



For more information, contact:

[Chris Zurawsky](#)

Director of Communications and Public Affairs

412-802-6775

chris@aaci-cancer.org

[Emily Stimmel](#)

Communications and External Relations Coordinator

412-647-0504

April 9, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cancer Center at Illinois is AACI's Newest Member

The Association of American Cancer Institutes (AACI) welcomed its newest member this spring, with the addition of the Cancer Center at Illinois (CCIL), University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. **Rohit Bhargava, PhD**, is director. The center applies the 150-year-old university's historic strengths in science and engineering to cancer research. Its mission is to foster and translate technological innovations that address cancer across the lifespan, enabling cancer-free lives for patients.

AACI's membership is comprised of academic and freestanding cancer research centers in the United States and Canada. Forming North America's cancer research infrastructure, AACI cancer centers are recognized worldwide for their excellence in translating promising research findings into new interventions to prevent and treat cancer.

"AACI is excited to welcome the Cancer Center at Illinois," said AACI Executive Director Jennifer W. Pegher. "With a multidisciplinary approach that applies engineering principles to cancer research, the CCIL will bring a unique and valuable perspective to our membership."

Supported by decades of infrastructure investments and world-class educational programs, the CCIL is the hub of a highly integrated research ecosystem that aims to develop next-generation technologies to improve cancer care.

The CCIL is comprised of two complementary, multidisciplinary basic cancer research programs: Cancer Measurement Technology and Data Science, and Discovery Platforms Bridging the Engineering-Biology Continuum. These two programs employ 70 full members focused on themes including next-generation imaging; precision medicine; computational biology; cancer drug discovery; and model systems, both natural and engineered.



The goal of the Cancer Measurement Technology and Data Science Program is to develop novel technologies in medical imaging, cellular/molecular diagnostics, and computational strategies that translate to clinical practice. The Discovery Platforms Bridging the Engineering-Biology Continuum Program aims to discover novel cancer targets through mechanistic studies, develop lead drugs against these targets, and exploit a spectrum of pre-clinical models to advance research for the benefit of cancer patients.

The cancer center is part of a university-wide emphasis on interdisciplinary health research, which also includes the engineering-based Carle Illinois College of Medicine — the first new college on the university's Urbana-Champaign campus in more than 50 years. With a focus on maximizing shared resources, the CCIL has cultivated partnerships with the Carle Foundation Hospital and the Mayo Clinic to accelerate advances in cancer treatment and provide novel cancer-related educational experiences to students — from high schoolers to postdoctoral fellows.

###

AACI is dedicated to reducing the burden of cancer by enhancing the impact of North America's leading academic cancer centers. For more information, please visit www.aaci-cancer.org.