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News From the Association of American Cancer Institutes | March 2021

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

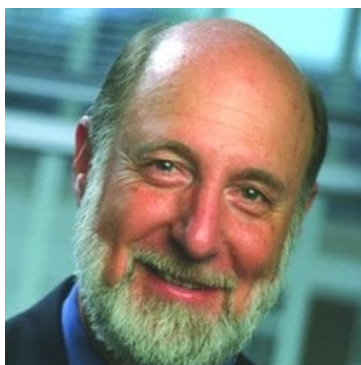
AACI HEADLINES

[Thayer Selected as New Director of Feist-Weiller Cancer Center](#)



Sarah Thayer, MD, PhD, FACS, has been selected as the new director of Ochsner LSU Health Shreveport – Feist-Weiller Cancer Center. The cancer center was established by an act of the Louisiana Board of Regents in 1993. Dr. Thayer joins Feist-Weiller from the University of Nebraska Medical Center where she served as physician-in-chief and associate director for clinical affairs. [Read More](#)

[AACI Marks the Passing of UVA Cancer Center Director Emeritus Michael Weber](#)



Michael J. Weber, PhD, has passed away following a battle with pancreatic cancer. Dr. Weber was key to the founding of the University of Virginia Cancer Center in 1984, obtaining a grant from the National Cancer Institute (NCI) that partially paid to renovate laboratories to house investigators. Based on its strengths in fundamental laboratory science, the cancer center received its NCI designation in 1987. [Read More](#)

[Paper on Protected Time for Clinician Investigators Published](#)

The *Journal of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network* has published “[Status of the Clinician Investigator in America: An Essential Health Care Provider Driving Advances in Cancer Care](#),” a report based on an AACI survey about protected time for research efforts. The lead author is **Randall F. Holcombe, MD, MBA**, director of the University of Hawai'i Cancer Center, and past chair of AACI's



Physician Clinical Leadership Initiative (PCLC) Steering Committee.
[Read More](#)

Register Today for the 13th Annual AACI CRI Meeting



Registration is open for the 13th Annual AACI Clinical Research Innovation (CRI) Meeting, which will be held virtually **July 13-15**. The three-day online meeting will deliver the innovative, quality education that AACI members have enjoyed at prior CRI annual meetings. This year's meeting theme will focus on adapting cancer clinical research for 2021 and beyond. [Read More](#)

PCLC Webinar: The State of Telehealth



AACI's **Physician Clinical Leadership Initiative (PCLC)** will host "**The State of Telehealth**" on **Wednesday, March 10** at 1:00 pm eastern time. The webinar will examine the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on telemedicine. [Read More](#)

NEWS FROM THE CENTERS

AWARDS & HONORS

CCIL Director Named OSA Award Recipient

Cancer Center at Illinois



Rohit Bhargava, PhD, Cancer Center at Illinois director, was selected as the 2021 recipient of The Optical Society (OSA) Ellis R. Lippincott Award. Co-presented by the OSA, the Coblenz Society, and the Society for Applied Spectroscopy, this award recognizes significant innovations in the field of vibrational spectroscopy. [Read More](#)

Cote Named a National Academy of Inventors Senior Member

Siteman Cancer Center



Richard J. Cote, MD, a research member at Siteman Cancer Center, has been elected a senior member of the National Academy of Inventors. He has developed tools for analyzing tumor cells and predicting disease progression and response to therapy. [Read More](#)

GRANTS & GIFTS

VA Grant to Evaluate Whether Topical Medication Can Prevent Common Skin Cancer

[Cancer Center at Brown University](#)

Reducing Cancer Disparities Gets a Boost

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

BMS Grant Fights Cancer in Native and Rural Communities

[Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)

\$2.2 Million Grant Awarded for Breast Cancer Imaging Study

[Cancer Center at Illinois](#)

Stress, Cancer Risk, Reproductive Toxicity Studied in Women Firefighters

[The University of Arizona Cancer Center](#)

Award to Better Inform HER2 Breast Cancer Treatment

[Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey](#)

Family Gives \$1 Million for NCI Designation

[UAMS Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute](#)

Grant to Address Cancer Health Inequities

[Yale Cancer Center, Yale School of Medicine](#)

Pledge Honors Wife, Family

[UAMS Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute](#)

Kim and Tim Eberlein Distinguished Professorship Established

[Siteman Cancer Center](#)

LEADERSHIP TRANSITIONS

Walker Returns to Roswell Park in Newly Created Executive Role

[Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)

An experienced executive with a passion for serving cancer patients and exceptional strategic leadership skills has rejoined the Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center team. Roswell Park President and CEO **Candace S. Johnson, PhD**, has recruited **Jeff Walker, MBA**, back to Western New York to fill the new role of executive vice president of operations and transformation. Walker has served many years as treasurer of AACI. [Read More](#)



Plimack Appointed Chair of Scientific Advisory Board for Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network

Fox Chase Cancer Center, Temple Health



Elizabeth Plimack, MD, MS, chief of the Division of Genitourinary Medical Oncology at Fox Chase Cancer Center, has been appointed chair of the scientific advisory board for the Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network. [Read More](#)

Apte Joins Huntsman as Chief Clinical Officer

Huntsman Cancer Institute, University of Utah



Huntsman Cancer Institute (HCI) and University of Utah Health welcome **Sachin Apte, MD, MS, MBA**. He will serve as chief clinical officer of HCI and physician-in-chief of the cancer hospital. Dr. Apte joins HCI from Moffitt Cancer Center where he served as associate chief medical officer. [Read More](#)

Hamstra Named Chair of Department of Radiation Oncology

Dan L Duncan Comprehensive Cancer Center at Baylor College of Medicine

Daniel Hamstra, MD, PhD, is joining Baylor College of Medicine as professor and chair of the Department of Radiation Oncology. He will serve as the radiation oncology lead at the Dan L Duncan Comprehensive Cancer Center and radiation oncology service line chief for St. Luke's Health – Texas Division. Dr. Hamstra joins Baylor after nine years at the University of Michigan. [Read More](#)

Barnes Joins Massey as Cancer Service Line VP

VCU Massey Cancer Center

VCU Massey Cancer Center and VCU Health System welcome **Katie Barnes, MPA**, as vice president of the cancer service line, a new collaborative model designed to fulfill strategic initiatives for Massey while maintaining close alignment with VCU Health System. [Read More](#)



Chiang Appointed Deputy Chief Medical Officer and Chief Integration Officer at Smilow

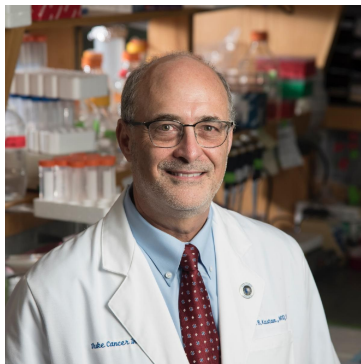
Yale Cancer Center, Yale School of Medicine



Anne Chiang, MD, PhD, has been named deputy chief medical officer and chief integration officer at Smilow Cancer Hospital. Dr. Chiang will partner with Smilow leadership to further expand multidisciplinary cancer services across the care center network. [Read More](#)

2021 Brings Changes to Research Programs, Leadership

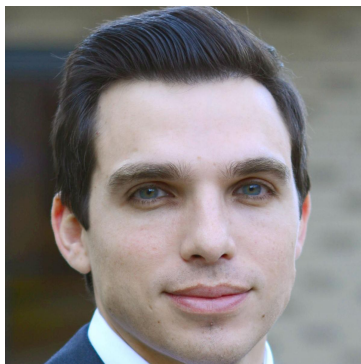
Duke Cancer Institute, Duke University Medical Center



In a recent message to faculty, Duke Cancer Institute Director **Michael B. Kastan, MD, PhD**, detailed institutional changes, including new program names and newly appointed leaders, including new associate directors in basic research and translational research. [Read More](#)

Spratt Named New Chair of Radiation Oncology

Case Comprehensive Cancer Center



Daniel E. Spratt, MD, will join the UH Seidman Cancer Center team and hold the Vincent K. Smith chair in radiation oncology, effective May 1. Dr. Spratt joins Seidman—part of the Case Comprehensive Cancer Center consortium—from the University of Michigan. [Read More](#)

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Potential Biomarker for IBD Severity, Cancer Risk Identified

Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center

Neoadjuvant Combination Immunotherapy Improves Outcomes for Early Stage Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer

The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

Researchers Discover How Breast Cancer Cells Hide From Immune Attack

Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center

Focused Genetic Testing Recommended for Breast and Ovarian Cancers

Stanford Cancer Institute

Genomic Test Helps Estimate Risk of Prostate Cancer Metastasis, Death

Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins University

Process Ensures Follow-up of Incidental Radiology Findings

Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center

Virtual Human Intervention Allows for Colorectal Cancer Screening From Home

University of Florida Health Cancer Center

New Test Predicts Tumors Most Likely to Respond to Radiation, Chemotherapy

UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center

Chatter Between Cell Populations Drives Progression of Gastrointestinal Tumor

UC San Diego Moores Cancer Center

Drug-Delivery Microcapsules Tagged With Zirconium-89 Can Be Tracked by PET Imaging

O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center at the University of Alabama at Birmingham

New Method of Counting Tumor Cells Offers Possibility of a Liquid Biopsy

Case Comprehensive Cancer Center

Targeted RNA Nanoparticle Shows Early Promise as Treatment for Liver Cancer

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

Team Builds First Model of Progression of AML Using CRISPR

The Tisch Cancer Institute at Mount Sinai

Children's Mercy Joins Pediatric Early Phase Clinical Trials Network

The University of Kansas Cancer Center

New Prostate Cancer Test Could Avoid Unnecessary Biopsies

University of Michigan Rogel Cancer Center

SRC-3 is a Novel Regulator of Human Immune T Regulatory Cells

Dan L Duncan Comprehensive Cancer Center at Baylor College of Medicine

Technology Could Upend DNA Sequencing for Diagnosing Certain DNA Mutations

VCU Massey Cancer Center

Validation of Novel Prognostic Index May Better Inform Burkitt Lymphoma Treatment

Genetic Tool Improves Estimation of Prostate Cancer Risk in Diverse Ethnic, Racial Groups

UC San Diego Moores Cancer Center

Blood Discoveries Advance Effort to Grow Organs, Battle Cancer

University of Virginia Cancer Center

Researchers Developing New Cancer Immunotherapy Drug

University of Florida Health Cancer Center

OTHER NEWS & COVID-19

Freireich Passes Away at 93

The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center



Emil J. Freireich, MD, a trailblazing oncologist who developed groundbreaking therapies for childhood leukemia and came to be recognized as a founding father of modern clinical cancer research, passed away peacefully at his beloved institution, The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, on February 1. He was 93. [Read More](#)

Grant Program Fosters Cancer Prevention, Control

Stanford Cancer Institute

The Stanford Cancer Institute announces the launch of its Community Partnership Seed Grant Program. The program fosters community-driven cancer prevention and control efforts by partnering Stanford researchers, physicians, trainees, and/or staff with community partners to develop projects focused on the cancer burden of medically underserved populations. [Read More](#)

New State Bill Eliminates Barriers to Treatment for Stage IV Cancer Patients

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

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine has signed into law a new bill to ensure immediate access to treatment for Stage IV cancer patients in the state, a move that cancer physicians with OSUCCC – James cite as of critical importance for patients facing advanced cancers. [Read More](#)

Email Fraud Reminder From AACI

Association of American Cancer Institutes

AACI recently received a fraudulent email message that incorporated AACI's domain name. Please remain alert to possible phishing and email scams, especially if you receive unsolicited messages, attachments, and requests for replies. [Read More](#)

Pandemic Brings Career Setbacks for Women in Medicine

UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center

Women in academic medicine are facing the prospect of career setbacks as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. **Katherine Van Loon, MD, MPH**, and **Bridget Keenan, MD, PHD**, recently published their views on the issue and offered solutions for institutions. [Read More](#)

Cancer Patients and COVID-19 Vaccines

Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center

The initial batch of COVID-19 vaccines are now available in the U.S. following incredibly fast development and testing. Not so incredibly, there's a lot of confusion among cancer patients, as well as their oncologists and caregivers, as to whether the vaccine is a good or bad idea for somebody dealing with cancer. [Read More](#)

COVID-19 Infection in Immunodeficient Patient Cured by Infusing Convalescent Plasma

[O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center at the University of Alabama at Birmingham](#)

A 72-year-old woman was hospitalized with severe COVID-19 disease, 33 days after the onset of symptoms. She was unable to mount her own immune defense against the SARS-CoV-2 virus because of chronic lymphocytic leukemia. But when physicians at the University of Alabama at Birmingham recommended a single intravenous infusion of convalescent blood plasma from her son-in-law—who had recovered from COVID-19 disease—she showed profound improvement within 48 hours. [Read More](#)

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Associate Director, Administration

[The University of Arizona Cancer Center](#)

Clinical Program Coordinators

[Moffitt Cancer Center](#)

Clinical Research Coordinator

[Moffitt Cancer Center](#)

Executive Director

[Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University](#)

Postdoctoral Research Associate II

[The University of Arizona Cancer Center](#)

Principal Research Administrator - Program Manager

[The University of Arizona Cancer Center](#)

Project Administrator

[Sanford Burnham Prebys Medical Discovery Institute](#)

Research Professional I

[The University of Arizona Cancer Center](#)

AACI MEETINGS AND EVENTS



**AACI/AACR
HILL DAY**

SAVE THE DATE

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021

VIRTUAL

 Association of American Cancer Institutes

 American Association for Cancer Research

AACI/AACR Hill Day

VIRTUAL MEETING

July 9, 2021

13th Annual AACI CRI Meeting

VIRTUAL MEETING | REGISTER TODAY

July 13-15, 2021



2021 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting

SAVE THE DATE

October 17-19, 2021

MEMBER MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS



Cancer Disparities Symposium

VIRTUAL MEETING

Case Comprehensive Cancer Center

March 4-5, 2021

Cancer Center Survivorship Research Forum

Innovations in Survivorship Care Delivery

Cancer Center Survivorship Research Forum

VIRTUAL MEETING

Masonic Cancer Center, University of Minnesota

April 15-16, 2021



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