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News From the Association of American Cancer Institutes | November 2020

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[Awards & Honors](#) | [Grants & Gifts](#) | [Leadership Highlights](#) | [Research Highlights](#) | [Other News & COVID-19](#)

AACI HEADLINES

[IU Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center Names New Director](#)



Indiana University School of Medicine has announced the hiring of **Kelvin Lee, MD**, to lead the Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center, bolstered by a \$15 million fund established by the Walther Cancer Foundation to support him in this role. [Read More](#)

[Director Appointed for University of Illinois Cancer Center](#)



Jan Kitajewski, PhD, has been appointed director of the University of Illinois (UI) Cancer Center effective November 13, 2020. He has served as interim director since December 2019 and joined UI Cancer Center in 2016 from Herbert Irving Comprehensive Cancer Center. [Read More](#)

[Permanent Director Selected for WVU Cancer Institute](#)

Hannah Hazard-Jenkins, MD, associate chair of surgery for cancer services and a native West Virginian, has been named the permanent director of the WVU Cancer Institute after having served in the position on an interim basis since January. [Read More](#)



Virtual AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting Attracts Record Registrations



The coronavirus pandemic has challenged the cancer research community in countless ways, and the **2020 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting** was no exception. Held virtually for the first time during two days in October, the event drew nearly 900 cancer center colleagues for presentations on topics ranging from cancer screening guidelines and managing change in clinical trials to pediatric oncology and end-of-life care. [Read More](#)

CRI Update: Abstract Book Available, CTO Medical Director Roundtable Planned



AACI's Clinical Research Innovation (CRI) has published a **digital book of abstracts and posters** from the 12th Annual AACI CRI Meeting. The book features 77 abstracts from 31 cancer centers submitted for virtual presentation at the CRI meeting this past July. The CRI Clinical Trials Office (CTO) Medical Director Working Group will host a virtual roundtable on Tuesday, November 10. The discussion will focus on the results of a recent survey distributed to CTO medical directors. [Read More](#)

New Presidential Initiative to Focus on Mitigating Cancer Disparities



At the 2020 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting, AACI President **Karen E. Knudsen, MBA, PhD**, announced plans for her presidential initiative, which will leverage the expertise of North America's 102 leading cancer institutes to address cancer health disparities. Through a two-phase process, the initiative will convert understanding of cancer disparities across AACI cancer centers into meaningful, measurable actions to improve the lives of people with cancer. [Read More](#)

AACI Expands Public Policy Resource Library to Track Federal Legislation

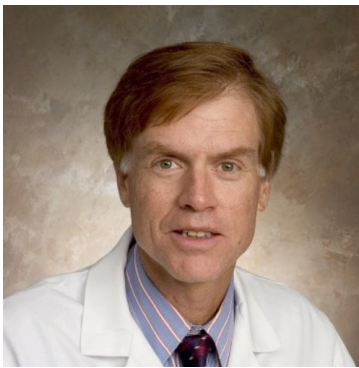
AACI recently launched a federal legislation tracking tool for its **Public Policy Resource Library** (PPRL). The **legislation tracker** will provide updates on the status of cancer-related bills and will track efforts by AACI and likeminded organizations to advance the legislation. The tracker will specifically highlight federal legislation that has been endorsed by AACI's Board of Directors. [Read More](#)

NEWS FROM THE CENTERS

AWARDS & HONORS

Evers Elected to National Academy of Medicine

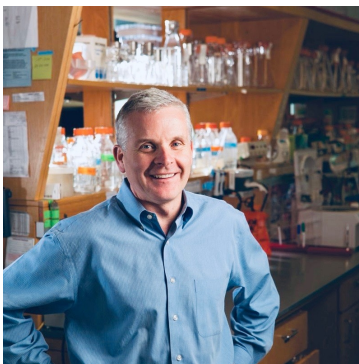
UK Markey Cancer Center



B. Mark Evers, MD, FACS, director of UK Markey Cancer Center, has been elected to the National Academy of Medicine. Dr. Evers was elected for his expertise on intestinal hormones and hormonal arcades in oncogenesis. [Read More](#)

McDonnell to Receive Komen Brinker Award

Duke Cancer Institute, Duke University Medical Center



The national breast cancer organization Susan G. Komen® has announced that **Donald McDonnell, PhD**, is one of two breast cancer researchers named to receive the nonprofit's Brinker Award for Scientific Distinction — Komen's highest scientific honor. [Read More](#)

Mullett Begins Term as Commission on Cancer Chair

UK Markey Cancer Center



Cardiothoracic surgeon **Timothy W. Mullett, MD, MBA, FACS**, has started a two-year term as chair of the Commission on Cancer of the American College of Surgeons. He serves as medical director of the UK Markey Cancer Center Affiliate Network and specializes in the treatment of lung cancer. [Read More](#)

Ribas Elected to National Academy of Medicine

[UCLA Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)



Antoni Ribas, MD, PhD, has been named to the National Academy of Medicine. He was recognized for defining the mechanistic basis of how patients respond to or develop resistance to checkpoint inhibitors and for leading multicenter clinical trials for patients with advanced melanoma. [Read More](#)

Tetzlaff Named President of Association of Physician Assistants in Oncology

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

Colleen Tetzlaff, MHS, PA-C, an advanced practice clinician at Fox Chase Cancer Center, was recently named president of the Association of Physician Assistants in Oncology for 2020-2021. [Read More](#)

Cone Receives 2020 APSHO Award for Excellence

[Duke Cancer Institute, Duke University Medical Center](#)



The Advanced Practitioner Society for Hematology and Oncology (APSHO) presented the third annual Mary Pazdur Award for Excellence in Advanced Practice in Oncology to **Christina Cone, DNP, APRN, ANP-BC, AOCNP®**, of Duke Cancer Institute, at JADPRO Live Virtual 2020, an educational conference for oncology advanced practitioners. [Read More](#)

Fox Chase Receives Press Ganey 2020 Guardian of Excellence Award

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

Press Ganey has recognized Fox Chase Cancer Center with its 2020 Guardian of Excellence Award for providing outstanding clinical performance for patients in its outpatient clinics. The award honors organizations who continually perform in the top five percent for patient experience, engagement, or clinical quality performance throughout each quarter of the award year. [Read More](#)

GRANTS & GIFTS

Team Receives \$11.2 Million to Leverage the Microbiome Against GVHD

[University of Michigan Rogel Cancer Center](#)

\$11 Million Investment to Expand IU-Purdue Bioinformatics Collaboration

[Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)

Grant Renewal Will Support Cancer Retrovirus Research

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

\$8.5 Million Gift to Establish Breast Cancer Research Institute

[The University of Arizona Cancer Center](#)

Cedars-Sinai to Study Unequal Impact of COVID-19 on Minorities

Cedars-Sinai Cancer

Mount Sinai Part of New NCI Serological Sciences Network

The Tisch Cancer Institute at Mount Sinai

\$7.2 Million Grant for Cancer Prevention Trials

University of Michigan Rogel Cancer Center

\$7 Million Grant Renewal Supports Cancer Drug Research Based on Natural Compounds

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

NCI Funds Investigation of Relationships Between HIV, Lung Cancer in East Africa

Case Comprehensive Cancer Center

Dasgupta Earns NIH Director's New Innovator Award

Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center

\$1.6 Million Awarded for Rutgers Youth Enjoy Science Program

Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey

Grant to Fund COVID-19 Research in Patients With Hematologic Cancers

Yale Cancer Center, Yale School of Medicine

Felsher Receives NCI Outstanding Investigator Award

Stanford Cancer Institute

LEADERSHIP TRANSITIONS

Breast Cancer and Radiation Researcher Joins Mays

Mays Cancer Center, UT Health San Antonio

David Gius, MD, PhD, a breast cancer and radiation researcher, has joined the Mays Cancer Center. He was recruited from the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University with a \$6 million senior investigator recruitment grant from the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas.

[Read More](#)

Dinan Named Co-Leader of Cancer Prevention and Control Research Program

Yale Cancer Center, Yale School of Medicine



Michaela A. Dinan, PhD, has been appointed co-leader of the Cancer Prevention and Control Research Program at Yale Cancer Center beginning January 1, 2021. She joins Yale from Duke Cancer Institute/Duke Clinical Research Institute. [Read More](#)

Director of Gastrointestinal Oncology Program Appointed

The Tisch Cancer Institute at Mount Sinai



Deirdre J. Cohen, MD, MS, has joined Mount Sinai Health System as director of the Gastrointestinal Oncology Program and medical director of the Cancer Clinical Trials Office at The Tisch Cancer Institute. [Read More](#)

Mesa Elevated to Executive Director

Mays Cancer Center, UT Health San Antonio



Ruben Mesa, MD, FACP, has been named executive director of the Mays Cancer Center. The appointment broadens Dr. Mesa's scope of responsibility in coordinating and integrating all aspects of cancer prevention, screening, care, and survivorship with practice, education, and research across UT Health San Antonio. [Read More](#)

Park to Lead Hematology and Oncology

Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center



After serving as interim director since January 1, **Ben Ho Park, MD, PhD**, has been named director of the division of hematology and oncology at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. He is associate director for translational research, co-leader of the breast cancer research program, and director of precision oncology at Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center. [Read More](#)

Gerson to Serve as Interim Dean for Additional Year

Case Comprehensive Cancer Center

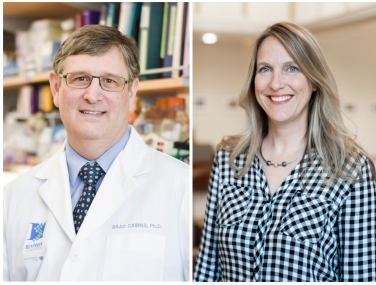


Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine Interim Dean **Stanton L. Gerson, MD**, has agreed to extend his term for another year, to June 30, 2022. Dr. Gerson is a Distinguished University Professor, longtime director of the Case Comprehensive Cancer Center, and a past president of AACI. [Read More](#)

Chief Academic Officer, Senior Director of Basic Science Named

Huntsman Cancer Institute, University of Utah

Brad Cairns, PhD, has accepted an appointment as chief academic officer at Huntsman Cancer Institute. In addition, **Alana Welm, PhD**,



has accepted an appointment as senior director of basic science, a role previously held by Dr. Cairns. [Read More](#)

Winkfield to Direct Meharry-Vanderbilt Alliance

[Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center](#)



Karen Winkfield, MD, PhD, associate director for Community Outreach and Engagement and director of the Office of Cancer Health Equity at Wake Forest Baptist Comprehensive Cancer Center, has been named the new executive director of the Meharry-Vanderbilt Alliance. [Read More](#)

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Researchers Seek to End Unexpected Bills for Screening Colonoscopies

[University of Virginia Cancer Center](#)

New Discovery Could Help Improve Cancer Vaccines

[Siteman Cancer Center](#)

Risk of Deadly Skin Cancer May Be Gauged by Accumulated DNA Damage

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

Study Finds Cancer Mutations Accumulate in Distinct Regions Based on Structure of Genome, Mutational Causes

[The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center](#)

Experimental Drug Being Developed to Thwart Pancreatic Cancer, Other KRAS-Driven Tumors

[VCU Massey Cancer Center](#)

Study Shows Increased Failure-Free Survival in Prostate Cancer

[Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University](#)

Research Finds Anticancer Drugs Also Effective Against Epstein-Barr Virus-Related Cancers

[University of Florida Health Cancer Center](#)

Study: Personalized Cancer Therapy Improves Outcomes in Advanced Disease

[UC San Diego Moores Cancer Center](#)

Biomarker Found That Can Appear Before Stomach Cancer Develops

[The University of Arizona Cancer Center](#)

CAR NKT Cells Offer a Promising Novel Immunotherapy for Solid Tumors

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

Immunotherapy Trial in Advanced Bladder and Other Urinary Tract Cancers Shows Results

Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center

Tool Developed to Better Predict Treatment Course for Lung Cancer Patients

Moffitt Cancer Center

Virus-Mimicking Drug Helps Immune System Target Cunning Cancer Cells

UCLA Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center

Axing the ACA Means Young Adults With Cancer Lose Coverage

UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center

Molecular Shape Shifters

University of New Mexico Comprehensive Cancer Center

Opioid Use Among Cancer Patients

The University of Kansas Cancer Center

Not All Patients Are Offered the Same Effective Breast Cancer Treatment

Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson Health

UVA Improves Care for Cancers That Have Spread to the Brain

University of Virginia Cancer Center

Activating Inflammasome May Improve Cancer Response to Immunotherapy and PARP Inhibitors

Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins University

Changing Gut Microbiota, Taming Inflammation May Help Battle Colorectal Cancer

University of Florida Health Cancer Center

Genomic Differences May Be Key to Overcoming Prostate Cancer Disparities Among African-American Men

Moffitt Cancer Center

New Strategy for Overcoming Resistance to Immunotherapy Unleashes Power of Dendritic Cells

Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center

Sexual Health Often Overlooked in Cancer Survivorship Care, Especially for Women

Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson Health

Social Media Policies Can Curb HPV Vaccine Misinformation, Improve Public Health Communications

VCU Massey Cancer Center

Study Shows How HIV and Cancer Drugs Accelerate Cellular Aging

UPMC Hillman Cancer Center

Study Documents Racial Differences in U.S. Hospice Use and End-of-Life Care Preferences

Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins University

AI Tool Created to Guide Colorectal Cancer Care With More Precision

OTHER NEWS & COVID-19

Assessing Diversity in Cancer Center Leadership

Association of American Cancer Institutes

Results from a [leadership diversity survey](#) conducted by AACI in partnership with *The Cancer Letter (TCL)* show that there is a long road ahead in confronting cancer disparities in the oncology leadership pipeline. In an [editorial](#) published in the October 9 edition of *TCL*, AACI President **Karen E. Knudsen, MBA, PhD**, and Immediate Past President **Roy A. Jensen, MD**, shared their thoughts on the survey results. [Read More](#)

Cancer Compound Leads to Licensing Deal

Cancer Center at Illinois

Researchers affiliated with the Cancer Center at Illinois discovered a novel small molecule compound that is now the subject of a new global licensing agreement between the pharmaceutical company Bayer AG and the cancer drug development company Systems Oncology LLC. [Read More](#)

Investment Fund Launched to Support Promising Investigational Cancer Therapies

The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

The Focus Fund GP, LLC, in partnership with The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, has launched Cancer Focus Fund, LP, an oncology-focused investment fund designed to support the advancement of compelling investigational cancer therapies from late preclinical development through Phase I and Phase Ib/II clinical trials. [Read More](#)

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Cancer Center Director

Sanford Burnham Prebys Medical Discovery Institute

Director, Cancer Center

The University of Vermont Cancer Center

Director, Clinical Trials Office

University of New Mexico Comprehensive Cancer Center

Senior Director, Clinical Operations and Compliance

University of Maryland Marlene and Stewart Greenebaum Comprehensive Cancer Center

Chief Operating Officer, Indiana Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute

Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center

Assistant Professor of Oncology

Livestrong Cancer Institutes, The University of Texas at Austin, Dell Medical School

Informatics Project Manager

UCI Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer Center

Sponsored Programs Administrator

UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

AACI MEETINGS AND EVENTS

13th Annual AACI CRI Meeting
SAVE THE DATE

July 13-15, 2021



2021 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting

SAVE THE DATE

October 17-19, 2021

MEMBER MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS

2020 SITC Annual Meeting

Society for the Immunotherapy of Cancer

VIRTUAL MEETING

November 9-14, 2020

[Learn More](#)



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