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News From the Association of American Cancer Institutes | May 2021

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

AACI HEADLINES

[Knudsen to Step Down as AACI President](#)



AACI President **Karen E. Knudsen, MBA, PhD**, is resigning from Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center (SKCC) at Jefferson Health in Philadelphia. She will step down as AACI president and begin her new role as chief executive officer of the American Cancer Society (ACS) on **Tuesday, June 1**. Dr. Knudsen will be the first woman CEO to lead the 107-year-old organization and the American Cancer Society Cancer Advocacy Network (ACS CAN). [Read More](#)

[Holcombe Named Director of UVMCC](#)



Randall F. Holcombe, MD, MBA, has been appointed director of The University of Vermont Cancer Center (UVMCC) and chief of the Division of Hematology and Oncology in the Department of Medicine. He joins UVMCC from the National Cancer Institute (NCI)-Designated University of Hawai'i Cancer Center, where he has served as director since 2016. Dr. Holcombe will begin his tenure on August 1. He succeeds **Richard Galbraith, MD, PhD**, and **Chris Holmes, MD, PhD**, who became interim co-directors of UVMCC in 2020. [Read More](#)

[Reps. Higgins, Bilirakis to Receive Cancer Research Ally Award](#)

Representatives **Brian Higgins (D-NY)** and **Gus Bilirakis (R-FL)** will be honored with the Cancer Research Ally Award at the **2021 AACI/AACR Hill Day**, which will be held virtually on **Wednesday, June 9**. Both congressmen will deliver remarks as part of the event's lunchtime programming. [Read More](#)



CRI Keynote Spotlight: Mary 'Dicey' Jackson Scroggins



Mary "Dicey" Jackson Scroggins, MA, will deliver the keynote presentation on **Wednesday, July 14** during the **13th Annual AACI CRI Meeting**. Scroggins, a 24-year ovarian cancer survivor and recent acute myeloid leukemia (AML) survivor, research advocate, and health activist, is driven by a commitment to global health equity. [Read More](#)

Call for Nominations: AACI Cancer Health Equity Award

Nominations are now being accepted for the **2021 AACI Cancer Health Equity Award**. The award was created to recognize 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. The nomination period will close on **Friday, May 28**. [Read More](#)

Reminder: Promote Your Cancer Center With a CRI Meeting Program Ad



AACI invites you to promote your cancer center by purchasing an ad in the **13th Annual AACI CRI Meeting** program. The digital program book offers an excellent opportunity to showcase your center while supporting the CRI meeting. Your cancer center's program ad may highlight a conference or a new initiative, or celebrate the success of the center's clinical trials office. Cancer centers may also include links to their website and any upcoming events. [Read More](#)

NEWS FROM THE CENTERS

AWARDS & HONORS

Beckerle Elected to National Academy of Sciences

Huntsman Cancer Institute, University of Utah

The National Academy of Sciences has elected **Mary Beckerle, PhD**, Huntsman Cancer Institute CEO and distinguished professor of biology and oncological sciences at the University of Utah, as a member. Dr. Beckerle is among 120 newly elected members of the academy. [Read More](#)



Maquat Awarded 2021 Wolf Prize in Medicine

Wilmot Cancer Institute, UR Medicine



Lynne E. Maquat, PhD, the founding director of the Center for RNA Biology at the University of Rochester, has been honored with the 2021 Wolf Prize in Medicine. She shares the award with **Joan Steitz, PhD**, at Yale School of Medicine, and **Adrian Krainer, PhD**, at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory. [Read More](#)

Gordon Receives Kober Medal

Siteman Cancer Center



Jeffrey I. Gordon, MD, has been awarded the George M. Kober Medal from the Association of American Physicians in recognition of his contributions to the field of gut microbiome research. Dr. Gordon, a research member of Siteman Cancer Center, is considered to be the father of the field. [Read More](#)

Sharifi Honored With AACR Achievement Award

Case Comprehensive Cancer Center



The Case Comprehensive Cancer Center congratulates the Cleveland Clinic's **Nima Sharifi, MD**, on his selection as the 2021 recipient of the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) Waun Ki Hong Award for Outstanding Achievement in Translational and Clinical Cancer Research. [Read More](#)

Balderson Leads National Physician Assistants Organization

Duke Cancer Institute, Duke University Medical Institute

Duke Cancer Institute physician assistant **Scott Balderson, PA-C**, has begun his term as president of the national Association of Physician Assistants in Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgery. The association has



more than 700 members and supports advocacy, medical education, and professional recertification. [Read More](#)

Chi Receives Kastan Award

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



The American Association for Cancer Research has named **Jen-Tsan Ashley Chi, MD, PhD**, as co-winner of the Molecular Cancer Research Michael B. Kastan Award for Research Excellence on behalf of his all-Duke research team for their paper, "A TAZ-ANGPTL4-NOX2 Axis Regulates Ferroptotic Cell Death and Chemoresistance in Epithelial Ovarian Cancer." [Read More](#)

White Elected as a Fellow to the AACR Academy

[Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey](#)



Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey deputy director, **Eileen White, PhD**, has been elected to the 2021 class of Fellows of the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) Academy. [Read More](#)

GRANTS & GIFTS

\$10 Million Gift to Support Research Initiatives, New Director

[The University of Chicago Medicine Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)

\$6 Million Awarded to Decrease Disparities in Cancer Clinical Trials

[The Tisch Cancer Institute at Mount Sinai](#)

\$3 Million Grant Awarded to Apply AI to Lung Cancer Immunotherapy

[Case Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)

Advances in Brain Cancer Research Lead to \$3 Million Award

[Cancer Center at Illinois](#)

Maihle Wins DOD Award

[UMMC Cancer Center and Research Institute](#)

Seed Grant Leads to \$1.25 Million NIH Grant for Breast Cancer Research

Roswell Park, Wilmot Partner on First Large Study of Immunotherapy in Black Cancer Patients

Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center

Award to Jump-Start Young Scientists Seeking to Cure Cancer

Cedars-Sinai Cancer

LEADERSHIP TRANSITIONS

Associate Director for Cancer Equity Announced

USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center



Chanita Hughes-Halbert, PhD, will join USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center as associate director for cancer equity, a newly created position. Her appointment begins July 1 and she joins USC from the Medical University of South Carolina. [Read More](#)

Juckett Named CTO-CGI Medical Director

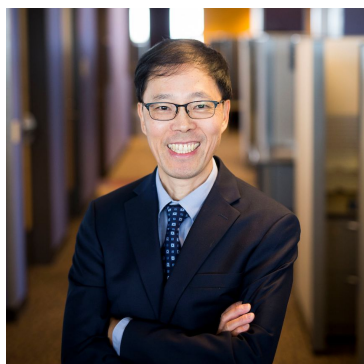
Masonic Cancer Center, University of Minnesota



Mark Juckett, MD, was appointed medical director of the Masonic Cancer Center Clinical Trials Office for the Cellular, Gene and Immunotherapy Initiative (CTO-CGI), succeeding **Shernan Holtan, MD**, who initiated the role. Dr. Juckett was recruited from the University of Wisconsin - Madison. [Read More](#)

Zheng Named Associate Director for Population Sciences Research

Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center



Wei Zheng, MD, PhD, MPH, has been named associate director for Population Sciences Research at Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center. He replaces **William Blot, PhD**, who retired from the leadership position on April 1. [Read More](#)

Kelly Named Associate Director for Cancer Research Training and Education

UAMS Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute

Thomas J. Kelly Jr., PhD, has been named associate director for cancer



research training and education at the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS). Dr. Kelly is an associate professor of pathology in the UAMS College of Medicine Department of Pathology and will become a full professor in July. [Read More](#)

New Chief of Hematology/Oncology Named

UPMC Hillman Cancer Center



Taofeek K. Owonikoko, MD, PhD, will join the UPMC Hillman Cancer Center and Department of Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh as chief of the Division of Hematology/Oncology. He also will serve as associate director for translational research and co-leader of the Cancer Therapeutics Program at Hillman. [Read More](#)

Lu Named EDT Co-Program Leader

Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center



Xiongbin Lu, PhD, has been named co-program leader of the Experimental and Developmental Therapeutics (EDT) research program. He has made important discoveries promoting translational development of human cancer research, including breast cancer targeted therapy and immunotherapy. [Read More](#)

Mohan Joins Moffitt as New Vice President of Digital

Moffitt Cancer Center



Santosh Mohan, MMCI, CPHIMS, FHIMSS has joined Moffitt Cancer Center as the new vice president of digital. This newly created position will be instrumental in Moffitt's success as the cancer center accelerates its digital capabilities to advance cancer care, treatment, and research. [Read More](#)

Physician-Researcher Tapped to Lead Cancer Genetics and Genomics Department

Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center

Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center has appointed **Agnes Witkiewicz, MD**, as director of cancer genetics and genomics. She will also hold the John & Santa Palisano Endowed Chair of Cancer Genetics.

[Read More](#)

Sacks Named Division Director in Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery

University of Wisconsin Carbone Cancer Center



Justin M. Sacks, MD, has been named director of the Division of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis. Dr. Sacks will treat patients at Siteman Cancer Center. [Read More](#)

Faculty Leader Named for Cancer Therapy Discovery and Development

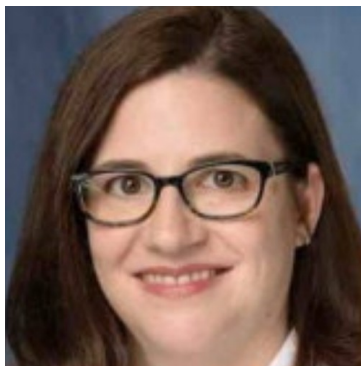
University of Wisconsin Carbone Cancer Center



Nataliya Uboha, MD, PhD, has been selected to lead the Cancer Therapy Discovery and Development program at the University of Wisconsin Carbone Cancer Center. [Read More](#)

Markham Appointed as Chief of Hematology and Oncology

University of Wisconsin Carbone Cancer Center



Merry Jennifer Markham, MD, FACP, FASCO, has been appointed as chief of the division of hematology and oncology in the UF College of Medicine. Dr. Markham has served as the associate director for medical affairs for the UF Health Cancer Center since 2017. [Read More](#)

Senior Director of Clinical Research Innovation Appointed

Huntsman Cancer Institute, University of Utah



Neeraj Agarwal, MD, a physician-scientist at Huntsman Cancer Institute, has been appointed senior director of clinical research innovation, overseeing critical components of Huntsman's clinical research infrastructure. [Read More](#)

Study Analyzes Clinical, Economic Impact of Hemorrhagic Cystitis in Stem Cell Transplant Patients

[The University of Kansas Cancer Center](#)

Study: Jump in Cancer Diagnoses at 65 Implies Patients Wait for Medicare

[Stanford Cancer Institute](#)

Having a Single Personal Doctor May Sometimes Lead to Unnecessary Tests

[University of Florida Health Cancer Center](#)

Drug Derived From Kentucky-Grown Plant Shows Promise for Ovarian Cancer Treatment

[UK Markey Cancer Center](#)

New CRISPR Technology Offers Unrivalled Control of Epigenetic Inheritance

[UCSF Helen Diller Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)

Patients With Metastatic Breast Cancer and High Mutational Burden Benefit From Pembrolizumab

[University of Michigan Rogel Cancer Center](#)

Protein Identified That Could Serve as Therapeutic Target in Lung Cancer

[VCU Massey Cancer Center](#)

Bone Microenvironment Fosters Breast Cancer Metastatic Behavior

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

New Research Suggests Breast Cancer Treatment in Patients Over Age 70 Can Be Safely Reduced

[UPMC Hillman Cancer Center](#)

Study Revises Understanding of Cancer Metabolism

[Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center](#)

Discovery Could Revive Failed Treatments for Solid Tumors

[University of Virginia Cancer Center](#)

Information Theory Recruited to Help Scientists Find Cancer Genes

[Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins University](#)

New CAR T Approach Minimizes Resistance, Helps Avoid Relapse in Non-Hodgkin's B-Cell Lymphoma

[UCLA Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)

Genetic Diversity Within Tumors Suggests Continuous Evolution

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

Liquid Biopsy Test Developed for Lymph Node Metastasis in Early-Stage T1 Colorectal Cancer

[City of Hope Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)

Project Explores Text Messages for Smoking Cessation

[Wilmot Cancer Institute, UR Medicine](#)

Black Prostate Cancer Patients Face Higher Risk of Cardiovascular

Disease-Related Mortality Than White Patients

Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson Health

New Method Developed for Identifying Mutational Signatures in Cancer

Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins University

End-of-Life Care Remains Aggressive for People With Ovarian Cancer

University of Michigan Rogel Cancer Center

Investigators Identify STING Gene Methylation Allows Melanoma to Evade the Immune System

Moffitt Cancer Center

Pancreatic Cancer Cells Hijack Muscle Protein to Beef Up Their Metabolism

UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center

Stem Cell Transplants Prevent Relapses of Most Common Childhood Cancer

University of Virginia Cancer Center

Genomic Data Commons Provides Unprecedented Cancer Data Resource

The University of Chicago Medicine Comprehensive Cancer Center

New Strategy Found for Fighting Brain Cancer

VCU Massey Cancer Center

Study Reveals a Unique Mode of Cell Migration on Soft Viscoelastic Surfaces

Stanford Cancer Institute

Study Suggests Common Drug Could Be Used to Prevent Certain Skin Cancers

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

OTHER NEWS & COVID-19

New Initiative to Increase Patient Engagement

Fox Chase Cancer Center, Temple Health

Fox Chase Cancer Center has begun utilizing a new program called MyCareCompass that is designed to support patients with necessary information about their care by sending that information directly to them.

[Read More](#)

Arizona Clinical Trials Network Launched

The University of Arizona Cancer Center

Arizona residents, including underserved and underrepresented populations, will have better access to cutting-edge cancer therapies as the University of Arizona Cancer Center offers its clinical trials at locations across the state. The network is a collaboration among communities, hospitals, and physicians that will enable the university's clinical research to reach more patients. [Read More](#)

Sameer Patel Co-Authors New Textbook on Cosmetic Breast Surgery

Fox Chase Cancer Center, Temple Health

Sameer Patel, MD, FACS, chief of the Division of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery in the Department of Surgical Oncology at Fox Chase Cancer Center and the Temple University Health System, has co-authored a new textbook, *Cosmetic Breast Surgery*. [Read More](#)



Study Seeks to Understand Effectiveness of COVID-19 Vaccination in Cancer Patients, Survivors

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

A study at OSUCCC - James will evaluate how COVID-19 impacts the immune system of cancer patients. The study will look at whether the COVID-19 vaccine is less effective in cancer patients receiving certain therapies, and how long immunity lasts. [Read More](#)

UAMS Surpasses 100,000 Digital Health Visits in Pandemic

UAMS Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute

The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences conducted more than 100,000 digital health visits following the COVID-19 outbreak, seeing its highest numbers of virtual consultations at the height of the pandemic and during a February winter storm, performing more than 4,500 digital health visits per week. [Read More](#)

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Project Coordinator, Site Operations

Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center

Research Administrator

Cleveland Clinic Cancer Center

Chair, Taussig Cancer Institute

Cleveland Clinic Cancer Center

Clinical Trials Amendment Manager

Moffitt Cancer Center

CAR T Research Nurse

Stony Brook Cancer Center

Director, Oncology and Pediatric Clinical Research Operations

Moffitt Cancer Center

FDA Regulatory Specialist

OHSU Knight Cancer Institute

Regulatory Affairs Associate

Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center

Regulatory Coordinator, Cancer Clinical Trials

Stony Brook Cancer Center

Research Phlebotomist Cancer Clinical Trials

Stony Brook Cancer Center

Study Coordinator Cancer Clinical Trials

Stony Brook Cancer Center

Assistant Director of Regulatory Operations

Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center

Data Quality Manager

Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Harvard Medical School

Director of Oncology and Pediatric Clinical Research

Moffitt Cancer Center

Program Administrator

Sanford Burnham Prebys Medical Discovery Institute

Senior Program Analyst

The University of Arizona Cancer Center

AMPATH Hematology-Oncology Team Leader

Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center

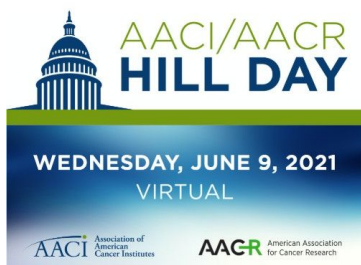
Clinical Trial Activation Project Manager (2 Positions)

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

Vice President, Cancer Services

Dartmouth-Hitchcock Norris Cotton Cancer Center

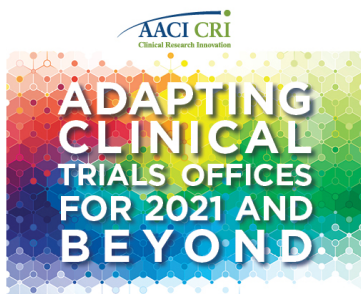
AACI MEETINGS AND EVENTS



2021 AACI/AACR Hill Day

VIRTUAL EVENT | REGISTER TODAY

June 9, 2021



13th Annual AACI CRI Meeting

VIRTUAL EVENT | REGISTER TODAY

July 13-15, 2021

2021 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting

VIRTUAL EVENT | NEW DATES

June 9, 2021

AACI CCAF
ANNUAL MEETING
2021



Medical Arts Building
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Pittsburgh, PA 15213
412-647-6111

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