

CURE.



December 11–13, 2024

Eden Roc, Miami Beach



**Scan the QR code
to download the
Cure Summit event app**

**hosted on
Zuddl Events**



Name

Dear Esteemed Colleagues, Advocates, and Innovators,

Welcome to the 2024 Cure CRC Summit, hosted by the Colorectal Cancer Alliance. It is an honor to convene once again in the pursuit of a shared vision: to transform colorectal cancer research and treatment and, ultimately, to CURE this disease.

Last year, we launched the Alliance's Project Cure CRC initiative with the ambitious goal of funding tens of millions of dollars in innovative research. This year, we are here to build upon that momentum. Your collective expertise, dedication, and pioneering spirit have already begun to lay the groundwork for breakthroughs that will redefine our understanding of colorectal cancer.

The Summit serves as a crucible of collaboration, where your ideas, discoveries, and strategies intersect to accelerate progress. Over the next few days, we will celebrate advancements, tackle pressing challenges, and refine the path forward. From groundbreaking research to robust partnerships, every discussion and presentation is a step closer to a world without colorectal cancer.

This year's Summit will drive the next wave of funding opportunities, and together, we will ensure that resources are directed towards the most promising, high-impact investigations. Your insights will shape the trajectory of this initiative and inspire a new generation of researchers to join the movement.

You are more than scientists and doctors. You are visionaries and change-makers whose work transcends the lab bench and the clinic. Your innovations give hope to patients and families, charting a future where colorectal cancer is not just treatable but preventable and curable.

On behalf of the Colorectal Cancer Alliance and the millions of lives your work touches every day, we extend our heartfelt gratitude. Your dedication and ingenuity are the lifeblood of this mission. As we gather in this spirit of collaboration, let us push the boundaries of what is possible and take bold strides toward the cure.

Together, we are not just imagining a better future—we are creating it.
With deepest respect and gratitude,



K. Chudnovsky

Katie Chudnovsky
Summit Co-Chair
Alliance Board Member



Michael A. Sapienza

Michael Sapienza
Summit Co-Chair
CEO, Colorectal Cancer Alliance

CURE.

LEADERSHIP

Project Cure CRC Co-Chair

Michael Sapienza

CEO, Colorectal Cancer Alliance

Katie Chudnovsky

Colorectal Cancer Alliance

Alliance Board Chair

Lee Dranikoff

Founder, Practical Strategy

Alliance Project Lead

David Fenstermacher, PhD

Senior Director of Research
and Medical Affairs,
Colorectal Cancer Alliance

Scientific Co-Chairs

John Marshall, MD

Georgetown University

Scott Kopetz, MD, PhD, FACP

MD Anderson Cancer Center

Christopher Lieu, MD

University of Colorado Cancer Center

Patient Advocate Co-Chair

John Woerner

mCRC Survivor and Board Member,
Colorectal Cancer Alliance

AGENDA

DAY 1

**Wednesday
December 11, 2024**

1:00pm - 6:00pm
Registration

6:00pm - 7:00pm
Opening Reception
Remarks by Melissa Lynch

7:00pm – 8:15pm
Conference Welcome
& Dinner
Remarks by
Katie Chudnovsky and
Michael Sapienza
Colorectal Cancer Alliance
Co-Chairs

8:15pm – 9:00pm
Conference Opening
Remarks by John Marshall,
MD, Scott Kopetz, MD and
Christopher Lieu, MD
Scientific Co-Chairs

DAY 2

**Thursday
December 12, 2024**

7:30am – 8:15am
Breakfast

8:15am – 12:00pm
Biotech Talks

12:00pm – 1:00pm
Lunch

1:00pm – 4:30pm
Breakout Sessions

4:30pm – 6:00pm
Free Time

6:00pm – 7:00pm
Reception

7:00pm – 9:00pm
Dinner
Remarks by John Woerner,
Tina Zeff, Katie Chudnovsky,
and Michael Sapienza

DAY 3

**Friday
December 13, 2024**

7:30am – 9:00am
Breakfast

9:00am – 10:00am
Biotech Talks

10:00am – 10:15am
Break

10:15am – 12:00pm
Interest-based
Networking Sharing
& Summaries
Town Hall with Michael
Sapienza, John Marshall, MD,
Scott Kopetz, MD and
Christopher Lieu, MD

12:00pm – 12:15pm
Closing Remarks

12:15pm
Lunch and Departures

Our Mission:
**We exist to end colorectal
cancer in our lifetime.**

Our Vision:
**A world free of
colorectal cancer.**



Girish Aakalu
Chief Executive Officer
Phenomic AI

Mr. Aakalu is the Chief Executive Officer of Phenomic AI, a biotech company developing PAI-003, a novel T-cell engager, for the treatment of MSS CRC. Prior to joining Phenomic, Mr. Aakalu held a variety of leadership roles at Genocea Biosciences, Ipsen, and Pfizer. Earlier in his career, he was the strategy lead for the Genentech program teams that gave rise to Kadcyra, Perjeta, and Erivedge.



Ariel Aguilo
Senior Medical Director, Oncology, R&D
Daiichi Sankyo

Dr. Aguilo is a certified medical oncologist specializing in gastrointestinal tumors, particularly colorectal cancer. With training from Argentina and Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, he focused his research on hepatic arterial infusion pump therapy for metastatic CRC with liver metastases. With over 10 years of experience in drug development, Dr. Aguilo has a deep expertise in gastrointestinal cancers. He is currently Senior Medical Director and overall indication lead at Daiichi Sankyo for the development of HER3 DXd for gastrointestinal tumors. He also played a pivotal role in the Colorectal Cancer Alliance Clinical Trial Think Tank Initiative, aiming to increase patient participation in cancer trials.



Rahul Aras
Chief Executive Officer
Iterion Therapeutics, Inc

Dr. Aras is currently the President and Chief Executive Officer of Iterion Therapeutics Inc., a Houston-based clinical-stage biotechnology company. He has more than 18 years of experience in the biotechnology sector, including all aspects of raising funding, product development, business development, and executive management.



Leonard Augenlicht
Professor, Medicine, Oncology and Cell Biology
Albert Einstein College of Medicine,
Montefiore Medical Center

Dr. Augenlicht heads the Colon Program and serves as Associate Director for Translational Research of the Albert Einstein Cancer Center. His focus, with Schramm, is on MTDIA and prodrugs, picomolar, non-toxic transition state analog MTAP inhibitors active in colon cancer and that exhibit synthetic lethality with MAT2A inhibitors. Colon cancer patients are excluded from clinical trials of MAT2A inhibitors since efficacy depends on MTAP genetic inactivation, present in only 1% of CRC. The synthetic lethality potentially expands the efficacy of MAT2A inhibitors to 100% of colon and other tumors, also avoiding GI toxicity of direct inhibition of PRMT5, the ultimate target.



Nilofer Azad

Professor of Oncology

Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center

Dr. Azad is a Professor of Oncology and a member of the Gastrointestinal Oncology Program at the Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center (SKCCC). Since joining the faculty of the SKCCC at Johns Hopkins, Dr. Azad has been the PI of numerous early-phase clinical trials in solid tumors and gastrointestinal cancers. Dr. Azad is a clinically active medical oncologist and co-leader of the NCI-funded UM1 Developmental Therapeutics clinical research program at the SKCCC. She is a member of both the Epigenetics and Colon Cancer Stand Up 2 Cancer Dream Teams, serving as a Principal on the latter. She has been a member of the NCI Colon Cancer Task Force, the Advisory Board of the Biden Cancer Initiative, and the Executive Board of The Cholangiocarcinoma Foundation, among others.



Alan Barge

Chief Executive Officer and Chief Operating Officer Tilikum Therapeutics

Dr. Barge is a venture partner at Delin Ventures in London and is now the Chief Executive Officer of Tilikum Therapeutics Inc., a biotechnology company developing a third-generation PARP-inhibitor for genetically-defined subsets of common cancers.



Hemanta Baruah
Founder & Chief Executive Officer
Aakha Biologics

Dr. Baruah is the founder and Chief Executive Officer of Aakha Biologics, an immuno-oncology startup that originated from Alloy Therapeutics 82VS venture studio. With over 15 years of expertise in preclinical antibody discovery and development, Mr. Baruah is the principal inventor of Sintilimab, an anti-PD-1 therapy approved in China. Aakha Biologics focuses on developing multi-specific antibodies aimed at targeting colon cancer with KRAS mutations. These tri-specific antibodies are engineered to combat tumor growth through multiple mechanisms, including the activation of NK and T cells and the effective inhibition of receptor-ligand interactions. So far, the approach has demonstrated promising in vivo efficacy in both cell line and patient-derived KRAS mutant mouse models.



Eduard Batlle
Chairman, Cancer Science Program
Institute for Research in Biomedicine (IRB Barcelona)

Over the past 20 years, Dr. Batlle's laboratory has investigated the mechanisms governing metastatic colorectal cancer (mCRC). Their pioneering studies have characterized the architecture of mCRC and revealed key aspects of the plastic cell hierarchy dominating this malignancy, including the characterization of MRD responsible for relapse. His team has also made groundbreaking discoveries to understand immune evasion in mCRC, such as the key role of TGF-beta-activated tumor microenvironment. In collaboration with the pharma, his laboratory has transformed our findings into innovative therapeutic tools (petosemtamab and INCA33890), which are now showing promising results in clinical trials.



Lev Bedniagin
Director of Clinical Integration
BostonGene

Mr. Bedniagin is the Director of Clinical Integration at BostonGene, Corp. in Waltham, MA. Mr. Bedniagin's research interests include the development and validation of predictive biomarkers for immunotherapy response. Mr. Bedniagin frequently uses comprehensive molecular profiling techniques, including RNA-seq, whole exome sequencing, multiplex immunofluorescence, immunoprofiling, ctDNA, and digital pathology, in his oncology studies.



Patricia Benjamin
Director Medical Affairs Early Compound Lead
Boehringer Ingelheim Oncology

Ms. Benjamin is the Director of Medical Affairs Early Compound Lead at Boehringer Ingelheim Oncology.



Christopher Bradley
Chief Executive Officer
Matter Bio

Mr. Bradley is a serial entrepreneur who has co-founded and led several successful startups, including Loki Therapeutics and Mana Health (acquired by Comcast in 2018). While at Comcast, Mr. Bradley was responsible for leading product strategy as an executive director for joint-venture Quil Health. With over 18 years of C-suite experience in tech and biotech, Mr. Bradley is passionate about taking great research and turning it into usable treatments and products. He is the primary inventor of over 25 patents.



Jennifer Buell
President and Chief Executive Officer
MiNK Therapeutics

Dr. Buell is the President and Chief Executive Officer at MiNK Therapeutics and the Chairman, Executive Council at Agenus. She brings more than 27 years of biopharmaceutical experience, leading teams to advance discovery candidates through clinical development to commercialization. She was previously President and Chief Operating Officer at Agenus, where she was responsible for organizational operations, including research, clinical development, manufacturing, commercial operations, investor relations, and external affairs. Prior to Agenus, Dr. Buell held leadership positions in R&D operations at Bristol-Myers Squibb and Harvard Clinical Research Institute (Baim), where she was involved in the development strategy and operations for a portfolio of industry and government-sponsored clinical programs.



Scott Campbell
Head of Patient Advocacy
Takeda Oncology

Mr. Campbell is the Head of Patient Advocacy of Takeda Oncology.



Ariel Carmeli
Co-Founder
Reversing Early Recurrence

Mr. Carmeli is the Co-founder of Reversing Early Recurrence, a nonprofit creating a nationwide system to develop cures for cancer patients with minimal residual disease. He is trained in biomedical informatics and business and is passionate about building accessible solutions that personalize cancer care. Mr. Carmeli is a Board Observer at Colorectal Cancer Alliance and advises its impact modeling. He has expertise in advancing novel therapies for metastatic breast cancer at Broad Institute's Count Me In. He received the 2022 GRASP Advocate Choice Award for real-world data research. As Engagement Manager at McKinsey & Co., he developed an R&D strategy for a best-in-class therapy. Prior to that, he was Head of Partnerships at the Biden Cancer Initiative.



Robert Carnahan
Professor and Chief Operating Officer
Vanderbilt University Medical Center/Proxy Bio

Dr. Carnahan is a Professor of Pediatrics and Associate Director of the Vanderbilt Vaccine Center. His expertise is in the discovery of novel antibody therapeutics. He guided the DARPA-funded Pandemic Prevention Platform program, which was activated to respond to SARS-CoV-2 and discovered the parental antibodies for Evusheld (AstraZeneca), recognized as a Time Magazine invention of the year and an R&D Magazine Gold Medal winner (2022). As a Vanderbilt Ingram Cancer Center member, he led a therapeutics discovery facility for over ten years, collaborating on a broad spectrum of cancer-focused efforts, including colorectal cancer targets. Dr. Carnahan is also a recognized expert in Lean Laboratory management practices, for which he has served as a consultant and an invited speaker across the U.S.



Sean Carrick
Chief Executive Officer
Nascent Biotech

Mr. Carrick is the Chief Executive Officer of Nascent Biotech Inc. His experience spans over 30 years and he has held leadership roles at a variety of life sciences companies, including Pfizer, Conmed and Maquet Medical. Mr. Carrick has also been part of several start-up ventures including Praecis Pharma and Aveolus. He was directly involved in a strategic partnership with Hisun Bioray of China. In his time at Nascent, Mr. Carrick has led the development of Pritumumab from preclinical to Phase II ready and is currently exploring other therapeutic applications for PTB.



Kenneth Carter
Executive Chairman
Black Canyon Bio

Dr. Carter is Executive Chairman of Black Canyon Bio, a company focused on treating colorectal cancer based on its proprietary SNAP technology for credentialing patient-specific neoantigen targets. He has started and led multiple cancer companies including former NASDAQ-listed companies Avalon Pharmaceuticals and NexImmune, both of which he co-founded and served as Chief Executive Officer. Earlier in his career, Dr. Carter was head of gene mapping at Human Genome Sciences, Inc., where he was involved in the discovery of dozens of novel human genes. In this role, he mapped the MUT-L genes and was involved in a foundational body of discoveries regarding the role of MUT-L and DNA mismatch repair mutations in driving inherited colorectal cancer.



Michael Cecchini
Associate Professor of Medicine
Yale University School of Medicine

Dr. Cecchini is an Associate Professor of Medicine (Medical Oncology) at the Yale Cancer Center. He is a board-certified medical oncologist specializing in treatment for patients with advanced colorectal cancer. His research is focused on early phase clinical trials developing novel therapies that are biomarker driven for patients with advanced gastrointestinal cancers. Furthermore, he performs translational research to understand the relationship between DNA damage and the immune response to develop new biomarkers and treatment combinations for patients with advanced colorectal cancer. Dr. Cecchini is also co-director of the Colorectal Cancer Program and GI Oncology Clinical Research at Yale and is a member of the National Cancer Institute Colon Task Force.



Andrea Cercek
Gastrointestinal Oncologist
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

Dr. Cercek is a board-certified medical oncologist specializing in the treatment of patients with gastrointestinal (GI) cancers, particularly colorectal cancer, appendix cancer, and cholangiocarcinoma. Her research is focused on the development of novel systemic and regional therapies, including approaches based on tumor genomics, with the goal of improving outcomes while minimizing treatment-related toxicities. Dr. Cercek is the founder and co-director of the Center for Young Onset Colorectal and Gastrointestinal Cancer. This clinic — the first of its kind in the world — is dedicated solely to the specific needs of people under 50 who have CRC or other GI cancers.



William Chapin
Assistant Professor of Medicine
(Hematology/Oncology)
University of Pennsylvania

Dr. Chapin is a medical oncologist, and he treats patients with colorectal cancer and other gastrointestinal cancers. His research focuses on developing and performing clinical trials of promising new treatments, evaluating new clinical biomarkers that might help better select the right treatments for patients and using real-world data to answer important clinical questions that have not been evaluated in clinical trials. This research program aims to improve patient outcomes and quality of life and cure more patients with colorectal cancer and other gastrointestinal cancers.



Marcio Chedid
Chief Scientific Officer
Irazu Oncology

Dr. Chedid has over 25 years of experience in pharmaceutical drug discovery and biotech R&D. He has contributed to the discovery and development of 15 oncology clinical candidates and 12 IND submissions. He has over forty publications and nine granted patents. He has experience vetting companies in his past role as Executive Director of Biotechnology Research at Eli Lilly.



Steven Chen
Professor
University of Miami

Dr. Chen currently holds the position of Professor of Biostatistics within the Department of Public Health Sciences at the University of Miami's Miller School of Medicine. He is also the leader of the Translational Statistical Bioinformatics Lab. The mission of this lab is to devise novel statistical strategies and harness data science to facilitate the progression of translational genomic research, with an emphasis on understanding complex diseases and various types of cancers.



Eric Christenson
Assistant Professor of Oncology
Johns Hopkins University

Dr. Christenson is a Assistant Professor of Oncology at Johns Hopkins University.



Kristen Ciombor
Associate Professor of Medicine
Vanderbilt University Medical Center

Dr. Ciombor is an Associate Professor in the Division of Hematology/Oncology within the Department of Internal Medicine at the Vanderbilt University Medical Center. Prior to joining the Vanderbilt faculty in 2017, Dr. Ciombor was an Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine in the Division of Medical Oncology at Ohio State University. A board-certified medical oncologist, Dr. Ciombor specializes in the treatment of patients with gastrointestinal cancers, especially colorectal cancer. Her research involves the design and implementation of clinical trials in colorectal cancer. She has a research interest in the genomics of colorectal cancer and translational medicine, and she leads multiple national investigator-initiated clinical trials in this space.



Tomer Cohen
Chief Financial Officer
KAHR Medical Ltd.

Mr. Cohen is a finance and business development professional with over 10 years of experience at Goldman Sachs, Barclays, and Locust Walk in investment banking, risk management, and business development advisory. He has advised clients on deals totaling over \$40bn across M&A, fundraising, partnering, and licensing transactions. He most recently served as a Vice President of biopharma strategic transactions at Locust Walk.



John "Al" Copland
PhD Scientist
Mayo Clinic

Dr. Copland leads the Cancer Biology and Translational Research Laboratory at Mayo Clinic's campus in Florida. Research in the lab is aimed at better understanding the mechanisms and pathways of carcinogenesis and tumor progression in order to develop novel, synergistic cancer therapies. Discoveries from the Copland laboratory include RhoB, transforming growth factor receptor 3 (TBR3), and GATA3 as tumor suppressor genes in addition to FOXO3a, stearoyl CoA desaturase 1 (SCD1), neuronal pentraxin 2 (NPTX2) and others as novel oncogenes. Focus areas include cancer, individualized medicine, and new drug development.



Emily Corse

**Executive Vice President, Biology and Translation
Larkspur Biosciences**

Dr. Corse is committed to the development of new treatments for colorectal cancer that are possible due to a new understanding of scientific connections between cancer biology and immunology. Dr. Corse's background is in cancer immunotherapy, and she has developed new treatments for cancer patients during her career in the pharmaceutical and biotech industry.



Mike Cusnir

**Chief, Division of Hematology & Oncology;
Co-Director, Gastrointestinal Malignancies; and
Assistant Professor at the Columbia University
Division of Hematology/Oncology
Mount Sinai Medical Center**

Since joining Mount Sinai Medical Center in 2003, Dr. Cusnir has been an active member of the gastrointestinal committee of the Alliance for Clinical Trials in Oncology (Formerly CALGB). He is currently the Division Chief of Hematology and Oncology and since 2010, has been the Co-Director of Gastrointestinal Malignancies.



Ekaterina Dadachova
Professor of Pharmacy
University of Saskatchewan, Canada

Dr. Dadachova has been a Professor of Pharmacy at the University of Saskatchewan, Canada, since 2016. Before, she held a Professorship in Radiology, Microbiology, and Immunology at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York. Her research interests are radionuclide therapy for cancer, infections, autoimmune diseases, and melanin-based radioprotectors. She has published over 200 papers, 13 book chapters, and eight U.S. patents. She received several awards, including the Mary Kay Ash Research Award, the Top 10 researchers at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in 2013, the 2017 Burroughs Welcome Award, and the 2020 University of Saskatchewan Distinguished Researcher Award. She is in the top 2% of cited scientists worldwide, according to Stanford University 2021 database.



Mark de Souza
Chief Executive Officer
SonALAsense, Inc.

Dr. de Souza has over 20 years of executive and entrepreneurial experience at multiple venture-backed companies in the rare disease space. He held positions of increasing responsibility in business development (culminating as VP) at Dyax Corp, which Shire acquired for its FDA-approved drugs for hereditary angioedema. He has been a founder, Chief Executive Officer, or Executive Chair of Lotus Tissue Repair (a Third Rock Ventures company acquired by Shire), PellePharm and Molecular Skin Therapeutics (both BridgeBio companies), SeylanMed and Chromaderm (both merged into Dermibiont), NFlection Therapeutics, and Phoenicis Therapeutics.



Peter DeMuth
Chief Scientific Officer
Elicio Therapeutics

Dr. DeMuth is a founding scientist at Elicio and currently serves as Chief Scientific Officer, leading the development of technology platforms for cancer immunotherapeutics from early research to clinical development. To this role, he brings over 15 years of experience in oncology, immunology and materials science. Prior to joining Elicio, Dr. DeMuth oversaw efforts to develop novel technologies for immunotherapy and vaccine development at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research in affiliation with the Ragon Institute of Massachusetts General Hospital, MIT, and Harvard University, where he received recognition from the National Institutes of Health and the American Chemical Society.



Gino Di Scullo
Chief Executive Officer
Branch Therapeutics, Inc.

Dr. Di Scullo is a seasoned biopharmaceutical executive with over 25 years of experience advancing medical technologies from research to commercialization. He has held leadership roles in startup and clinical-stage companies and served as a transactional partner at a healthcare venture capital firm in Silicon Valley.



Luis Diaz
Physician Scientist
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

Dr. Diaz is a physician-scientist who leads the Division of Solid Tumor Oncology at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. His team pioneered the use of circulating tumor DNA as a cancer screening, monitoring, and detection of occult disease; and also discovered the therapeutic link between genetics and immunotherapy in patients with mismatch repair deficient tumors. This research led to the first tumor agnostic FDA approval and the first cancer study that resulted in a 100% complete remission rate. He is a member of the National Academy of Medicine and in 2021, Dr. Diaz was appointed by President Biden to the National Cancer Advisory Board.



Ugur Eskiocak
Chief Executive Officer
Voro Therapeutics

Dr. Eskiocak is the founder and Chief Executive Officer of Voro Therapeutics. Voro is developing a precision medicine platform of tumor-activated multi-specific antibodies for cancer immunotherapy. He has over 15 years of experience in oncology research and drug development. He has advanced six immuno-oncology programs through IND-enabling studies and into clinical trials in various leadership roles at Compass Therapeutics, Xilio Therapeutics, Takeda, and Janux Therapeutics.



Melika Fini

Senior Director, External Engagement
Eli Lilly

Dr. Fini is an experienced board-certified clinical oncology pharmacist adept in clinical pharmacy, teaching, and mentoring. She currently serves as Senior Director of External Engagement for lung and GI cancers portfolio, spearheading strategy and operations to ensure seamless cross-functional integration of external engagement activities from pre-FHD through post-launch phases in a global capacity.



David Fogelman

Senior Principal Scientist
Merck & Co

Dr. Fogelman is the Senior Principal Scientist at Merck & Co.



Yuman Fong
Sangiaco Family Chair in Surgical Oncology
and Chair of the Department of Surgery
City of Hope

Dr. Fong is the Sangiaco Family Chair in Surgical Oncology and Chair of the Department of Surgery at City of Hope. He is an internationally recognized expert in cancers of the liver, pancreas, gallbladder, and bile ducts. He has led the research effort to employ genetically modified viruses to destroy cancer cells. Dr. Fong joined City of Hope in 2014 after more than two decades at the renowned Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City.



Christopher Gallen
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
Treos Bio Ltd

At The Scripps Research Institute, he pioneered Magnetic Source Imaging, made key scientific discoveries, and contributed to the NASDAQ IPO of BTi. He held leadership roles at Quintiles and Premier Research Worldwide, driving pivotal CNS trials, introducing Remote Data Capture to clinical research, and leading PRWW to a NASDAQ IPO. At Pharmacia and Wyeth, he transformed clinical operations, developed outsourcing models, and advanced late-stage CNS therapeutics. As Chief Executive Officer of Neuromed, SK Biopharmaceuticals, and WEX Pharmaceuticals, he led strategic partnerships, advanced critical therapeutics, and guided global teams, cementing his legacy as an innovator in medicine and clinical research.



Boyi Gan
Professor
MD Anderson Cancer Center

Dr. Gan is a Professor at MD Anderson Cancer Center. His lab studies how to target cell death pathways, particularly ferroptosis and disulfidptosis, in cancer therapy, including targeting ferroptosis as a vulnerability in treating BRCA1-deficient CRC.



Marco Gerlinger
Medical Oncologist and Clinician Scientist
Barts Cancer Institute, London, UK

With his research group, Dr. Gerlinger works on answering the question why immunotherapy has so far been disappointing and how this can be improved for MMRp colorectal cancers. In particular, we are investigating how T cell infiltration into CRC can be improved and what antigens T cells can recognize in CRC cells. Another specific focus is why CRCs with liver metastases are particularly difficult to treat. His research group predominantly uses translational clinical trials, organoid-immune cell co-cultures, and mass spec immunopeptidomics in their work.



Sepideh Gholami
Associate Professor of Surgery
Northwell Health

Dr. Gholami is a highly accomplished surgical oncologist and hepatobiliary surgeon who serves as the Director of the Liver Multidisciplinary Clinic and Hepatic Artery Infusion Pump Program at Northwell Health. Additionally, she holds a joint appointment as the Director for Translational Research in Surgical Oncology at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory. Her internationally recognized research focuses on developing new drugs for colon cancer that have spread to the liver.



William Gibson
Principal Investigator
Dana Farber Cancer Institute

Dr. Gibson's research focuses on novel chemical biology platforms to push the boundaries of what is druggable. A major focus has been trying to drug mutant TP53 using induced proximity approaches. Upcoming projects will focus on enhancing the efficacy and pharmacologic control of CAR-T to drive next-generation therapeutics with the potential to cure CRC and other cancers.



Jack Gierlich
Head of Marketing
Leal Health

Mr. Gierlich is currently the Head of Marketing for Leal, a tech start-up using AI to clinically match cancer patients to clinical trials and empower them to take action. While at Leal, they've been able to craft unique, high-converting personalized journeys, demonstrate growth of over 15% a month, lead a growing team, and help impact and empower tens of thousands in the midst of their cancer journeys.



Sanjay Goel
Professor of Medicine
Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey

Dr. Goel is an attending physician and a Professor of Medicine at Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey.



Joseph Grossman
Vice President Early Stage Clinical Development
Agenus, Inc.

Dr. Grossman is the Vice President of Early-Stage Clinical Development at Agenus where he leads the development of botensilimab, a multifunctional Fc-enhanced CTLA-4 antibody designed to treat immunologically “cold” tumors and directs the company’s CRC and pancreatic clinical studies. He came to Agenus in 2020 from Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center/ Harvard Medical School where he was a GI oncologist treating patients, and led clinical trials and translational research in colorectal cancer and other GI malignancies. At Agenus, it has been the highlight of his career to begin to show that immunotherapy can not only potentially work in MSS CRC but may also lead to deep and durable responses for patients who have exhausted standard treatment options. Dr. Grossman also has a family member being treated for young onset colorectal cancer and is looking forward to working together towards a future where all CRC patients can be cured.



Justin Guinney
SVP Cancer Genomics
Tempus

Dr Justin Guinney is the Senior Vice President of Computational Biology and Cancer Genomics at Tempus, where he leads research and development of precision oncology models using Tempus’ large multimodal database. Prior to Tempus, Dr. Guinney was the Vice President of Computational Oncology and principal investigator at the non-profit research institute Sage Bionetworks, where his lab focused on the development of diagnostic, prognostic, and predictive models of disease. His lab has supported data and analytics of several large cancer consortia including the Cancer Genome Atlas (TCGA), the NCI Human Tumor Atlas Network (HTAN), and AACR Project GENIE. Dr. Guinney retains positions as an Affiliate Associate Professor at the University of Washington, and Director of the DREAM Challenges. In this latter role, Dr Guinney organized data and AI challenges for benchmarking methods in biomedicine and bioinformatics.



Omar Gutierrez-Ruiz
Post-Doctoral Research Fellow
Mayo Clinic

Dr. Gutierrez-Ruiz is a post-doctoral fellow working with Dr. Kenderian. They are dedicated to developing innovative therapies to combat colorectal cancer. Their research centers on engineering advanced Chimeric Antigen Receptor T-cell (CAR-T) therapies to target CRC and the immunosuppressive tumor microenvironment, a major obstacle for effective treatment. By designing next-generation CAR-T cells with improved precision, efficacy, and safety, they strive to overcome the limitations of current CRC treatments. Through preclinical studies and novel therapeutic approaches, Dr. Gutierrez-Ruiz is committed to translating scientific discoveries into clinical advancements, improving patient outcomes, and advancing the field toward a cure for CRC.



Jennifer Han
Clinical Development Lead/Early Assets
Boehringer Ingelheim

Ms. Han is a board-certified medical professional with over 18 years of experience in oncology. She is a highly dedicated and organized individual who can prioritize and delegate projects effectively to ensure timely completion. She has significant experience in clinical development/medical affairs as an individual contributor and a people/project manager supporting early pipeline products and late-stage assets.



J Randolph Hecht

**Professor of Clinical Medicine, David Geffen School of Medicine and Director of the UCLA Gastrointestinal Oncology Program
University of California, Los Angeles**

Dr. Hecht is a Professor of Clinical Medicine in the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA School of Medicine. He holds the Carol and Saul Rosenzweig Chair for Cancer Therapies Development and is the Director of the UCLA Gastrointestinal Oncology Program. Dr. Hecht is an internationally known clinical and translational researcher in the field of gastrointestinal cancers. He has led and is currently directing small trials with new molecules as well as large international randomized trials. Current ongoing research includes preclinical models of therapy with biological agents, early studies with gene therapy vectors and tyrosine kinase inhibitors, and leading phase II and phase III trials with novel agents.



Alan Herbert

**Founder
InsideOutBio, Inc.**

Dr. Herbert initiated his research on Z-DNA at MIT. Following this, his genetics research led to the publication of the first genome-wide association study on a human population in the journal Science. Following a period at Merck translating human genetics into therapies, Dr. Herbert founded the start-up InsideOutBio, where he leads research to improve cancer therapy using approaches validated by human genetics.



Kathryn Hitchcock
Clinical Associate Professor,
Department of Radiation Oncology
University of Florida

Dr. Hitchcock is a Clinical Associate Professor in the UF Health department of radiation oncology. She is board certified with the American Board of Radiology and a member of the American College of Radiation Oncology, American Society of Therapeutic Radiation Oncology, Florida Society of Clinical Oncology, and Radiological Society of North America.



Steven Hochwald
Director, Cancer Center, Chief of Surgical Oncology
Mount Sinai Medical Center

As a physician-scientist, Dr. Hochwald has performed basic science and translational research in colorectal cancer and other GI malignancies for the past 25 years. Dr. Hochwald has served on the National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable with the goal of increasing screening for colorectal cancer in the U.S. In addition, he has participated in writing the Operative Standards for Cancer Surgery for colorectal cancer with other members of the American College of Surgeons. Dr. Hochwald's goals are to identify and evaluate novel signaling and metabolic pathways suitable for targeting small molecule compounds as therapy in colorectal cancer.



William Hoos
President
Pathfinder Oncology

Mr. Hoos is an entrepreneur, executive, and venture leader in healthcare innovation. Among leading the Pathfinder team, Mr. Hoos serves as President of the Jaime Leandro Foundation for Therapeutic Cancer Vaccines and is a partner at Pilot Mountain Ventures. In addition, he advises medical diagnostic, device, pharmaceutical, and patient advocate organizations globally on product development and market strategy. His past clients include OncoPlexDx (acquired by NantOmics), Pancreatic Cancer Action Network, Skyline Diagnostics BV, and Vanda Pharmaceuticals.



Peter Hosein
Associate Professor
University of Miami

Dr. Hosein is a GI Medical Oncologist at the UM/Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, co-leader of the GI Cancer Site Disease Group, and Associate Director for Clinical Research at the Sylvester Pancreatic Cancer Research Institute. He is involved in cross-cutting themes in GI cancer research, especially strategies for re-invigorating immunity against cold tumors with stromal modulation, vaccines, and other novel targeted therapies.



Leighton Howells
Senior Vice President, Precision Biology Services
RareCyte, Inc.

Mr. Leighton Howells has over 30 years of experience developing, launching, and commercializing new technology platforms to support drug discovery/development and diagnostics. His technical and management career has focused on the pioneering instrumentation and assays for High Throughput Screening, High Content Screening, and more recently, highly multiplexed imaging assays for both Liquid Biopsy and Spatial Biology. He currently leads the Precision Biology Services team developing CTC assays and spatial biology panels in support of clinical trials for CRC and a wide range of cancer indications.



Charles Huang
Chief Operating Officer
ABM Therapeutics

Mr. Huang is currently Co-Founder and Chief Operating Officer of ABM Therapeutics Inc. His roles include corporate strategy, finance, business development, and external collaboration.



Christopher Hulme
Director Arizona Center for Drug Discovery and
Chief Scientific Officer Branch Therapeutics
University of Arizona

Dr. Hulme is director of medicinal chemistry at the BIO5 Translational Drug Discovery Center and is focused on small molecule drug design and developing enabling chemical methodologies to expedite the drug discovery process. The development of small molecule inhibitors of kinases is of particular interest. Projects are highly collaborative in nature, and students are exposed to the full array of design hurdles involved in progressing molecules along the value chain to clinical evaluation.



Hanlee Ji
Professor
Stanford University

Dr. Ji is a professor at Stanford University. Dr. Ji's clinical background is in medical oncology and clinical genetics. Their clinic is centered on gastrointestinal cancers, and they run a research lab that is focused on studying the genome biology of metastatic colorectal and gastric cancers for the purpose of finding new targets.



Jeremy Jones
Medical Oncologist
Mayo Clinic

Dr. Jones is a medical oncologist and hematologist who specializes in treating gastrointestinal malignancies. He is interested in finding the cure for colorectal cancer.



Adham Jurdi
Senior Medical Director
Natera

Dr. Jurdi is a gastrointestinal medical oncologist who transitioned to Natera after eight years in academic medicine. His focus is on advancing the field of Molecular Residual Disease in solid tumors, with a particular emphasis on GI cancers. At Natera, he has spearheaded efforts to produce groundbreaking ctDNA research in colorectal cancer and is dedicated to promoting a more tailored approach to patient care.



Mark Kaganovich
Chief Executive Officer
Tracer Biotechnologies

Dr. Kaganovich co-founded Tracer Biotechnologies, a cancer detection technology company focused on developing and distributing cfDNA-based MRD and monitoring assays. Prior to co-founding Tracer Biotechnologies, he was the Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder of SolveBio (acquired by Precision Medicine Group).



Raghu Kalluri
Professor and Chairman
The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

Dr. Kalluri is a Professor and Chairman of the Department of Cancer Biology at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. He is a CPRIT Established Investigator and holds the Frederick F. Becker Distinguished University Chair of Cancer Research. Dr. Kalluri's research program is focused on innovative research to unravel how cells and their environment communicate to maintain organ health and how such communication networks are altered in cancer and other diseases.



Pashtoon Kasi

**Medical Director, GI Oncology,
City of Hope Orange County
City of Hope**

Inspired by his physician parents, Dr. Kasi gravitated toward oncology because he was intrigued by novel therapies that made a difference in patient outcomes and the promise he saw in future discoveries. Dr. Kasi is known for his work on the “NEST” clinical trial which determined that a combination of immunotherapy drugs called botensilimab and balstilimab were effective in markedly killing colorectal cancer when given before surgery (neoadjuvant), thereby allowing the body to fight the tumors “roots up.” This potentially offers new hope for cure for patients with this and other cancers. Additionally, he is highly regarded for his investigation of liquid biopsies, frequently collaborating with international researchers and industries.



Pravin Kaumaya

**Vera Bradley Foundation Endowed Chair
in Breast Cancer Innovation
Indiana University School of Medicine Simon
Comprehensive Cancer Center**

Dr. Kaumaya is currently the Vera Bradley Foundation Endowed Chair in Breast Cancer Innovation at Indiana University School of Medicine Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center. Dr. Kaumaya was a Professor of Medicine at Ohio State University and Director of the Division of Vaccine Research and Peptide & Protein Engineering lab within the Medical Center and OSUCCC from 1989-2023. His work over the past 34 years has been in the field of B-cell vaccination, developing innovative strategies to create paradigm shifts in developing combination cancer vaccines that would be safe and exhibit little or no toxicities. The main goal and focus of Dr. Kaumaya’s research has been to develop vaccines for immune checkpoint molecules in syngeneic BALB/CT26 and C57Bl6/MC38 colon carcinoma mouse models. The present and future focus is to continue validating several combination immunotherapy.



Saad Kenderian
Physician Scientist, Oncologist/Hematologist
Mayo Clinic

Dr. Kenderian is a Physician Scientist and Oncologist at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN. He runs a federally funded translational research program focused on the development of novel engineered cellular therapies in the treatment of cancer. In this context, his team developed a novel engineered cellular therapy for the treatment of colorectal cancers that target both cancer cells and the tumor microenvironment.



Santosh Kesari
Professor
Pacific Neuroscience Institute

Dr. Kesari has led clinical trials in innovative approaches for high unmet need cancers, including personalized targeted therapies, immunotherapies, and neoantigen vaccines. He also is involved with developing drugs targeting cancer stem cells, including wnt/beta-catenin and other pathways.



Hiroki Kobayashi

Research Scientist

**Division of Digestive & Liver Diseases,
Columbia University**

Dr. Kobayashi is a pathologist and research scientist in Timothy C. Wang's lab at Columbia University, with a focus on the roles of tumor microenvironment in CRC progression. Their research interest centers on understanding how cancer-associated fibroblasts, a component of the tumor microenvironment, regulate tumor progression. Their recent work demonstrated that the interaction between fibroblasts and sympathetic nerves plays a key role in CRC progression. The goal of their study is to develop a novel therapeutic approach targeting the tumor microenvironment of CRC.



Scott Kopetz

Professor

The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

Dr. Kopetz is a physician-scientist with a focus on colorectal cancer biology, biomarkers, and drug development, with a goal of advancing the field through team science, mentoring/career development, and translational pursuits.



Peter Lee
Chair, Immuno-Oncology
City of Hope

At City of Hope, Dr. Lee develops combination immunotherapy for metastatic MSS CRC by leveraging immunogenic cell death induction and immunomodulation via ivermectin to synergize with immune checkpoint inhibitors.



Chris Lengner
Professor and Chair
Department of Biomedical Sciences, University of Pennsylvania

Dr. Lengner develops and employs molecular and functional genetic techniques in mouse models and human organoid culture systems to understand the intestinal stem cell compartment and how it becomes dysregulated to initiate colorectal cancer. More recently, work in the Lengner lab has expanded to applying these tools to understand how the tumor microenvironment contributes to CRC progression, and to understand the molecular drivers of CRC metastasis.



Joe Lennerz
Chief Scientific Officer
BostonGene

Dr. Lennerz is the Chief Scientific Officer at BostonGene. Dr. Lennerz oversees the comprehensive product lifecycle management, data utilization, and regulatory science for BostonGene, a leading provider of AI-driven molecular-genetic and immune profiling solutions. Before BostonGene, Dr. Lennerz served as the Associate Chief of Pathology and the Medical Director of the Center for Integrated Diagnostics at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) and Harvard Medical School.



Heinz-Josef Lenz
Professor of Medicine
USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center

Dr. Lenz is a physician-scientist known for his work on the molecular characterization of colon cancers. His work has pioneered pharmacogenomics in colon cancer, leading to the design of prospective trials in GI cancer using biomarkers identified in my laboratory, including biomarkers in DNA repair, angiogenesis, immune pathways, EGFR signaling, apoptosis, and hippo pathway. He is the Principal Investigator of the NCI UM1 (CA186717, PI: Dr. Lenz and Dr. Villalona-Calero, City of Hope), the Lead PI on the NIH-NCTN UG1-CA180830, and the PI on the Moonshot NCI U2C CA252971, which focuses on molecular characterization of Hispanics with colon cancer. He is a member of the NCI Investigational Drug Steering Committee and an NCI CTEP/IDSC working group on DNA repair and apoptosis.



Brian Lichty
Chief Executive Officer
Esphera SynBio

Dr. Lichty is an Associate Professor at McMaster University. His research has focused on molecular virology, the virus:host interaction and the use of viral vectors as immunotherapies in oncology and infectious disease. He is currently the Director of the Robert E. Fitzhenry vector lab, Canada's first academic GMP vaccine manufacturing site. In 2014, he co-founded Turnstone Biologics Inc. to translate novel viral vaccine immunotherapies in oncology and served as Chief Technology Officer and Senior Vice President of Basic Research until 2020. In these capacities, he has overseen the pre-clinical tox/efficacy testing, manufacture, and clinical testing of multiple viral vector vaccines. His latest research interests focus on 2nd generation COVID vaccines as well as immunoncology strategies including the use of engineered exosomes as immunotherapies and/or vaccines. As a result, he has recently co-founded AeroImmune Inc., a McMaster spinout devoted to the development of inhaled vaccines and antivirals as well as Esphera SynBio Inc. a joint venture between McMaster and the Ottawa Hospital Research Institute to develop the application of engineered exosome technologies to human disease.



Christopher Lieu
Professor of Medicine in the Division
of Medical Oncology and Associate Director
for Clinical Research
University of Colorado School of Medicine

Dr. Lieu is a Professor of Medicine in the Division of Medical Oncology, and Associate Director for Clinical Research at the University of Colorado School of Medicine in Aurora. He currently serves as the Associate Director for Clinical Research and Director of GI Medical Oncology at the University of Colorado Cancer Center, serves on the FDA Oncologic Drugs Advisory Committee, the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) Panel for Neuroendocrine Cancers, and the Vice-Chair of the NCCN Board of Directors.



Paul Limburg
Chief Medical Officer, Screening
Exact Sciences

Dr. Limburg has served as the Chief Medical Officer, Screening, of Exact Sciences since 2018. Dr. Limburg holds the academic rank of professor of medicine in the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine. His previous Mayo Clinic leadership roles include co-leader of the Cancer Prevention and Control Program, Medical Director for Global Business Solutions, Medical Director for the Office of Health & Well-Being, Physician Lead for Prediction and Prevention in the Center for Innovation, and Research Director for the Healthy Living Program, among others.



David Liska
Chair of the Department of Colorectal Surgery
Cleveland Clinic

Dr. Liska is the Chair of the Department of Colorectal Surgery at the Cleveland Clinic. He holds the James Church, MD, and Edward J. DeBartolo, Jr. Family Endowed Chair in Colorectal Surgery. He is an Associate Professor of Surgery at Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine. He serves as the Director of the Sanford R. Weiss, MD Center for Hereditary Colorectal Neoplasia and the Cleveland Clinic DeBartolo Center for Young-Onset Colorectal Cancer. His clinical practice specializes in the minimally invasive treatment of hereditary and sporadic colorectal cancer, inflammatory bowel disease, and other benign colorectal conditions. His research interests include hereditary and young-onset colorectal cancer and optimizing surgical outcomes through the implementation of enhanced recovery pathways. His laboratory studies the biology of rectal cancer response to therapy with the goal of developing novel therapeutics that can overcome treatment resistance.



Emil Lou

**Physician-Scientist, GI Medical Oncologist, Professor
Masonic Cancer Center, University of Minnesota**

Dr. Lou is a professor with tenure at the Masonic Cancer Center of the University of Minnesota. His clinical interest includes whole-patient care of patients with early-onset/young-adult colorectal cancers, and his translational focus includes cell therapy and immunotherapy-based clinical trials for patients with CRC with a growing focus on adaptive trial design. The Lou Lab is centered on understanding the clinical cancer biology of solid tumors, with areas of expertise including structural, molecular, and cell biology of RAS-driven colorectal tumors. A principal strategy of this work is to focus on uncovering the crucial roles of intercellular communication in inducing tumor heterogeneity and the emergence of chemotherapy resistance, an approach we refer to as “Subcellular Oncology.”



Binfeng Lu

**Professor and Member
Center for Discovery and Innovation,
Hackensack Meridian Health**

Dr. Lu is a member of the Center for Discovery and Innovation and Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center. His research area includes tumor immunology and cancer immunotherapy. His lab investigates ways to harness T cell-mediated anti-tumor immune responses to treat cancer. His team has performed molecular characterization of tumor-associated Treg cells with the discovery of TIM3⁺ Treg cells in the tumor immune suppressive microenvironment, established key transcription factors, such as Tbet and Eomes, that regulate tumor-specific memory stem T cells, and ushered in novel cytokine-based cancer immunotherapy based on tissue alarmin cytokines, such as IL-33 and IL-36.



Peter Luo
Chief Executive Officer
Adagene

Dr. Luo is Adagene's Co-Founder and has served as its Chief Executive Officer since 2011 and Chairman of the Board of Directors since 2018. Before joining Adagene, Dr. Luo was the first lead scientist in computational protein design and protein laboratory at Xencor. He also founded Abmaxis and was its Co-Founder, Chief Technology Officer, President, and Director. Dr. Luo led the acquisition of Abmaxis by Merck & Co., after which Dr. Luo served as a director of Biologics Technology at Merck and Chief Technology Officer of Abmaxis, the subsidiary of Merck & Co.



Katarina Luptakova
Chief Medical Officer
Xilio Therapeutics

Dr. Luptakova has approximately 20 years of experience serving patients with cancer through bedside patient care and drug development. She has contributed to the development and successful launch of multiple cancer therapies. Dr. Luptakova is serving as Chief Medical Officer at Xilio Therapeutics. Xilio Therapeutics is a clinical-stage small biotech developing novel tumor-activated immune-oncology agents, including a novel tumor-activated aCTLA-4 for patients with MSS colorectal cancer, including patients with and without liver metastases. Prior to joining Xilio Therapeutics, Dr. Luptakova led clinical development at Constellation Pharmaceuticals, Tesaro, Inc. (acquired by GSK) and Takeda. Before transition to the biopharmaceutical industry, she was a physician-scientist at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston, MA.



John Marshall

Chief Medical Officer

**Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center
Medstar/Georgetown**

Dr. Marshall is an internationally recognized expert in new drug development for GI cancer, with expertise in phase I, II, and III trial design, and has served as Principal Investigator for over 100 clinical trials. In 2009, he established the Otto J Ruesch Center for the Cure of GI Cancers focused on improving the lives of GI cancer patients through innovative research, personalized medicine, and focused advocacy. In 2015, Dr. Marshall established and directed the Precision Oncology Alliance to study the impact of molecular profiling on cancer research, value and outcomes. He currently is serving as the Oncology Chief Medical Officer for Indivumed. In 2020, he and his wife published "Off Our Chests, A Candid Tour Through the World of Cancer." In 2022, he became the inaugural Physician Executive Director of the MedStar Washington DC Integrated Hematology Oncology Division.



Ashiq Masood

**Associate Professor of Medicine
Indiana University**

Dr. Masood is deeply engaged in cancer research, specializing in cancer genomics, computational biology, and gastrointestinal oncology. As a physician-scientist at Indiana University's Simon Cancer Center, he bridges clinical care with genomic research in pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma. His lab focuses on the molecular complexities of colorectal and gastrointestinal cancers, particularly the role of cancer-associated fibroblasts (CAFs) in colorectal cancer (CRC) pathogenesis. They utilize single-cell RNA sequencing and spatial transcriptomics with the CAF inhibitor ProAgio to explore therapeutic resistance. Additionally, his team investigates the molecular biology of BRAF-mutant CRC using novel syngeneic mouse models and advanced single-cell and spatial transcriptomics techniques.



Lisa McNeil
Vice President, Translational Medicine
Elicio Therapeutics

Ms. McNeil leads the strategic planning, coordination, and execution of Elicio's clinical immunogenicity program. She brings over 25 years of translational immunology research and clinical development across immunotherapy, biologics, and prophylactic and therapeutic vaccines in big pharma and small biotech settings. In her role at Elicio, Ms. McNeil has focused on developing therapeutic cancer vaccines to stimulate the T cell immune response against tumor antigens, focusing on colorectal and pancreatic cancer.



Gabriel Morris
Chief Financial Officer
Immix BioPharma, Inc.

Mr. Morris is the Chief Financial Officer of Immix Biopharma, Inc. Since its founding, he has been the Managing Partner of Alwaysraise LLC, a life sciences advisory and investment firm based in San Francisco. Prior, Mr. Morris was the interim Chief Financial Officer of Zap Surgical Systems, a brain radiosurgery company, where he completed a growth equity financing round. Mr. Morris also led cross-border mergers and acquisitions transactions at Goldman Sachs and other global investment banks for more than a decade, where he participated in greater than \$50 billion in completed transactions.



Gareth Morrison
Research Director
Private Health Management

Dr. Morrison has extensive experience in the healthcare and research field. Currently, they are the Research Director at Private Health Management, where they manage a team of experts and navigate the complex healthcare system for clients. Prior to this, Dr. Morrison worked at the University of Southern California as a Translational Research Manager, where they organized research retreats and directed funding for cancer center initiatives.



Kimmie Ng
Associate Chief, Division of
Gastrointestinal Oncology
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute

Dr. Ng is Associate Chief of the Division of Gastrointestinal Oncology at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute (DFCI), and Associate Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School. She also serves as the Founding Director of the Young-Onset Colorectal Cancer Center and Co-Director of the Colon and Rectal Cancer Center at DFCI. Her research focuses on identifying dietary, plasma, and molecular predictors of improved survival in patients with colorectal cancer. She is the recipient of numerous NIH, foundation, and industry grants to support her work. She chaired the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Scientific Program Committee for the 2023 Annual Meeting and currently serves as a member of ASCO's Nominating Committee. She was appointed an Associate Editor of the Journal of the American Medical Association in February 2024.



Jonathan Northrup
Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder
Stingray Therapeutics

Mr. Northrup is the Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder of Stingray Therapeutics. Stingray has started its clinical study in metastatic Microsatellite Stable Colorectal Cancer (mMSS CRC). Stingray's SR-8541A innate immune enhancer is designed to turn the immune desert around these tumors into an immune oasis with SR-8541A's innate immune stimulation, and then work in combination with Agenus' adaptive immune checkpoint inhibitors Botensilimab (2nd generation CTLA-4 antibody) and Balstilimab (PD-1 antibody). By combining our innate immune checkpoint inhibitor with Agenus' double adaptive immune checkpoint inhibitors, we believe we may achieve a new standard of care for this terrible disease.



Steven O'Day
Chief Medical Officer
Agenus Bio

Dr. O'Day serves as Agenus' Chief Medical Officer. He is responsible for leading the expansion of the company's presence in the I-O field. A pioneer in CTLA-4 inhibition, Dr. O'Day played key roles in the advancement of cancer therapies Yervoy and Opdivo and has been the principal investigator in more than 200 clinical trials. Prior to joining Agenus, he was Executive Director of the John Wayne Cancer Institute and Cancer Clinics at Providence St. John's Health Center and Director of the Melanoma and Cutaneous Oncology Research Center.



Conor O'Donnell
Senior Associate Consultant
Mayo Clinic Florida

Dr. O'Donnell is a Medical Oncologist in the Department of Internal Medicine at Mayo Clinic Florida. Dr. O'Donnell specializes in the treatment of gastrointestinal cancers, including colon, rectal, stomach, esophagus, liver, pancreas and anal malignancies.



Peter O'Dwyer
Professor of Medicine and Co-Chair,
ECOG-ACRIN Cancer Research Group
University of Pennsylvania

Dr. O'Dwyer is the PrECOG, LLC, Board of Managers Chair and Chief Executive Officer. He is a medical oncologist at the University of Pennsylvania and holds an appointment as a Professor of Medicine. His research focus is in the area of novel therapy development, primarily in pancreatic and colorectal cancers. Since 2017, he has served as Group Co-Chair for ECOG-ACRIN Cancer Research Group, where he also leads the GI Cancer Committee.



Thihan Padukkavidana
Senior Director Medical Affairs
Takeda Oncology

Dr. Padukkavidana brings over 10 years of experience in the pharmaceutical industry, with a strong focus on oncology across both solid tumors (CRC, NSCLC) and leukemia. He has supported five product launches. His most recent launch was Fruquintinib, the first approved novel molecular entity in over a decade for relapsed/refractory metastatic CRC, distinguished by its unique mechanism of action.



Jim Pankovich
Executive Vice President, Clinical Development
Bold Therapeutics Inc.

Mr. Pankovich is the Executive Vice President of Clinical Development and Co-Founder at Bold Therapeutics. Bold Therapeutics is a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company founded to develop and commercialize BOLD-100, a first-in-class metallothepapeutic being developed for the treatment of patients with gastrointestinal cancers. Mr. Pankovich brings more than 30 years of biopharmaceutical experience, leading clinical and regulatory teams to advance development candidates from discovery to commercialization in various oncology, infectious disease, and inflammatory conditions. He is also active as a Board Member of N2 Canada and a Management Committee member of the Canadian Cancer Clinical Trials Network. Both these national organizations are committed to advocating for clinical trial education, quality, patient engagement, and enhancing clinical trial capability and capacity.



Aparna Parikh
Associate Professor of Medicine,
Harvard Medical School
Massachusetts General Hospital

Dr. Parikh has an interest in caring for young adults with colon cancer. She also has a great interest in ctDNA and trying to cure more patients by testing patients in the adjuvant setting and then taking the promising therapies forward for metastatic patients.



Yaron Pereg
Chief Executive Officer
KAHR Medical Ltd.

Dr. Pereg is an executive leader with over two decades of experience leading worldwide clinical programs in oncology, heading multi-disciplinary teams, and managing diverse portfolios both in private and publicly traded companies. Dr. Pereg is the Chief Executive Officer of KAHR Medical, a privately-held biotechnology company developing a novel multi-functional immunotherapeutic for colorectal cancer. Dr. Pereg dedicated his career to finding a cure for cancer patients struggling with unresponsive tumors. Prior to joining Kahr, he served as Chief Development Officer at Collect Biotechnology and as Senior Director of Oncology at BioLineRx.



Jenny Permuth
Vice Chair of Research, Department of
Gastrointestinal Oncology
Moffitt Cancer Center

Dr. Permuth is an Associate Member and Molecular Epidemiologist in Moffitt's Department of Cancer Epidemiology and Gastrointestinal Oncology. She currently serves as Moffitt's first Vice Chair of Research in the Department of GI Oncology, where she works with faculty, staff, and other stakeholders to develop, maintain, and lead active research programs in GI Oncology. She also oversees Moffitt's Gastrointestinal Translational Oncology Laboratory. Colorectal cancer and other GI malignancies have impacted her life, and she is committed to colorectal cancer research, advocacy, and educational efforts. Her research portfolio is primarily dedicated to developing early detection and prevention strategies for pancreatic cancer and addressing the disproportionate pancreatic cancer burden among African Americans. She co-founded the Florida Pancreas Collaborative, a state-wide partnership dedicated to advancing pancreatic cancer research. She is the Principal Investigator for large-scale grants from the National Cancer Institute, the Department of Defense, and the Florida Department of Health.



Michael Pishvaian
Associate Professor
Johns Hopkins

Dr. Pishvaian is a translational oncologist, who has strived to provide novel therapies for patients, particularly in the areas of pancreatic cancer and refractory colorectal cancer. He has been a Phase I program leader for most of his career, focusing trials in the area of precision medicine, with a special focus on therapy targeted towards homologous recombination DNA repair deficient tumors.



Kelvin Pond
Chief Scientific Officer
ProxyBio

Dr. Pond is an Assistant Research Professor at the University of Arizona's Department of Cellular and Molecular Medicine, where he is developing patient-derived organoid technology to advance the understanding of epithelial homeostasis and single-cell kinase dynamics. His research, which integrates collaboration with machine learning specialists and bioengineers, focuses on DNA repair, genomic instability, and the development of innovative therapeutic solutions. Dr. Pond is actively establishing a new lab dedicated to these efforts. As a Wellcome Trust Researcher and recipient of the 2023 FASEB Outstanding New Investigator Award, he is committed to mentoring emerging scientists and driving novel biotech research.



Ellen Puré
Grace Lansing Lambert Professor
of Biomedical Sciences
University of Pennsylvania

Dr. Puré is a Grace Lansing Lambert Professor of Biomedical Sciences at the University of Pennsylvania.



Ilya Rachman
Chief Executive Officer
Immix Biopharma, Inc.

Dr. Rachman is a physician-scientist and former community clinical faculty at the University of California, Los Angeles. He founded a Clinical Research organization that conducted clinical trials of pharmaceutical drugs and is also currently the Chief Executive Officer of Immix Biopharma, Inc. He has completed several clinical trials as a Principal Investigator and developed strong relationships in the clinical research industry.



Kanwal Raghav
Associate Professor
The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

Dr. Raghav is an Associate Professor in the Department of Gastrointestinal Medical Oncology with clinical and research efforts centered on tumor biology and developmental therapeutics in colorectal cancer. Dr. Raghav's research focuses on predictive biomarkers, ctDNA applications, immunotherapy, HER2 selection, and antibody conjugates in colorectal cancer. He believes that team science and revolutionary ideas can truly change the status quo and further precision care for patients with colorectal cancer.



Gopal Ramachandran
Chief Scientific Officer
TracerDx

Dr. Ramachandran is the Chief Scientific Officer and Co-Founder of Tracer Biotechnologies, a ctDNA liquid biopsy company specifically focused on longitudinal monitoring. The assay developed by Tracer has pan-cancer applicability. It has been utilized in the Lung and CRC exploratory settings. Prior to Tracer, he was the Chief Technology Officer at Wellframe, a digital health company used by insurance companies for the management of chronic disease.



Joe Reynolds
VP of Program Leadership
C4 Therapeutics

Mr. Reynolds is the Vice President of Program Leadership at C4 Therapeutics.



Oliver Rosen
Chief Medical Officer
Akamis Bio

Dr. Rosen is a physician-scientist and has broad experience in biopharmaceutical oncology and hematology product development, including global clinical development, global medical affairs, translational medicine, patient advocacy, and health economics and outcomes research. He is passionate about successful translation of data from bench to bedside to develop medicines that address unmet medical needs.



Aliasger Salem
Professor and Chair
University of Iowa

Dr. Salem is the Associate Vice President for Research for the University of Iowa and Bighley Chair and Professor of Pharmaceutical Sciences at the University of Iowa College of Pharmacy. Dr. Salem's research expertise is in drug discovery, development, formulation and delivery for treatment of colorectal cancer.



Asal Sayas

**Former Senior Advisor,
White House Biden Cancer Moonshot
Former White House**

Ms. Sayas was most recently a Senior Advisor on President Biden's Cancer Moonshot in the White House Office of Science & Technology Policy. Her portfolio specifically focused on clinical trials, innovation and improving the experience and outcomes for people diagnosed with metastatic cancer. Asal began her career in policy working as a congressional aide in both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate.



Joshua Schiffman

**Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder
Peel Therapeutics, Inc.**

Dr. Schiffman is the Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder of PEEL Therapeutics, Inc., and a pediatric hematologist-oncologist at the University of Utah's Huntsman Cancer Institute.



Monil Shah
Chief Development Officer
Stingray Therapeutics

Mr. Shah is the Chief Development Officer at Stingray Therapeutics.



Mark Shapiro
Chief Operating Officer
xCures

Mr. Shapiro the PI for the XCELSIOR patient-centric registry in oncology which includes more than 8,000 patients across the U.S. Over a 25-year career, he has been led a large global research team that conducted more than 120 cancer clinical trials. More recently, as the Chief Operating Officer at xCures, he led the development of the platform's AI-powered oncology clinical decision support algorithm, which was trained against human tumor boards.



Sunil Sharma
Physician in Chief
TGen

Dr. Sharma is the Physician in Chief at Translational Genomics, a renowned oncologist and researcher who has conducted a number of studies on colorectal cancer, including immunotherapy. Dr. Sharma co-authored a study published in Nature Medicine that demonstrated the effectiveness of a combination immunotherapy treatment for microsatellite stable metastatic colorectal cancer. This is the most common type of colon cancer and has generally not responded well to immunotherapy. He has helped develop drugs such as ceritinib, pembrolizumab, and nivolumab. He has also worked on developing new therapeutics, including image-guided and targeted drug delivery systems. Dr. Sharma's research focuses on identifying possible cancer-fighting agents. His lab has identified small molecules, fragments, and inhibitors against LSD1.



John Paul Shen
Assistant Professor, Department of Gastrointestinal (GI) Medical Oncology, Division of Cancer Medicine
The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

Dr. Shen is a physician-scientist with a scientific background in chemical biology, functional genomics, and systems biology leading a lab team of computational, experimental, and clinical scientists studying the genomics and transcriptomics of colorectal cancers. They combine knowledge from testing model systems and molecular profiling of colorectal cancer (CRC) tumors. They have built a software system to capture clinical information from the over 3,000 patients with CRC treated at MDA every year so we can learn from patients not on clinical trials. With these sources of data, they are trying to move away from the historical one-size-fits-all approach to chemotherapy to precision oncology. Active projects include high-throughput double gene knockout with CRISPR-cas9 to identify new synergistic drug combinations, investigating interaction of tumor cells with tumor microenvironment (TME) using the largest cohort of CRC patients profiled with single cell RNAseq, and utilizing circulating tumor DNA to identify minimal residual disease.



Xiling Shen
CPRIT Professor
MD Anderson Cancer Center

Dr. Shen is currently the CPRIT Professor in GI Medical Oncology and Co-Director of CRC Moonshot at MD Anderson. He was formerly a professor Director of the Woo Center for Big Data and Precision Health at Duke University and Chief Scientific Officer at Terasaki Institute. He was the Steering Committee Chair of the NCI Patient-Derived Model of Cancer Consortium, Co-Chair of the NCI Tissue Engineering Consortium, and Cancer Track Chair of Biomedical Engineering Society 2019. He also founded several cancer-related biotech startups. His lab studies novel cancer therapeutics from a systems biology perspective.



Ardaman Shergill
Attending Physician, Assistant Professor of Medicine
University of Chicago

Dr. Shergill is a medical oncologist specializing in providing comprehensive care to patients with colorectal cancers with a focus on clinical trials, targeted therapies, especially the KRAS pathway, novel therapies, ct-DNA, and MRD management. In addition to clinical trials, she conducts clinical research on patient-reported outcomes in patients with early-onset CRC and survivorship. She also serves as part of the leadership team as the executive officer for the gastrointestinal cancers committee at the Alliance for Clinical Trials in Oncology, a National Cancer Institute-funded oncology research organization.



Giulia Siravegna

Associate Director, Translational Medicine
Quest Diagnostics (Haystack Oncology)

Dr. Siravegna is the Associate Director, Translational Medicine, at Quest Diagnostics (Haystack Oncology).



Tom Smart

Chief Executive Officer
Actym Therapeutics

Mr. Smart is the Chief Executive Officer of Actym Therapeutics. Actym Therapeutics has engineered a new drug modality harnessing the power of a genetically modified bacterial vehicle that safely introduces therapeutic payloads to activate the immune response in the tumor microenvironment. To achieve targeted anti-tumor effects, we have developed a systemically administered treatment that exploits intrinsic TME-specific metabolites, enabling selective enrichment of the bacterial vehicle in tumors. After cell-specific entry, our lead candidate, ACTM-838, positively activates tumor-resident myeloid cells and delivers two synergistic payloads, optimized IL-15 and STING, unlocking a comprehensive and durable innate and adaptive anti-tumor immune response. With the ability to tailor our platform utilizing a range of payload combinations, we aim to achieve a new level of therapeutic impact for cancer patients across multiple tumor types.



Ramji Srinivasan
Chief Executive Officer
Teiko

Mr. Srinivasan is the Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Teiko.bio, a company dedicated to helping drug developers measure the immune state of patients in clinical trials in our lab. Teiko.bio uses a technique called “multi-parameter” flow cytometry to measure hundreds of unique populations. This technique can increase the resolution of cellular populations by ~16X versus prior generations of technology. These population measurements help drug developers figure out why their drugs are working (or not) and help those drug developers save years of development time to get to market. While the lab services are particularly beneficial for colorectal cancer researchers targeting the immune system, they have broad applicability for any immunotherapy drug development.



Sharon Stein
Physician
MetroHealth

Dr. Stein is a colorectal surgeon and professional development coach. She previously worked as a Professor of Surgery at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine and was awarded the Murdough Master Clinician in Colorectal Surgery for outstanding contributions to her patients and university. She has served as the President of the Association of Women Surgeons, as Chair of the American College of Surgeons Women in Surgery Committee, and on the Executive Council of the American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons. She has worked for Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors without Borders) as a surgeon in both South Sudan and Haiti.



Gabriele Strusi
Postdoctoral Research Fellow
Anglia Ruskin University

Dr. Strusi is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Anglia Ruskin University. His research focuses on understanding how the tumor microenvironment influences cancer development, particularly in relation to obesity. Currently, Dr. Strusi is investigating the relationship between adipose tissue and colorectal cancer, examining how obesity impacts different tumor cell sub-populations. This work aims to uncover new ways to influence the tumor microenvironment to halt cancer progression, potentially leading to improved therapeutic strategies for colorectal cancer patients.



Somasundaram Subramaniam
Oncology Medical Development Director
Exact Sciences

Dr. Subramaniam is the Oncology Medical Development Director at Exact Sciences. He is a medical oncologist specializing in gastrointestinal cancers. Their work is dedicated to cancer control, with a focus on prevention, screening, early diagnosis, and aggressive treatment to improve patient outcomes.



Caterina Suelzu
Postdoctoral Research Fellow
Anglia Rusking University

Dr. Suelzu is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Anglia Ruskin University in Cambridge, UK. Her expertise spans stem cell differentiation for regenerative medicine applications and molecular investigations into the effects of gene knockouts on osteoporosis, diabetes, and breast cancer, both in vitro and using murine models. Her current research focuses on the interaction between cancer cells (specifically colorectal and breast cancer cells) and adipose tissue, aiming to unravel the nature of this crosstalk under both normal and obese conditions. This work seeks to advance the development of innovative therapeutic strategies for colorectal and breast cancers by creating unique assembloids to identify key factors involved in this mutual relationship.



Alex Tendler
Chief Technology Officer
ExoProTher

Dr. Tendler is an entrepreneur, scientist, and researcher with vast experience in the management of international projects in various areas of life sciences and biomedical engineering, such as drug delivery, neuroscience, and medical devices. He has extensive experience leading multidisciplinary projects from concept development to clinical research, including IP development, scientific writing, and teaching. Dr. Tendler has deep knowledge of a wide range of research methods and techniques, including designing and monitoring laboratory and clinical trials, and has led multiple innovative research and development teams.



Christopher Thanos
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
XDemics Corporation

Dr. Thanos is the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of XDemics Corporation. Advanced cell and gene therapies remain expensive and hard to make, impeding powerful treatment options for patients across the spectrum of human disease. XDemics, a venture-backed spin out from Caltech, tackles this challenge with a patented new technology that allows for the production of cell and viral-based therapeutics in a natural and efficient way. We achieved this by separating the supply of oxygen and nutrients, creating the perfect environment for cells to thrive in a scalable, controllable and high quality manner.



Marshall Thompson

President

The Rare Cancer Research Foundation

Dr. Thompson is a multidisciplinary scientist, software engineer, and business leader with a strong interest in applying cutting-edge software practices to genomic-scale biological problems. As President of the Rare Cancer Research Foundation, Dr. Thompson is focused on building tools and infrastructure that empower patients and researchers, accelerating discovery and deployment of novel therapeutic options in personalized oncology.



Curtis Thorne

Associate Professor

University of Arizona

Dr. Thorne is an Assistant Professor at the University of Arizona's Department of Cellular and Molecular Medicine and a member of the Cancer Center.



Matthew Tindall
Executive Chairman & Chief Executive Officer
Flightpath Biosciences, Inc

Mr. Tindall has extensive entrepreneurial management experience as a Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder of healthcare companies in the rare disease, oncology, pain, cardiovascular and genomics spaces with Fabric Genomics, Kodikaz, Wheatsheaf Group, IQVIA, Digitas Health, Genzyme Corporation, Celera Genomics, Eli Lilly & Company and Sarentis Therapeutics.



William Tunno
Senior Director, Scientific Advocacy
AbbVie

Mr. Tunno is the Senior Director of Scientific Advocacy at AbbVie. He develops and manages long-term collaborations with academic institutions, the NIH, cooperative groups, oncology networks, patient advocacy organizations, and professional medical societies.



Kiran Turaga

Professor

Yale School of Medicine

Dr. Turaga is Division Chief of Surgical Oncology in the Department of Surgery and Assistant Medical Director for the Clinical Trials Office at Yale Cancer Center. Dr. Turaga joined Yale Cancer Center and Smilow Cancer Hospital from the University of Chicago, where he was Vice Chief of the Section of General Surgery and Surgical Oncology, Director of the Surgical Gastrointestinal Cancer Program, and Director of Regional Therapeutics.



Abi Vainstein Haras

Chief Medical Officer

Sapience Therapeutics

Dr. Vainstein-Haras is the Chief Medical Officer of Sapience. Dr. Vainstein brings more than 15 years of experience in oncology drug development and treatment of patients with cancer and other diseases. She joins Sapience from BioLineRx, where she spent the last eight years serving in multiple roles of increasing responsibility, most recently serving as Chief Medical Officer since January 2021.



Kevin Van der Jeught

Assistant Professor

**University of Miami-Sylvester Comprehensive
Cancer Center**

Dr. Van der Jeught's current research establishes a new angle on improving intratumoral mRNA vaccination strategies for colorectal cancer immunotherapy. His lab is working on delivering mRNA to dendritic cells, a specific immune cell that is at the basis of driving anti-tumor immune responses.



Atul Varadhachary

Managing Partner

Fannin

Dr. Varadhachary is Managing Partner at Fannin Innovation Studio which works with innovators at the institutions in the Texas Medical Center in Houston to help commercialize early-stage technologies in the life sciences.



Benjamin Vincent

Associate Professor of Medicine
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Dr. Vincent is an Assistant Professor of Medicine, Division of Hematology/Oncology, at the University of North Carolina (UNC). Dr. Vincent was trained in cellular immunology and immunogenetics in the laboratory of Dr. Jeffrey Frelinger, former Chairman of the UNC Department of Microbiology/Immunology and past President of the American Association of Immunologists.



Wenyi Wang

Professor of Bioinformatics and
Computational Biology
The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

Dr. Wang leads a statistical bioinformatics laboratory at MD Anderson. Her lab's research is focused on the development of computational methods to study the evolution of cancer cells, and further develop risk prediction models to accelerate the translation of biological findings to clinical practice.



Benjamin Weinberg
Associate Professor of Medicine
Georgetown University

Dr. Weinberg is an Associate Professor of Medicine, Division of Hematology and Oncology at the Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center at Georgetown University, specializing in gastrointestinal oncology and sarcoma. He is interested in developing new therapies for colorectal and pancreatic cancers by translating research from animal models into early-phase clinical trials in humans.



Terrence West
Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder
Jeevan Therapeutics, Inc.

Mr. West is a visionary leader and co-founder of Jeevan Therapeutics, a biotech company dedicated to addressing critical unmet medical needs. With a focus on colorectal cancer, Jeevan is advancing a novel small molecule therapy targeting MSS tumors, aiming to transform outcomes for patients who currently have limited treatment options. Leveraging over 27 years of experience in biotech and pharma, Mr. West excels in building and leading high-performing teams, driving innovation, and advancing therapeutic programs from concept to impactful solutions. His leadership reflects a deep commitment to delivering groundbreaking science and improving patient care in oncology and beyond.



Angelique Whitehurst

Associate Professor

UT-Southwestern Medical Center

Dr. Whitehurst studies the role of Testis Specific Serine Kinase 6 (TSSK6) in colorectal cancer, where it is abnormally expressed in nearly half of cases. Normally restricted to sperm and essential for sperm motility and male fertility, TSSK6's aberrant expression in CRC, in both males and females, is linked to more aggressive disease and increased tumor growth and invasion. Her focus is understanding how TSSK6 influences the pathogenesis of colorectal cancer, the mechanism by which TSSK6 expression is abnormally induced, how TSSK6 signaling enhances malignant behaviors, and ultimately on the discovery of TSSK6 kinase inhibitors for the treatment of CRC.



Michael Yaffe

Director, MIT Center for Precision Cancer Medicine

Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research at MIT

Dr. Yaffe is the David H. Koch Professor of Science and Professor of Biology and Biological Engineering at MIT, where he has been a member of the faculty since 2000. He is also an attending surgeon and intensivist at the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, where he specializes in injury and surgical oncology. He has been the Director of the MIT Center for Precision Cancer Medicine since its inception.



Zane Yang
Chief Medical Officer
ABM Therapeutics Corporation

Dr. Yang is a physician and industry executive. Before joining ABM, he was Chief Medical Officer of Denovo Biopharma and Senior Vice President and US General Manager of Innovent Biologics, where he built the company's first U.S. R&D site and opened several clinical trials in the U.S. He was Senior Vice President for Spectrum Pharmaceuticals, where he managed and developed several oncology medicines, including Rolvedon, which is marketed in the US. He was Vice President for Inovio Pharmaceuticals to develop cancer vaccines. Before joining biotech companies, he worked for Janssen, Novartis, and Merck & Co. Dr. Yang graduated from Peking University Medical School and was an associate professor at the University of Virginia Medical Center.



Zhaohai Yang
Professor of Clinical Pathology
and Laboratory Medicine
University of Pennsylvania

Dr. Yang is a Professor of Clinical Pathology and Laboratory Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. He recently served as the Director of GI/Liver Pathology at Penn Medicine. Dr. Yang's expertise is to identify the tumor tissue, characterize its morphologic features, select and analyze relevant biomarkers, and correlate the biomarker expression with other parameters of the tumor and/or patient, including clinical presentation, disease progression, prognosis, and treatment response. Dr. Yang has worked with clinical collaborators on the utility of liquid biopsy in colorectal cancer and showed that circulating tumor cells were associated with tumor burden, advanced stage, and CEA levels, though heterogeneity does occur. Thus, assessment of circulating tumor cells using liquid biopsy may be a valuable alternative to invasive tissue biopsy for colorectal cancer.



Cassian Yee

**Professor, Department of Melanoma Medical
Oncology, Division of Cancer Medicine
The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center**

Dr. Yee has pioneered a form of adoptive cellular therapy known as endogenous T cell (ETC) therapy that has proven highly effective for patients with cancer. This approach yields memory T cells of defined specificity and is well-suited for the treatment of patients with colorectal cancer. Combined with this is his tumor immunopeptidome platform, which includes several CRC targets for ETC and TCR-based therapy of patients with CRC and other cancers.



Nicholas Young

**Clinical Research Scientist
More than Moore's Precision Medicine Solutions**

Dr. Young is a Clinical Research Scientist at More than Moore's Precision Medicine Solutions.



Elcin Zan
Chair, Nuclear Medicine
Cleveland Clinic

Dr. Zan is the Chair of Nuclear Medicine at Cleveland Clinic. Her research interest is Radiolabeled Fibroblast activation protein in colorectal cancer diagnosis and therapy combinations.



Yekaterina Zaytseva
Associate Professor
University of Kentucky

Dr. Zaytseva has extensive expertise in cancer biology with an emphasis on cancer metabolism and the development of novel therapeutic approaches for colorectal cancer. Dr. Zaytseva's recent studies focus on developing novel therapeutic strategies for BRAFV600E colorectal cancer. She has identified histone deacetylase inhibitors as a class of compounds with high efficacy in BRAFV600E CRC and high synergy with plixorafenib and denifanstat in inhibiting cancer cell viability. In her studies, Dr. Zaytseva utilizes patient-derived xenografts, metastasis models, and primary human colorectal cancer cultures.



Wenhan Zhu

Assistant Professor

Vanderbilt University Medical Center

At Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Dr. Zhu and his team investigate how a carcinogenic gut microbe rewires host epithelial cell metabolism for gut colonization and tumorigenesis.



Asaf Zviran

Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer

Prism AI Therapeutics

Dr. Zviran is an experienced entrepreneur, scientist, and executive with over 20 years of experience in product development, business development, and team management in the defense and life science industries. Previously, Dr. Zviran was the Co-Founder, Chief Executive Officer, and Chief Scientific Officer of C2i Genomics, a company that commercialized a liquid biopsy test for cancer detection and treatment monitoring using a technology that he co-invented. Dr. Zviran led the company from an academy spin-off to a global industry leader and a successful exit. As a former cancer survivor, he is committed to improving cancer patients' quality of life and outcomes.

ALLIANCE STAFF

@colorectal cancer alliance



Michael Sapienza
Chief Executive Officer
msapienza@ccalliance.org



Angie Lawry
Chief Marketing &
Communications Officer
alawry@ccalliance.org



Tina Zeff
Chief Operating Officer
tzeff@ccalliance.org



Marc Mason
SVP of Data Intelligence
& Technology
mmason@ccalliance.org



Brian Cowart
Chief Development
Officer
bcowart@ccalliance.org



David Fenstermacher
Senior Director of Research
& Medical Affairs
dfenstermacher@ccalliance.org



Melissa Lynch
Chief People Officer
mlynch@ccalliance.org



Cara Schmitt
Research Project Manager
cschmitt@ccalliance.org

ALLIANCE STAFF

@colorectal cancer alliance



Kim Newcomer
Director of Volunteers
knewcomer@ccalliance.org



Jamee Telford
Director of Industry Giving
jtelford@ccalliance.org



Heidi Jaafar
Senior Director of Finance
hjaafar@ccalliance.org

SPECIAL GUESTS



Joe Whalen
Member, Board of Directors



Alison Friedman
Patient & Advocate



Elizabeth Healy
Patient & Advocate

P O W E R E D B Y



colorectalcaner.org/cure