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News From the Association of American Cancer Institutes | July 2023

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[Awards & Honors](#) | [Grants & Gifts](#) | [Leadership Highlights](#) | [Research Highlights](#) | [Other News](#)
[Job Opportunities](#) | [Meeting Announcements](#)

AACI HEADLINES

[UF Health Cancer Center Achieves NCI Designation](#)



The University of Florida Health Cancer Center has joined the ranks of the country's most distinguished cancer centers as the 72nd National Cancer Institute (NCI)-Designated Cancer Center in the United States. Led by **Jonathan D. Licht, MD**, the center doubled its peer-reviewed cancer research funding since 2016, with \$48.8 million in total cancer research grants and 359 active cancer research projects last year. [Read More](#)

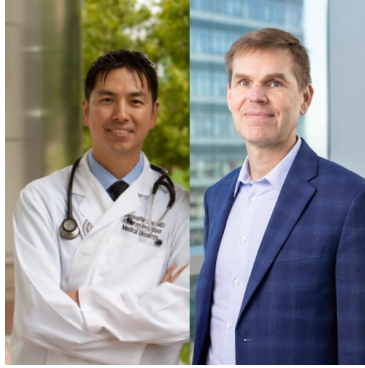
[Submit Your Nomination for the AACI Public Service Award](#)

AACI is currently seeking [nominations](#) for the 2023 [Public Service Award](#), which will be presented during the [2023 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting](#) on **Monday, October 2**, at the Salamander Washington DC. One Republican and one Democrat are eligible to receive the award, which recognizes leaders who demonstrate outstanding support for biomedical research in general, and cancer research in particular, and who support AACI's mission of enhancing cancer centers and health equity. [Read More](#)

[PCLI Webinar: Artificial Intelligence and Its Impact on Cancer Care and Research](#)

The AACI [Physician Clinical Leadership Initiative](#) (PCLI) will host "[Seismic Shift or Small Step Forward? Artificial Intelligence and Its Impact on Cancer Care and Research](#)" at 1:00 pm eastern time on **Thursday, July 20**. The webinar will describe new advances in artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning and potential applications for research and discovery.

Pictured (L-R): Panelists Christopher Lieu, MD, and Sean Davis, MD, PhD. [Read More](#)



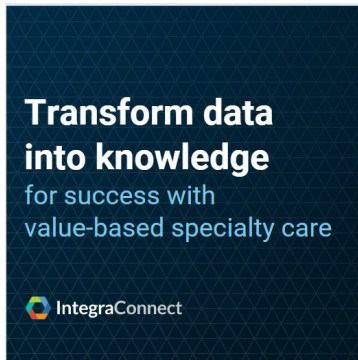
15th Annual AACI CRI Meeting Raises Bar for Attendance, Abstracts



ACI's **Clinical Research Innovation** (CRI) convened its **15th annual meeting** June 26-28, in Rosemont, IL. More than 500 colleagues attended in person and 118 abstracts were submitted for presentation – both records for the increasingly popular event focused on clinical trial office operations.

Pictured clockwise from top left: Patient advocate Mel Mann; poster session networking; (L-R) panelists Dr. Mark Agulnik, Dr. Shaalan Beg, moderator Angela Fritsche; plenary session attendees. Photo credit: Randy Belice. [Read More](#)

Integra Connect: A Value-Based, Precision Medicine Company



At **Integra Connect**, we connect providers, payers, and life sciences with the experiences, outcomes, and costs of cancer they need to understand to improve care, embrace scientific advancements, manage costs, and deliver innovations for patients.

- Industry-leading specialty care data
- Insights from powerful AI and analytics solutions
- Intelligence from unprecedented experience and expertise

[Watch Our Webinar](#)

NEWS FROM THE CENTERS

AWARDS & HONORS

Cairns Elected Fellow of the Royal Society

Huntsman Cancer Institute, University of Utah



The Royal Society, the world's oldest science academy, has elected **Bradley R. Cairns, PhD**, to the Fellows of the Royal Society. Dr. Cairns serves as the chief academic officer of Huntsman Cancer Institute, Jon M. Huntsman Presidential Endowed Chair in Cancer Research, and investigator with Howard Hughes Medical Institute and Huntsman Cancer Institute. [Read More](#)

[Lee Elected American Statistical Association President](#)

[University of Florida Health Cancer Center](#)



Members of the American Statistical Association have elected **Ji-Hyun Lee, DrPH**, a professor of biostatistics in the University of Florida College of Public Health and Health Professions and the UF College of Medicine, president of ASA for the 2025 term. Dr. Lee also serves as the director of the Division of Quantitative Sciences at the UF Health Cancer Center.

[Read More](#)

[Cancer Research Alliance Recognizes Young Investigator](#)

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



Marta Luksza, PhD, has received a 2023 Pershing Square Sohn Prize for Young Investigators in Cancer Research. Dr. Luksza and team will use approaches from machine learning and physics to develop a predictive model for immune interactions and tumor evolution under vaccine immunotherapy. On the basis of this model, they will build a protocol for the optimal design of personalized anti-tumor vaccines. [Read More](#)

[VanBrocklin Receives Aebersold Award](#)

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



The Aebersold Award recognizes outstanding achievement in basic science applied to nuclear medicine. For decades, **Henry VanBrocklin, PhD**, has led research on the preparation and application of novel radiopharmaceuticals. He received the award on June 25 at the Society of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging Annual Meeting in Chicago.

[Read More](#)

[Smoking Treatment Accreditation Earned](#)

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

Fox Chase Cancer Center has been accredited by the Smoking Treatment Accreditation & Recognition (STAR) program, a tobacco treatment initiative funded through a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Health. STAR seeks to facilitate the integration of tobacco dependence treatment into existing health care workflows in order to elevate the level of treatment available to community members. [Read More](#)

[LeBlanc Named Education Chair, Honored for Advocacy](#)

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

Duke Cancer Institute Chief Patient Experience and Safety Officer **Thomas LeBlanc, MD, MA, MHS, FAAHPM, FASCO**, has been designated chair of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) 2024 Annual Meeting Education Program Committee. He was also recently named an ASCO Advocacy Champion, President's Circle for his "active engagement" in ASCO's advocacy activities. [Read More](#)



[Plimack Appointed Treasurer of ASCO](#)

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



Elizabeth Plimack, MD, MS, deputy director and professor in the Department of Hematology/Oncology at Fox Chase Cancer Center, has been appointed treasurer of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO). In 2019, Dr. Plimack was elected to a four-year term on ASCO's Board of Directors. [*Read More*](#)

GRANTS & GIFTS

[Winship Renewed as NCI-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)

[Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University](#)

[\\$100 Million Lead Gift to Support Transformative New Cancer Research and Care Facility](#)

[The University of Kansas Cancer Center](#)

[\\$50 Million State Investment to Fund Expansion of Research and Treatments](#)

[WVU Cancer Institute](#)

[Researchers Receive \\$2 Million to Study Pancreatic Cancer Microenvironment](#)

[University of Michigan Rogel Cancer Center](#)

[Light Endoscope May Enhance Ovarian Cancer Detection and Treatment](#)

[Stony Brook Cancer Center](#)

[Grant Moves Breast Cancer Drug Development Work Forward](#)

[Hollings Cancer Center, Medical University of South Carolina](#)

LEADERSHIP TRANSITIONS

[Advani Appointed Co-Leader of Cancer Biology and Signaling Program](#)

[UC San Diego Moores Cancer Center](#)



As the new co-leader of the Moores Cancer Center cancer biology and signaling research program, **Sunil J. Advani, MD**, will join current co-leader, Jing Yang, PhD at the helm of the program. Dr. Advani studies the tumor-targeted delivery of anti-cancer agents in combination with radiotherapy for locally aggressive tumors. [Read More](#)

[Sawyer Tapped as Inaugural Chair of Bioengineering](#)

[Moffitt Cancer Center](#)



Moffitt Cancer Center has launched the Department of Bioengineering. The new academic research department will be housed within the Division of Basic Science and led by **W. Gregory Sawyer, PhD**. Prior to joining Moffitt, Dr. Sawyer was a professor of mechanical engineering at the University of Florida. [Read More](#)

[City of Buffalo First Deputy Mayor Joins Roswell Park as Chief Diversity Officer](#)

[Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)



Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center has appointed **Crystal Rodriguez-Dabney, Esq.**, as chief diversity officer and senior vice president. In her leadership role with the City of Buffalo, Rodriguez-Dabney steered successful efforts to engage and support richly diverse communities and organizations. [Read More](#)

[Funchain Joins Stanford](#)

[Stanford Cancer Institute](#)



The Stanford Cancer Institute welcomes **Pauline Funchain, MD**. She will join in August as an associate professor of medicine/medical oncology. Dr. Funchain offers additional expertise in cutaneous malignancies, Merkel cell carcinoma, and skin cancer genomics and immunotoxicity. [Read More](#)

[New Director Joins One-Stop Resource for Integrative Cancer Care](#)

[UCLA Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)



Shannon La Cava, PsyD, has been named as the new director of the Simms/Mann-UCLA Center for Integrative Oncology, bringing a wealth of experience in meeting the varied emotional needs of people with cancer. Dr. La Cava is an integrative psychologist specializing in psychosocial oncology. [Read More](#)

[Inaugural Associate Director for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Named](#)

[UC San Diego Moores Cancer Center](#)



Melody K. Schiaffino, PhD, MPH, is the new associate director for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at Moores Cancer Center. She is a health services researcher and epidemiologist who specializes in health disparities as they relate to population health, health services delivery, and quality outcomes. [Read More](#)

[Avat Joins Moffitt as New Chief Business Officer](#)

[Moffitt Cancer Center](#)



Xavier Avat has joined Moffitt Cancer Center as the new chief business officer. He will be responsible for leading the cancer center's business development strategies and functions. Mr. Avat brings nearly 30 years of experience in marketing, operations, and business development to the role, most recently serving as chief business officer at Capricor Therapeutics, a biotech company. [Read More](#)

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

[Loss of Y Chromosome in Men Enables Cancer to Grow](#)

[Cedars-Sinai Cancer](#)

[Project Stella Enables Novel Pediatric AML Immunotherapies, Potential Cure](#)

[Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center](#)

[Study Identifies Marked Disparities in Federal Cancer Research Funding](#)

[Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, University of Miami Health System](#)

[Breast Density and BMI Both Play a Role in Breast Cancer Risk](#)

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

[Study Discovers That Tumor Mutation Burden Predicts Survival Outcome](#)

[Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center](#)

[Liquid Biopsy Predicts Early Disease Progression, Potential Survival in Patients With Advanced Breast Cancer](#)

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

[Smart Drugs Give New Hope to Some Patients With Advanced Pancreatic Cancer](#)

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

[Study Reveals How Treatment-Resistant Prostate Cancer Provides Its Own Hormonal Fuel](#)

[Siteman Cancer Center](#)

[Deterministic Evolution and Stringent Selection During Preneoplasia](#)

[Stanford Cancer Institute](#)

[Study Finds Functional Limitations Increasing in Survivors of Cancer](#)

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

[AI-Driven Biomarker Predicts Optimum Length of Treatment for Prostate Cancer](#)

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

[Filling the LGBTQIA+ Void in Cancer Research](#)

[University of New Mexico Cancer Center](#)

[Study Reveals a Trio of Immune Cells Vital in Response to Liver Cancer Immunotherapy](#)

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

[Study May Provide Clues to Treating Colorectal Cancer More Effectively in Younger Patients](#)

[Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)

[Cancer Cells Rev Up Synthesis, Compared With Neighbors](#)

[Siteman Cancer Center](#)

[Cancer Experts Warn About Wave of HPV-Related Cancers in Adults](#)

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

[Study Finds Women, Underrepresented Groups Experience Higher Rates of Workplace Mistreatment in Academic Medicine](#)

[Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University](#)

[New Drug Delays Glioma Progression](#)

[UCLA Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)

[New Treatment Option for Metastatic Colorectal Cancer Prolongs Survival](#)

[Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center](#)

[Markey Study Reveals Persistent Cancer Disparities in Appalachian Kentucky](#)

[UK Markey Cancer Center](#)

OTHER NEWS

[Radiation Oncologist William Blackstock Dies](#)

[Winship Cancer Institute at Emory University](#)



A. William Blackstock Jr., MD, FASCO, chair of the Department of Radiation Oncology at Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist, passed away in June at age 60 due to complications from prostate cancer. He was one of the first African American chairs in the field and began his career at UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center. [*Read More*](#)

[Huntsman Plans for New Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)

[Huntsman Cancer Institute, University of Utah](#)



Huntsman Cancer Institute at the University of Utah has announced plans for a new Huntsman Cancer Institute comprehensive cancer center in Utah County. This second headquarters will be in Vineyard, a growing city embedded in Utah's tech hub. [*Read More*](#)

[Emerging Leaders Sought to Join EAB](#)

[The University of Vermont Cancer Center](#)

The University of Vermont Cancer Center seeks early career faculty to participate in its external advisory board. The deadline to apply is September 1. This opportunity is designed for future leaders who represent groups underrepresented in biomedical science and in cancer center leadership positions across the country. [*Read More*](#)

[KU Cancer Center Joins ORIEN](#)

[The University of Kansas Cancer Center](#)

The University of Kansas (KU) Cancer Center has joined the Oncology Research Information Exchange Network (ORIEN), a national initiative promoting collaboration to drive research and discovery of personalized treatments for cancer. Launched in 2014 and comprised of 18 cancer centers across the U.S., it is the largest and longest-running academic cancer research consortium of its kind in the United States. [*Read More*](#)

[Program Gives Undergrads Pathway to Cancer Careers](#)

[University of Michigan Rogel Cancer Center](#)

What does it look like to work in cancer research? For two weeks this



summer, 20 undergraduate students from public universities across Michigan will find out. The Rogel Cancer Center's Pathways Undergraduate Fellowship program launched in 2022 to fill a gap in training programs that left out undergraduate students. [Read More](#)

[Survivorship Program Launched for Adolescents and Young Adults](#)

[University of New Mexico Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)



The UNM Comprehensive Cancer Center is launching an adolescent and young adult survivorship program, coordinated by **Amy Gundelach, RN, MSN, AG-CNS-BC, OCN**. Individualized survivorship care plans encourage communication and collaboration among patients and their cancer treatment and primary care providers. [Read More](#)

[More Evidence Needed to Confirm Promise of Remote or Decentralized Trials](#)

[Hollings Cancer Center, Medical University of South Carolina](#)



There's one question that **Jennifer Dahne, PhD**, co-director of the remote and virtual trials program at the South Carolina Clinical & Translational Research Institute, hears more than any other: Will remote—or decentralized—clinical trials overcome the barriers that make it difficult for minority and underserved populations to participate in clinical research? [Read More](#)

[Novel Approaches to Help Young Adult Survivors](#)

[The University of Arizona Cancer Center](#)



To assist cancer survivors between the ages of 18–39, **Rina Fox, PhD, MPH**, University of Arizona Cancer Center member, has spent several years developing an innovative, 10-week eHealth information and peer support stress management program called TOGETHER-YA (Young Adults). [Read More](#)

[AVP, Trial Management](#)

[Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center](#)

[Clinical Research Coordinator IV](#)

[Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University](#)

[Clinical Research Nurse II](#)

[Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University](#)

[Clinical Trials Manager, Winship](#)

[Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University](#)

[Immuno-oncology Position](#)

[The University of Vermont Cancer Center](#)

[Multiple Job Opportunities - SCI](#)

[Stanford Cancer Institute](#)

[Associate Director, Translational Research](#)

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

[Early Career Faculty, EAB](#)

[The University of Vermont Cancer Center](#)

MEMBER MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS

[2023 Annual Conference of the Cancer Molecular Therapeutics Research Association \(CMTRA\)](#)

[July 23-27, 2023](#)

[Watkins Glen, NY](#)

AACI MEETINGS AND EVENTS

[PCLI Webinar: Seismic Shift or Small Step Forward? Artificial Intelligence and Its Impact on Cancer Care and Research](#)

[REGISTER TODAY](#)

[July 20, 2023](#)

[2023 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting](#)

[REGISTER TODAY | VIRTUAL OPTION AVAILABLE](#)

[October 1-3, 2023](#)

[Salamander Washington DC \(formerly Mandarin Oriental, DC\)](#)

[Washington, DC](#)

[16th Annual AACI CRI Meeting](#)

[SAVE THE DATE](#)

[June 24-26, 2024](#)

[Loews Chicago O'Hare Hotel](#)

[Rosemont, IL](#)

[2024 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting](#)

[SAVE THE DATE](#)

[October 20-22, 2024](#)

[Loews Chicago Hotel](#)



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