Clinical Research Forum launched in 2023 and meets bimonthly. The first major task of the new forum is to draft a standardized job description for the role.
INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMS

CAR T Initiative

AACI’s CAR T Initiative convenes cancer center clinicians and administrators to discuss challenges and offer best practices for managing and developing a CAR T therapy program. Collaboration is facilitated by topic-specific working groups, webinars, listserv discussions, monthly update calls, and in-person meetings. Participants include staff and faculty at AACI member institutions.

In 2023, CAR T Steering Committee members developed educational resources to increase patient referrals for CAR T therapy by community physicians. Additionally, the steering committee partnered with the American Society for Transplantation and Cellular Therapy (ASTCT), the Association of Community Cancer Centers (ACCC), and Kite Pharma to develop a framework to enable community oncology care teams to assess patients more easily for CAR T consultation. A summary of the group’s discussion, and a description of the framework, co-authored by AACI, ASTCT, and ACCC, was published in the ASTCT journal, Transplantation and Cellular Therapy.

CTO Staff Retention Task Force

Established in response to the mass resignation of CTO staff amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the CTO Staff Retention Task Force is led by Dr. Leonidas C. Platanias, director of the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University. To assess the scope of the CTO staffing challenge at AACI cancer centers, the task force distributed surveys to cancer center directors in 2022 and again in 2023. Survey results were published in a report, available to AACI members, highlighting key data from the two surveys and successful staff retention strategies implemented by AACI cancer centers.

Physician Clinical Leadership Initiative (PCLI)

The PCLI Steering Committee is a resource for creating best practices as well as for comparing approaches to common problems facing clinical physician leaders, including deputy directors, chief medical officers, physicians-in-chief, and similarly titled positions. PCLI’s 11th annual meeting, held during the AACI/CCAF annual meeting, featured a panel discussion titled “Bridging the Divide Between Cancer Centers and Cancer Service Lines.” The meeting featured preliminary results of a survey on cancer service line reporting and financial structure at member cancer centers.
AWARDS

Dr. Patricia LoRusso with AACI Board of Directors member Dr. Joann B. Sweasy

Dr. Amelie Ramirez with AACI Board of Directors member Dr. Ruben Mesa

Dana Dornsife with AACI President Dr. Caryn Lerman

U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) and U.S. Representative Neal Dunn (R-FL)
Four AACI awards were presented at the 2023 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting, in recognition of outstanding support and achievement in the cancer research community.

AACI Distinguished Scientist Award

Dr. Patricia LoRusso, leader of the Early Phase Clinical Trials Division at Yale Cancer Center and Smilow Cancer Hospital, received AACI’s Distinguished Scientist Award. She presented a moving personal account of her clinical research career.

AACI Champion for Cures Award

Dana Dornsife, founder and chief mission and strategy officer of the Lazarex Cancer Foundation, was honored with the AACI Champion for Cures Award. Her philanthropy supports community outreach and engagement efforts to increase access to cancer care and clinical trials in minority and disadvantaged communities.

The AACI Champion for Cures Award was established in 2018 to recognize one or more people, who, through direct financial support of an AACI cancer center, demonstrate exceptional leadership in advancing cancer research and care and in inspiring others to do the same.

AACI Cancer Health Equity Award

The Cancer Health Equity Award went to Dr. Amelie Ramirez, chair of the Department of Population Health Sciences at UT Health San Antonio. As leader of the community outreach and engagement team at Mays Cancer Center, Dr. Ramirez has implemented changes that have improved equity and diversity in cancer clinical trial recruitment. Established in 2021, the Cancer Health Equity Award recognizes an individual or group who demonstrates exceptional leadership in promoting health equity, mitigating cancer disparities, and advocating for diversity and inclusion at their cancer center.

AACI Public Service Award

AACI’s Public Service Award was presented to U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) and U.S. Representative Neal Dunn (R-FL). In accepting her award, Sen. Klobuchar assured attendees that their work does not go unrecognized by Congress. “There are people who have your backs and see you as the pinnacle of what needs to be done,” she said. Rep. Dunn commented on the “unbelievable advances” in cancer treatment and reminded attendees not to hide their work from legislators.

The AACI Public Service Award was established in 2003 to recognize public servants who are dedicated supporters of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the National Cancer Institute (NCI), and cancer centers in their respective states.
By leveraging the collective efforts of cancer centers across North America, AACI has unprecedented opportunities to exert influence on public policy related to cancer research.

AACI’s public issues work is primarily guided by its Government Relations (GR) Steering Committee, which coordinates activity at AACI cancer centers to educate legislators about the cancer research community and its positive impact on patients. AACI hosts monthly Zoom meetings with cancer center GR colleagues and expert guests on federal issues impacting the cancer centers, while AACI’s Public Policy Resource Library shares cancer-related legislation at the state level and tracks AACI-endorsed federal legislation.

**Government Relations Forum**

In March, AACI held its Spring GR Forum at Huntsman Cancer Institute at the University of Utah. The forum gathered AACI staff, government relations representatives from AACI cancer centers, and sustaining members, and included a tour of the Huntsman campus and updates from the center’s leadership and clinical trials office (CTO). Topics discussed included opportunities for collaboration between GR staff and their centers’ community outreach and engagement colleagues and CTOs. In addition, congressional staffers from Huntsman’s catchment area and representatives from the National Cancer Institute’s (NCI) Office of Government and Congressional Relations provided updates.

L-R: Dr. Philip Greenberg, Dr. Ruben Mesa, Dr. Roy S. Herbst, Jennifer Pegher, and Jon Retzlaff meet with staff for Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA)
In May, AACI co-hosted its annual joint Hill Day with the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR). The first in-person visit to Capitol Hill since 2019 attracted 85 participants from 27 states, including cancer center directors, researchers, oncologists, cancer survivors, and other advocates. The group met with congressional legislators and staff, presenting a unified voice in support of stable funding increases for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and NCI.

The event kicked off the evening before with a reception at the Rayburn House Office building. U.S. Representatives Derek Kilmer (D-WA) and Kathy Castor (D-FL) attended, and Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL) delivered remarks after receiving AACI’s Cancer Research Ally Award. An additional Ally award, to Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), was accepted on his behalf by Legislative Assistant Jacqueline Baggett.

Recipients of AACI’s Hill Day Scholarship were among the patient advocates in attendance. Representing Florida, Illinois, Kansas, New York, and Wisconsin, these advocates shed light on cancer’s far-reaching impact. Their unique and compelling stories underscored the vital need for continued funding for the NIH and the NCI.

Hill Day assumed heightened importance against the backdrop of contentious legislative debate over raising the federal budget debt ceiling.

Specific budgetary “asks” for 2023’s Hill Day were $50.924 billion, an increase of $3.465 billion, for the NIH in Fiscal Year 2024, and at least $9.988 billion, an increase of $2.6 billion, for the NCI to support additional cancer research grants, as requested in the NCI Director’s Professional Judgment Budget.
NEW NCI AND NIH DIRECTORS

Two of the nation’s premier federal scientific agencies welcomed new leaders in 2023.

President Joe Biden named Dr. W. Kimryn Rathmell as the next director of the National Cancer Institute (NCI) in November, following Dr. Monica Bertagnolli’s confirmation as the new director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Dr. Bertagnolli had served a year-long tenure as NCI’s first female director.

Dr. Rathmell was the Hugh Jackson Professor of Medicine and chair of the Department of Medicine at Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC), joining VUMC in 2015 as director of the Division of Hematology and Oncology.

“Dr. Rathmell’s background in cancer research and institutional leadership will be a great benefit to AACI’s members as well as cancer patients and the wider oncology community,” AACI Executive Director Jennifer W. Pegher said.
AACI Advocacy in the Nation’s Capital

Throughout the year, AACI participated in numerous advocacy events, including those highlighted here.

The gatherings were hosted by like-minded partners and cancer centers, including the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, the Coalition for Health Funding, Friends of Cancer Research, One Voice Against Cancer (OVAC), and United for Medical Research (UMR).

In the spring, AACI participated in OVAC’s Grassroots Hill Day, and AACI Senior Government Relations Manager Jaren Love joined United for Medical Research (UMR) staff to meet with new House Appropriations Labor, Health and Human Services, Education Subcommittee Chair, Rep. Robert Aderholt (R-AL). AACI also teamed up with UMR to meet with staffers from the offices of Sen. Jerry Moran (R-KS) and Rep. Guy Reschenthaler (R-PA) to advocate for robust annual increases to the NIH budget as a collective of the research community, patient and health advocates and industry.

Other advocacy activities included uniting with the Coalition to Improve Access to Cancer Care to meet with Members of Congress to seek support for the Cancer Drug Parity Act. In addition, AACI participated in the Rally for Medical Research and led a group of advocates to meet with representatives and staff for two senators.

The Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association (HOPA), an AACI sustaining member, gathered representatives from 20 professional and patient advocacy organizations to discuss policy solutions for ongoing chemotherapy drug shortages.

OVAC’s Hill Day gave AACI the opportunity to help deliver a targeted message to congressional appropriations committee leaders and members, urging increased funding for NIH, NCI, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and to underscore the need to pass a Fiscal Year 2024 budget.

Later in the year, UMR introduced its report, “How NIH-Funded Research Benefits Rural States,” on Capitol Hill. As a UMR board member, AACI’s Jaren Love participated in the report’s rollout. The event included a panel discussion with patients and representatives from industry and academia, and Rep. Steve Womack (R-AR) and Sen. Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) shared the impact of NIH funding in their respective states. Love also attended the Senate confirmation hearing of Monica Bertagnolli, MD, as the new director of the NIH.


Public Policy Resource Library and Federal Legislation Tracker

AACI continues to update its Public Policy Resource Library and provide updates on all AACI-endorsed federal legislation. As of late 2023, AACI is tracking 13 bills covering issues such as clinical trial diversity, increased funding for cancer research, and expanding access to cancer prevention measures.
SHARING BEST PRACTICES
Providing a platform to share best practices is one of AACI’s signature member services. With the singular aim of improving cancer center operations and patient care, AACI educates the oncology workforce through listservs, webinars, and poster and abstract presentations.

**POSTERS AND ABSTRACTS**

The 15th Annual AACI Clinical Research Innovation (CRI) Meeting featured 118 abstracts from 36 cancer centers. Abstract topics spanned several areas of clinical trial operations, including quality assurance, community outreach and engagement, and trial start-up and activation. Three winning abstracts were presented individually during the meeting:

**FIRST PLACE:** Hybrid Decentralization of Early Phase Cancer Clinical Trials to Enhance Study Recruitment of Underrepresented Minorities
C. Wiess, A. Rodrigues, I. Palma, D. Wall, P. LoRusso
Yale Cancer Center
Yale School of Medicine

**SECOND PLACE:** Strategies to Improve Clinical Research Staff Engagement, Retention, Career Development, and Performance at an NCI-Designated Cancer Center
Laura and Isaac Perlmutter Cancer Center
at NYU Langone

**THIRD PLACE:** Protocol Prioritization Scores: Are They Predictive?
J. Bollmer, J. Thomas, B. George, M. Larson, K. Schroeder, S. Zindars, R. Kurzrock
Medical College of Wisconsin Cancer Center

**LISTSERVS**

In 2023, AACI launched an Associate Director for Clinical Research listserv. It joined several existing platforms for cancer centers colleagues to ask questions, discuss challenges, and share best practices.

The Clinical Research Innovation (CRI) listserv continues to grow since its inception in 2010, with representation standing at approximately 1,200 users from 90 cancer centers. Topics discussed in 2023 included staff retention; acuity tools and job metrics; DSMC monitoring; eligibility waivers; serious adverse event reporting; and medical coverage analysis for clinical trials.

More than 250 community outreach and engagement (COE) professionals at AACI cancer centers continue to post queries or otherwise reach out to colleagues about COE-related topics on the COE listserv.

AACI’s **Catchment Area Research and Data Science** (CARDS) listserv is building a supportive and collaborative community for those involved in cancer center data collection, analysis, and utilization. CARDS is for individuals engaged in community outreach, biostatistics, cancer informatics and similar roles in AACI cancer centers.

The **CTO Medical Directors** and **CTO Administrative Directors** listservs provide forums for clinical trials office leaders to discuss their roles and workplaces and to create mentoring opportunities.
WEBINARS

AACI’s Physician Clinical Leadership Initiative (PCLI) hosted two webinars in 2023:

“Seismic Shift or Small Step Forward? Artificial Intelligence and its Impact on Cancer Care and Research” shared new advances in artificial intelligence and machine learning and its impact on cancer care and research. Panelists were Dr. Christopher Lieu, University of Colorado Cancer Center and Dr. Sean Davis, University of Colorado Anschutz School of Medicine.

“A Practical Approach to Building a Survivorship Program” was presented by Dr. Julie Vose; Dr. Laura Tenner; and Rachael Schmidt, University of Nebraska Medical Center. The webinar reviewed core aspects of a survivorship program and considerations to make it sustainable.
The 2023 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting and the 15th Annual Clinical Research Innovation (CRI) Meeting provided opportunities for supporters to interact with AACI members and representatives from cancer research-related organizations.

Supporters and exhibitors promoted their products and services to hundreds of meeting attendees including cancer center directors, executive administrators, and leaders of clinics, laboratories, and specialized research facilities.

AACI received support in 2023 for its events and programs from:

- Actalent
- Adminformatics
- Advarra
- American Society of Clinical Oncology
- Astound Research
- Caris Life Sciences
- Deep 6 AI
- ECG Management Consultants
- Florence Healthcare
- Huron
- Idea Elan
- Inspirata
- Integra Connect
- Merck
- Mint Medical
- Novartis
- Pfizer
- Slope
- The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center - The James
- Triomics
- Varian Medical Systems
- VCU Massey Comprehensive Cancer Center
- Veeva Systems
- Verily Life Sciences
- Vitalief
- WCG
- WellSky
- Yunu, Inc.

AACI appreciates the valuable contributions that these supporters make to fulfilling the association’s mission of enhancing the impact of leading academic cancer centers.

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**CORPORATE ROUNDTABLE**

The AACI Corporate Roundtable provides a forum for AACI cancer centers to address topics of mutual interest with industry colleagues. These interactions lead to support for both new and ongoing AACI programs and initiatives. Roundtable members met in June during the 15th Annual Clinical Research Innovation (CRI) Meeting and again in October at the 2023 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting. Discussions focused on areas such as clinical trial access and diversity; centralized monitoring to reduce on-site monitoring visits; operational efficiencies; partnerships to increase clinical trial access; and CTO staff retention. AACI extends its gratitude for the commitment and support of its 2023 Corporate Roundtable members shown at left.

**SUSTAINING MEMBERS**

AACI welcomed Prevent Cancer Foundation as a new Sustaining Member in 2023. Sustaining membership in AACI includes nonprofit organizations that represent and support the educational and professional development of clinical oncology health professionals and researchers. These like-minded cancer organizations and patient advocacy groups share a common goal of decreasing the national cancer burden. Sustaining members participate in AACI-sponsored meetings, workshops, and forums and meet annually with...
Building bridges to other organizations that share our cancer advocacy goals is an essential component of AACI’s mission. In the communications realm, enhancing partnerships with our cancer center members included AACI’s sponsorship of the 2023 NACDDO-PAMN Conference—a collaboration by the National Association of Cancer Center Development Officers and the Public Affairs and Marketing Network—hosted by Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University, in Atlanta.

AACI has enjoyed a long-standing relationship with PAMN, a cooperative venture of academically based comprehensive, clinical, basic, and consortium cancer centers as designated by the National Cancer Institute (NCI) or that are members of AACI. PAMN works closely with the NCI’s Office of Media Relations and Public Affairs to further public awareness of cancer research, prevention, detection, and treatment. PAMN members are frequent contributors to AACI’s monthly newsletter, AACI Update, and they suggest topics for consideration for AACI’s monthly editorial series, AACI Commentary.

AACI is a frequent contributor to The Cancer Letter (TCL), a weekly news publication on issues that shape oncology. In 2023, TCL published statements from the association regarding cancer-related aspects of President Biden’s State of the Union address and his proposed budget for 2024. It also covered the introduction of AACI President Dr. Robert A. Winn’s presidential initiative. In addition, TCL ran excerpts from the February 2023 AACI Commentary (insights on cancer center leadership by Dr. George J. Weiner) and a 2021 history of AACI, supplemented its Cancer History Project archives with the keynote presentation from the 2022 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting; highlighted a report by AACI’s CTO Staff Retention Task Force on staff retention at clinical trials offices; and quoted the authors of AACI’s June 2023 Commentary regarding the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling on LGBTQ+ rights.

New Member

LSU LCMC Health Cancer Center

In January, AACI welcomed its newest member, LSU LCMC Health Cancer Center. Dr. Joe W. Ramos is the center’s director.

The LSU LCMC Health Cancer Center, located in New Orleans, Louisiana, was established in 2021. LSU Health and LCMC Health have each committed $50 million to the LSU LCMC Health Cancer Center aimed at changing the trajectory of cancer prevention, detection, and treatment throughout the state. That investment, and subsequent additional funding, supports LSU’s journey to NCI designation through expanded cancer-focused research and multidisciplinary care programs. LSU Health is a member of the Louisiana Cancer Research Center and the intended eventual NCI Designation applicant.
NEW LEADERSHIP

AACI PRESIDENT

Dr. Robert A. Winn, director of VCU Massey Comprehensive Cancer Center, is AACI's new president. He will serve a two-year term, after succeeding Dr. Caryn Lerman, director of the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center, at the close of the 2023 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting in October.

Overseeing a cancer center comprised of nearly 150 scientists and clinical investigators, Dr. Winn is leading the nation in establishing a 21st-century model for promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in the oncology workforce; spearheading interdisciplinary approaches to cancer disparities research; and building trust among populations previously disenfranchised from health care.

Dr. Winn's AACI Presidential Initiative aims to develop and promote inclusive excellence by examining methods through which AACI members can foster partnerships with like-minded organizations, government agencies, and other institutions – regionally, nationally, and globally.

Activities proposed for the Inclusive Excellence Initiative focus on collaborative efforts to create opportunities for research, training and education, and patient navigation. The initiative will also support the continued facilitation of AACI's annual Leadership Diversity and Development Workshop and the annual Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Summit in partnership with the Cancer Center DEI Network and the American Cancer Society.

AACI PRESIDENT-ELECT

Dr. Joann B. Sweasy, director of the Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center, was elected by the AACI membership to serve a two-year term as vice president/president-elect of AACI's Board of Directors.

Dr. Sweasy was appointed director of the Buffett Cancer Center at the University of Nebraska in 2023. Previously, she served as director of the University of Arizona Cancer Center, leading it to redesignation as a National Cancer Institute (NCI)-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center. She also served as the associate director for basic sciences and co-leader of the Radiobiology and Radiotherapy Program at the Yale Cancer Center.

Dr. Sweasy is an internationally recognized expert in the genetics, cell biology, and biochemistry of DNA repair, and has been continuously funded by the National Institutes of Health since 1994. She was appointed to AACI's board in 2021.
AACI’s Board Welcomes Three Cancer Center Leaders

Drs. Edward Chu, Raymond DuBois, and Yolanda Sanchez, were elected to AACI’s Board of Directors in 2023.

Dr. Chu is director of the Montefiore Einstein Comprehensive Cancer Center, leading its recent successful renewal and designation as an NCI Comprehensive Cancer Center. He is an international expert in investigating the mechanisms of cellular resistance to the fluoropyrimidines and antimetabolites and has also played a leading role in cancer drug development and early-phase clinical trials focused on colorectal cancer and other GI cancers.

Dr. DuBois leads Hollings Cancer Center, Medical University of South Carolina. His research has made significant contributions to understanding the role of inflammation and inflammatory mediators in the progression of colon cancer and other gastrointestinal malignancies. Among his many awards and honors, Dr. DuBois is a member of the National Academy of Medicine and a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Dr. Sanchez is director and CEO of the University of New Mexico Comprehensive Cancer Center. She is an international expert in DNA damage response pathways and her work focuses on exploring oncology targets and drug development for clinical trials. Throughout her career, Dr. Sanchez has prioritized collaboration across basic science, population science, and clinical research, and mentored trainees and junior faculty to help them develop successful research careers.

Outgoing Board Members

AACI extends its appreciation for service on AACI’s Board of Directors to Dr. Roy A. Jensen, director of The University of Kansas Cancer Center, and Dr. Cornelia Ulrich, chief scientific officer and executive director, comprehensive cancer center, Huntsman Cancer Institute at the University of Utah. AACI’s new vice president/president-elect, Dr. Joann B. Sweasy, also finished her term as a regular AACI board member in 2023.
### 2023 COMMITTEES

#### ANNUAL MEETING PROGRAM COMMITTEE

**Chair:** Primo N. Lara, Jr., MD  
UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center

**Elected: Edward Chu, MD, MMS**  
Montefiore Einstein Comprehensive Cancer Center

**Elected: Hannah Hazard-Jenkins, MD**  
WVU Cancer Institute

**Elected: Matthew Huesser, MBA, DBA**  
Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson Health

**Elected: Kelvin Lee, MD**  
Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center

**Elected: Michelle Lin, MBA**  
VCU Massey Comprehensive Cancer Center

**Elected: Rae Ann Paden, MPH**  
University of New Mexico Comprehensive Cancer Center

**Elected: Jennifer W. Pegher, MA, MBA**  
Association of American Cancer Institutes

**Elected: John Pounardjian, MBA**  
Case Comprehensive Cancer Center

**Elected: Suresh Ramalingam, MD**  
Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University

**Elected: Matthew Vander Heiden, MD, PhD**  
Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research at MIT

#### CAR T STEERING COMMITTEE

**Chair:** Peter Riedell, MD  
The University of Chicago Comprehensive Cancer Center

**Elected: Lihua Elizabeth Budde, MD, PhD**  
City of Hope Comprehensive Cancer Center

**Elected: Matthew H. Carabasi, MD**  
Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson Health

**Elected: Natalie Grover, MD**  
UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

**Elected: Yen-Michael S. Hsu, MD, PhD, CABB**  
UPMC Hillman Cancer Center

**Elected: Frederick L. Locke, MD**  
Moffitt Cancer Center

**Elected: Premal Lulla, MD**  
Dan L Duncan Comprehensive Cancer Center at Baylor College of Medicine

**Elected: Joseph McGuirk, DO, FACP**  
The University of Kansas Cancer Center

**Elected: Kunle Odunsi, MD, PhD**  
The University of Chicago Medicine  
Comprehensive Cancer Center

**Elected: Sheila Ouverson, MPA**  
Held Comprehensive Cancer Center  
University of Iowa

**Elected: Sapna Parshottam, BSc, MSc**  
The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

**Elected: Miguel-Angel Perales, MD**  
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

**Elected: David L. Porter, MD**  
Abramson Cancer Center of the University of Pennsylvania

**Elected: Craig Sauter, MD**  
Cleveland Clinic Cancer Center

**Elected: Joseph Uberti, MD, PhD**  
Karmancs Cancer Institute  
Wayne State University

#### CLINICAL RESEARCH INNOVATION (CRI) STEERING COMMITTEE

**Chair:** Tara L. Lin, MD  
The University of Kansas Cancer Center

**Elected: Chair-elect: Thomas J. George, Jr., MD, FACP**  
University of Florida Health Cancer Center

**Elected: Frances Brogan, MSN, RN, OCN, CCRP**  
Herbert Irving Comprehensive Cancer Center  
Columbia University Irving Medical Center

**Elected: Arcadia Cruz, PhD**  
UC San Diego Moores Cancer Center

**Elected: Angela Fritsche, MPA**  
Mayo Clinic Comprehensive Cancer Center

**Elected: Margaret Kasner, MD, MSCE**  
Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson Health

**Elected: Matthew R. Kovak, MS, CCRP**  
UAMS Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute

**Elected: Wendy Law, PhD**  
Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center

**Elected: Christopher Loetscher, MA**  
USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center

**Elected: Eneida Nemecek, MD, MS, MBA**  
Ghulu Knight Cancer Institute

**Elected: Jennifer W. Pegher, MA, MBA**  
Association of American Cancer Institutes

**Elected: Anne Schnatterly, MBA, BSN, RN, CCRP**  
WVU Cancer Institute

**Elected: Susanna Sellmann, MRT, BSc, CCRP**  
Princess Margaret Cancer Centre  
University Health Network

**Elected: Rachna Shroff, MD, MS**  
The University of Arizona Cancer Center

#### CRI BENCHMARKING SURVEY WORKING GROUP

**Chair:** Tara L. Lin, MD  
The University of Kansas Cancer Center

**Elected: Frances Brogan, MSN, RN, OCN, CCRP**  
Herbert Irving Comprehensive Cancer Center  
Columbia University Irving Medical Center

**Elected: Arcadia Cruz**  
UC San Diego Moores Cancer Center

**Elected: Angela Fritsche, MPA**  
Mayo Clinic Comprehensive Cancer Center

**Elected: Thomas J. George, Jr., MD, FACP**  
University of Florida Health Cancer Center

**Elected: Margaret Kasner, MD, MSCE**  
Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson Health

**Elected: Matthew R. Kovak, MS, CCRP**  
UAMS Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute

**Elected: Carrie Lee, MD**  
UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

**Elected: Ji-Hyun Lee, DrPH**  
University of Florida Health Cancer Center

**Elected: Man Chong “Henry” Leong, PhD**  
University of Florida, Department of Biostatistics

**Elected: Christopher Loetscher, MA**  
USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center

#### CRI EDUCATION AND OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

**Subcommittee Leader:**  
Wendy Bloomer, PhD, CCRP  
Duke Cancer Institute, Duke University Medical Center

**Elected: Elizabeth Anderson, MPH, MBA**  
Stanford Cancer Institute

**Elected: Jonathan Aguilar**  
The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

**Elected: Vanessa Caijuharinga, CCRP**  
Cedars-Sinai Cancer Center

**Elected: Erin Cebula, MPH, CCRP**  
Wilmot Cancer Institute, UR Medicine

**Elected: Doreen DeGray**  
Wilmot Cancer Institute, UR Medicine

**Elected: Jilliann De Jong, CCRP**  
The University of Kansas Cancer Center

**Elected: Chloé Fourrier, MBA, CCRP**  
Duke Cancer Institute, Duke University Medical Center

**Elected: Krista French, CCRP**  
Wilmot Cancer Institute, UR Medicine

**Elected: Katie Hogan**  
University of Colorado Cancer Center

**Elected: Mary Horak, CCRP**  
UPMC Hillman Cancer Center

**Elected: Christine Jerome, MS, CCRP**  
Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson Health

**Elected: Fyalon Kerr, CCRP**  
Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center

**Elected: Rachel Kingsford, MS, CCRP**  
Huntsman Cancer Institute at the University of Utah

**Elected: Stacey Lewis, RN, BSN, OCN, BBA**  
Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist Comprehensive Cancer Center

**Elected: Erin E. Lynch, MS, CCRP**  
Dartmouth Cancer Center

**Elected: Holly McClellan**  
Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center

**Elected: Mimi McKay, MPH, BSN, RN, CCRP**  
Holden Comprehensive Cancer Center  
University of Iowa

**Elected: Cary Passaglia, MSRC, CCRP**  
Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University
FINANCE AND INVESTMENT
Chair: David M. Gosky, MA, MBA
The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center - James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute

Jill Brabbs, MBA
University of Michigan Rogel Cancer Center

Patrick O’Brien, MBA
Fox Chase Cancer Center, Temple Health

Julia C. Schaum, MS
Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center

Joanna Weiss, CPA
Moffitt Cancer Center

Reuben J. Shaw, PhD
Salk Institute Cancer Center

Cornelia Ulrich, MS, PhD
Huntsman Cancer Institute at the University of Utah

George J. Weiner, MD
Holden Comprehensive Cancer Center
University of Iowa

Cheryl L. Willman, MD
Mayo Clinic Comprehensive Cancer Center

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS
Chair: Matthew Swaback, MHA
Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson Health

Alexander R. Currie
Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center

David M. Gosky, MA, MBA
The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center - James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute

James Kennedy
Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center

Alex M. Krigstein
University of Florida Health Cancer Center

Catherine Liao
Duke Cancer Institute, Duke University Medical Center

Joel McClelland
University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill

Carla V. Glass, PhD
Cato S. Laurencin, MD

Physician Clinical Leadership Initiative (PCLI) Steering Committee
Chair: Karen L. Reckamp, MD, MS
Cedars-Sinai Cancer Center

Paula Fracasso, MD, PhD, FACP
VCU Massey Comprehensive Cancer Center

Carrie Lee, MD, MPH
UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Christopher Lieu, MD
University of Colorado Cancer Center

Stephanie Lim, MD, MBA
University of Hawai‘i Cancer Center
University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

Quan P. Ly, MD, FACS
Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center

Nicole Simone, MD
Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson Health

Julie Ann Sosa, MD, MA, FACS, MAMSE, FSSO
UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center

Julie M. Vose, MD, MBA
University of Nebraska Medical Center

Theresa L. Werner, MD
Huntsman Cancer Institute at the University of Utah

Julia White, MD, FACP, FASTRO
The University of Kansas Cancer Center

Lee Wilke, MD
University of Wisconsin Carbone Cancer Center

PC LI Cancer Service Line Survey Working Group
Paula Fracasso, MD, PhD, FACP
VCU Massey Comprehensive Cancer Center

Stephanie Lim, MD, MBA
University of Hawai‘i Cancer Center
University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

Nicole Simone, MD
Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson Health

Lee Wilke, MD
University of Wisconsin Carbone Cancer Center
**UNITED STATES**

**ALABAMA**
O’Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center at the University of Alabama at Birmingham
Birmingham, Alabama

**ARIZONA**
Mayo Clinic Comprehensive Cancer Center, Arizona
Scottsdale, Arizona

The University of Arizona Cancer Center
Tucson, Arizona

**ARKANSAS**
UAMS Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute
Little Rock, Arkansas

**CALIFORNIA**
Cedars-Sinai Cancer Center
Los Angeles, California
City of Hope Comprehensive Cancer Center
Duarte, California
Loma Linda University Cancer Center
Loma Linda, California
Salk Institute Cancer Center
La Jolla, California
Sanford Burnham Prebys Medical Discovery Institute
La Jolla, California
Stanford Cancer Institute
Palo Alto, California
UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center
Sacramento, California
UC San Diego Moores Cancer Center
La Jolla, California
UCI Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer Center
Orange, California
UCLA Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center
Los Angeles, California
UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center
San Francisco, California
USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center
Los Angeles, California

**COLORADO**
University of Colorado Cancer Center
Aurora, Colorado

**CONNECTICUT**
Yale Cancer Center
Yale School of Medicine
New Haven, Connecticut

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**
Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center
Washington, District of Columbia
GW Cancer Center
Washington, District of Columbia

**FLORIDA**
Mayo Clinic Comprehensive Cancer Center, Florida
Jacksonville, Florida
Moffitt Cancer Center
Tampa, Florida
Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center
University of Miami
Miami, Florida
University of Florida Health Cancer Center
Gainesville, Florida

**GEORGIA**
Georgia Cancer Center, Augusta University
Augusta, Georgia
Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University
Atlanta, Georgia

**HAWAII**
University of Hawai‘i Cancer Center
University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa
Honolulu, Hawai‘i

**ILLINOIS**
Cancer Center at Illinois
Urbana, Illinois
Cardinal Bernardin Cancer Center
Loyola University of Chicago
Maywood, Illinois
Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University
Chicago, Illinois
The University of Chicago Medicine Comprehensive Cancer Center
Chicago, Illinois
University of Illinois Cancer Center
Chicago, Illinois

**INDIANA**
Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center
Indianapolis, Indiana
Purdue University Institute for Cancer Research
West Lafayette, Indiana

**IOWA**
Holden Comprehensive Cancer Center
University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa

**KANSAS**
The University of Kansas Cancer Center
Kansas City, Kansas

**KENTUCKY**
UK Markey Cancer Center
Lexington, Kentucky
UofL James Graham Brown Cancer Center
Louisville, Kentucky

**LOUISIANA**
Louisiana Cancer Research Center
New Orleans, Louisiana
LSU LCMC Cancer Center
New Orleans, Louisiana

**MAINE**
The Jackson Laboratory Cancer Center
Bar Harbor, Maine

**MARYLAND**
Murtha Cancer Center at Walter Reed Bethesda
Bethesda, Maryland
Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins University
Baltimore, Maryland
University of Maryland Marlene and Stewart Greenebaum Comprehensive Cancer Center
Baltimore, Maryland

**MASSACHUSETTS**
Boston University Cancer Center
Boston, Massachusetts
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute
Harvard Medical School
Boston, Massachusetts
Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research at MIT
Cambridge, Massachusetts

**MICHIGAN**
Karmansos Cancer Institute
Wayne State University
Detroit, Michigan
University of Michigan Rogel Cancer Center
Ann Arbor, Michigan

**MINNESOTA**
Masonic Cancer Center
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minnesota
Mayo Clinic Comprehensive Cancer Center
Rochester, Minnesota

**MISSISSIPPI**
UMMC Cancer Center and Research Institute
Jackson, Mississippi

**MISSOURI**
Ellis Fischel Cancer Center
Columbia, Missouri
Siteman Cancer Center
St. Louis, Missouri
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