February 22, 2019

Announcements

Doximity Voting Open
Voting is open through Doximity for *U.S. News & World Report’s* annual Best Hospitals Guide. Please take a moment to login to your profile and vote. Access is staggered so some physicians may not receive their email/access to vote until next week, please continue to check. It is important that our reputation through *U.S. News & World Report’s* annual Best Hospitals Guide reflects the high level of care you provide to our patients, and represents the exciting research happening at Smilow Cancer Hospital and Yale Cancer Center.

To vote:
* Log in to your account on Doximity.
* Click on the Best Hospital survey on the top of the page.
* You will then be asked to: Name up to five U.S. hospitals that you believe provide the best care in Cancer (or the specialty you are registered for) for patients who have the most challenging conditions or who need particularly difficult procedures. Please submit your response for Yale New Haven Hospital.
Melinda Irwin Named Associate Dean for Research at YSPH

I am pleased to announce that Melinda Irwin, PhD, MPH has been appointed by Sten Vermund, MD, PhD, Dean of Yale School of Public Health, as Associate Dean for Research (ADR). The ADR is responsible for advancing the school's research mission. Melinda will continue as Associate Director of Population Sciences at Yale Cancer Center and co-leader of the Cancer Prevention and Control (CPC) Research Program. She also serves as Deputy Director of Public Health at the Yale Center for Clinical Investigation (YCCI) and national Chair of the Cancer Survivorship Committee in the SWOG Cancer Research Network. Please join me in congratulating Melinda on her new role.

Learn More >>

Assistant Directors for Global Oncology Named

The Yale Cancer Center leadership has selected Donna Spiegelman, ScD, and Yawei Zhang, PhD, as Assistant Directors for Global Oncology. In their new role, they will lead collaborative efforts across campus to ensure Yale is impacting cancer care and research throughout the world. Dr. Spiegelman is the Susan Dwight Bliss Professor of Biostatistics at the Yale School of Public Health. She holds a joint doctorate in biostatistics and epidemiology and over 27 years of experience in the design and conduct of randomized trials and large longitudinal epidemiologic studies. Dr. Zhang is an Associate Professor and Chief of Surgical Outcomes and Epidemiology in the Department of Surgery.

Yale Cancer Center Researchers Combine Targeted Therapies to Fight Head and Neck Cancers

Read More >>

Study Identifies a Non-genetic Cause of Resistance to Melanoma Treatment

Read more >>

Study Finds Wide Variation Among Human Cell Lines Used for Research

Read more >>
Her research focuses on cancer prevention and prognosis, early life exposures, and surgical outcomes. In particular, she has been pioneering the causes of increasing trends of thyroid cancer observed worldwide. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to Dr. Anees Chagpar and Dr. Yong Zhu for their leadership in Global Oncology over the past several years.

**Director of Radiation Oncology Physics Appointed**

Brian Wang, PhD, FAAPM, has been appointed Director of Radiation Oncology Physics at Smilow Cancer Hospital to lead our physics and dosimetry team. Before joining Yale, Dr. Wang was Chief of Physics and Medical Physics Residency Director at University of Louisville. He received his PhD in nuclear engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and his clinical and research interests include motion management, image guidance, and SRS/SBRT.

Dr. Wang currently serves on several committees at ASTRO and RSS and he is a physics oral examiner for the ABR board. He was recently elected as the president of the North American Chinese Medical Physics Association and is an associate editor for Journal of Applied Clinical Medical Physics.

**Bladder Cancer CME Dinner**

Yale Urology, Smilow Cancer Hospital, and Yale Cancer Center will host a CME dinner highlighting advances in the medical and surgical treatment of bladder cancer on Wednesday, March 13 in Southport. Learn More >>

**Liver Cancer Symposium**

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Latest Posts:

The dynamic of cancer care has changed since Yale Urology moved in to eastern Connecticut's Lawrence + Memorial (L+M) Hospital and began partnering with the Smilow Cancer Hospital Care Center in Waterford. Men with prostate cancer now benefit from the newly implemented MRI-US fusion biopsy program as well as the experience and skill in robotic surgery that Dr. Joseph Renzulli and Dr. Joseph Brito, III offer, helping patients remain close to home for care.

Keep Prostate Cancer Care Close to Home

Read More >>

The standard treatment for patients whose head and neck cancer has either recurred or metastasized had not improved since 2006. Barbara Burtness, MD, set out to change that with a clinical trial of the immunotherapy drug pembrolizumab. She and her team recently announced the successful results.
Please join colleagues from the Smilow Cancer Hospital Liver Cancer Program for a CME Symposium on Friday, March 1 at the Yale West Campus Conference Center to discuss the changing landscape of hepatocellular carcinoma. The program is free, but registration is required.

Learn More >>

Notables

Susan Baserga, MD, PhD, a member of Yale Cancer Center's Radiobiology and Radiotherapy Research Program, has been awarded a 2019 Breast Cancer Alliance Exceptional Project Grant to support her research project, "Targeting the Nucleolus for Breast Cancer Therapy." The grant totals $100,000 for one year.

Qin Yan, PhD, a member of Yale Cancer Center's Genomics, Genetics, and Epigenetics Research Program, has been awarded the Norma Lies Mitchell Memorial Grant from the Breast Cancer Alliance to support his research project, "Targeting KDM5B Histone Demethylase to Boost Anti-tumor Response in Breast Cancer." The grant totals $100,000 for one year.

Congratulations to Dr. Lynn Tanoue, a member of Smilow Cancer Hospital's Thoracic Oncology Program, on the recent recognition of her clinical excellence, devotion, and dedication to patient care by the Connecticut Thoracic Society. Nominated by her peers, the Outstanding Clinician Award represents respect and admiration from Dr. Tanoue's colleagues and patients.

Katerina Politi, PhD, received funding of a Research Project Grant (R01) from the NIH, "Understanding and Overcoming Resistance to Cancer Immunotherapy Due to Defective Antigen Presentation" for $3,436,514 over 5 years. The multi-PI grant is a collaboration with Susan Kaech, PhD, at the Salk Institute and Soldano Ferrone, MD, PhD, at Massachusetts General Hospital. Co-investigators include Peter Cresswell, Paula Kavathas, Rong Fan, Kurt Schalper, as well as Roy Herbst, Scott Gettinger, Marcus Bosenberg, Aaron Ring, and Nik Joshi at Yale and Lewis Lanier at UCSF.

A Big Advance in the Treatment of Head & Neck Cancers

Read More >>

Eileen, one of our amazing oncology nurses, was faced with the role of caregiver last year when her husband was diagnosed with prostate cancer. Eileen shares their personal journey together in the Prostate Cancer Foundation's True campaign, highlighting true stories of love and support.

Read More >>

Meet Henry, when faced with prostate cancer, Henry and his physicians at Smilow Cancer Hospital, Dr. Preston Sprenkle and Dr. James Yu, decided radiation therapy along with SpaceOAR hydrogel was the right choice to get his cancer treated and to protect his quality of life.

Read More >>
Nadine Housri, MD, Assistant Professor of Clinical Therapeutic Radiology, and Sanjay Aneja, MD, a member of Yale Cancer Center's Radiobiology and Radiotherapy Research Program, were awarded a National Science Foundation grant to use theMednet to build machine learning technology to raise physician awareness of clinical trials.

The Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering has elected 24 new members, four are Yale Cancer Center members:

Shuangge Steven Ma, PhD, Professor of Statistics, School of Public Health and a member of Yale Cancer Center's Cancer Prevention and Control Research Program, cited for foundational contributions to the development of statistical techniques, including cutting-edge statistical methods for analysis of -omics and public health studies; crucial contributions to cancer genetics and health care research; >200 publications in leading scientific journals; a deep commitment to outstanding teaching and scientific dissemination both in Connecticut and globally.

Harvey Risch, MD, PhD, Professor of Epidemiology (chronic disease), School of Public Health, and a member of Yale Cancer Center's Cancer Prevention and Control Research Program, cited for his fundamental contributions to the understanding of the causes of cancer, particularly of the lung, ovary and pancreas. His work, comprising more than 300 original research publications in the biomedical literature, has proposed practical approaches for prevention of these highly fatal diseases.

David G. Schatz, PhD, Chair and Waldemar Von Zedtwitz Professor of Immunobiology, and Professor of Molecular Biophysics and Biochemistry, and a member of Yale Cancer Center's Cancer Immunology Research Program, cited for fundamental contributions to understanding mechanisms that assemble and diversify antigen receptor genes that encode antibodies and T cell receptors; and discovery of recombination activating genes RAG1 and RAG2, subsequent biochemical insights into RAG function and evolutionary origins, and discovery of two distinct levels of regulation of somatic hypermutation.

Jeffrey P. Townsend, PhD, Elihu Professor of Biostatistics (School of Public Health), and a member of Yale Cancer Center's Cancer Prevention and Control Research Program, cited for foundational contributions to the development of statistical techniques, including cutting-edge statistical methods for analysis of -omics and public health studies; crucial contributions to cancer genetics and health care research; >200 publications in leading scientific journals; a deep commitment to outstanding teaching and scientific dissemination both in Connecticut and globally.

This week's Yale Cancer Answers on Connecticut Public Radio will feature a discussion of treatment options for sarcomas with Dr. Gary Friedlaender, the Wayne O. Southwick Professor of Orthopaedics at Yale School of Medicine. Read More >>

Dr. Nikolai Podoltsev recently trained the Yale Cancer Center medical oncology and hematology fellows to do bone marrow biopsies using BONNIE, a clinical simulation skills trainer by VATA, to provide practice sessions and improve their skills. Great job everyone!
of Yale Cancer Center's Genomics, Genetics, and Epigenetics Research Program, cited for the development of innovative approaches to population biology, including the evolution of antimicrobial resistance, disease evolution and transmission, and evolution of tumorigenesis; and research that has enabled curtailment of pathogen evolution, outbreak mitigation, and informed therapeutic approaches to cancer metastasis and evolution of therapeutic resistance in cancer.

Please join family, friends, and colleagues for a memorial service to celebrate the life of our dear friend and colleague, Dr. Deepak Narayan on Saturday, March 23 at 10am at Yale University’s Battell Chapel, 400 College Street in New Haven. A reception will follow the service at the nearby Graduate Club. Please confirm your attendance to Sharon Barone.

**Employee Profile: Leigh Rooney**

Leigh Rooney has always wanted to care for patients, but it was while she was in nursing school that she discovered an interest in oncology. Learning about palliative and hospice care in school, she knew wanted to be in a position to provide comfort to patients as they neared the end of their lives.

Upon graduation, Leigh joined Smilow Cancer Hospital as a nurse on the 12th floor, the inpatient medical oncology unit. Leigh spends her shift as a floor nurse, caring for 3-4 patients throughout the day, or she serves as the charge resource nurse, attending...
bed meetings, morning rounds with doctors, and supporting the floor nurses however she can. Due to the critical nature of patients who are admitted to the 12th floor, many are receiving long-term care. Over time, the nurses get to know each patient and their families, providing them with emotional support in addition to daily care, and connecting them with other interdisciplinary teams such as palliative care and social work.

When patients do pass away, the nurses also need opportunities to decompress and receive emotional support. Seeing and experiencing this on her own, Leigh worked with her manager to institute "Code Lavender" on the 12th floor. When a death on the floor occurs, a Code Lavender is activated and the name of the nurse, PCA, and patient are given, signaling to all to check in on and provide support to the care team who just lost their patient. This support program has been so well-received on 12, that Leigh is presenting the program to other floors, and is also formally presenting the program at the Oncology Nursing Society Congress in April.

"In just my two and half years at Smilow, I have learned a lot - a lot more than I ever expected in such a short period of time," commented Leigh. "Working on NP12 is very challenging and the patients are very sick, so it takes an emotional toll on your well-being. But, I have grown and learned a lot about life and nursing, and I am grateful to have had a small impact on the lives of our patients here."

Tracy Carafeno, MS, BSN, CNML, Director of Patient Services for Smilow's Inpatient Units, says of Leigh, "She is everything an oncology nurse should be: compassionate, caring, knowledgeable and a strong patient advocate. Leigh ensures the patients and families get the absolute best care and outcomes, and also works to change systems and processes to make the unit a better place to work for her peers."

**Funding Opportunities**

**Leveraging Health Information Technology (Health IT) to Address Minority Health and Health Disparities (R01 Clinical Trial Optional)**

- **Dr. Abhijit Patel** is comparing levels of circulating tumor DNA before and after immunotherapy treatment to determine how well the treatment is working for patients. Learn more about his team's progress.

- **Thank you to Dr. Michael Caligiuri** @cityofhope for joining us and presenting the annual Blanche Tullman Lecture today at Yale Cancer Center Grand Rounds.

- **Meet Henry**, when faced with prostate cancer, he and his physicians at Smilow Cancer Hospital @dr_sprengle & @jamesbyudecided radiation therapy along with @SpaceOAR was the right choice to treat his cancer & to protect his quality of life.

- **Women have a lower risk of colorectal cancer than men, but a higher prevalence in an area of the colon that has poorer clinical outcomes.**

- **Tonight's Yale Cancer Answers on Connecticut Public Radio will feature a discussion of treatment options for sarcomas with Dr. Gary Friedlaender, the Wayne O. Southwick Professor of Orthopaedics at @YaleMed.**

## Calendar

**Smilow Screening and Prevention Program Information Table**

**February 22; 11AM**

YNHH cafe

*National Cancer Prevention Month*

[Learn More >>](#)

**Digestive Diseases GI Core Curriculum Lecture Series**

**February 22; 1PM**

TAC S-247

*Reproducibility in Research*

Michael Nathanson, MD, PhD

[Learn More >>](#)
This FOA seeks to support research that examines how health information technology adoption impacts minority health and health disparity populations in access to care, quality of care, patient engagement, and health outcomes.

**Application Deadline:** March 1, 2019
Learn More >>

**Yale Scholars in Implementation Science (YSIS) Career Development Program**

The YSIS Career Development Program is an NIH-funded K12 program within the Yale Center for Implementation Science at the Yale School of Medicine. Funded by the NIH's National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, it is designed to train junior faculty and postdoctoral fellows late-stage dissemination and implementation science.

**Application Deadline:** March 1, 2019
Learn More >>

**American Cancer Society Institutional Research Grant**

We are pleased to offer this ACS Institutional Research Grant pilot funding opportunity to Yale Assistant Professors to support innovative work in the broad fields of basic, translational, clinical and population prevention/control cancer research.

**Application Deadline:** March 1, 2019
Learn More >>

**2019 YCC Pilot Internal Grants**

Yale Cancer Center is pleased to announce the 2019 Pilot Internal Grants competition. These grants will support innovative basic, clinical, computational, population and epidemiology, prevention/control, and translational cancer research.

**Submission Deadline:** March 3, 2019
Learn More >>

**Sontag Foundation Distinguished Scientist Award**

The DSA seeks to provide career and research support to early career scientists who demonstrate...
outstanding promise for making scientific and medical breakthroughs in the field of brain cancer research.

**Application deadline:** March 13, 2019

Learn More >>

Department of Defense Breast Cancer Research Program Funding Opportunities

These funding opps are to support innovative, high-impact research with clinical relevance that will accelerate progress to end breast cancer for Service members, Veterans, and the general public.

- **Breakthrough Award - Level 1 & 2:** The intent of the Breakthrough Award is to support promising research that has high potential to lead to or make breakthroughs in breast cancer. **Letter of Intent Due:** March 14, 2019
- **Breakthrough Fellowship Award:** The Fellowship Award supports recent doctoral or medical graduates in pursuit of innovative, high-impact breast cancer research during their postdoctoral fellowship. **Letter of Intent Due:** March 14, 2019
- **Era of Hope Scholar Award:** The Era of Hope Scholar Award supports individuals early in their careers who have demonstrated significant potential to effect meaningful change in breast cancer. **Letter of Intent Due:** March 14, 2019
- **Innovator Award:** The Innovator Award supports visionary individuals who have demonstrated exceptional creativity, innovative work, and paradigm-shifting leadership in any field including, but not limited to, breast cancer. **Preproposal Due:** March 12, 2019
- **Distinguished Investigator Award:** The Distinguished Investigator Award enables established visionary leaders from any field to pursue innovative ideas that could accelerate progress toward ending breast cancer. **Preproposal Due:** March 12, 2019

Learn More >>

Damon Runyon Cancer Research Foundation Fellowship Award

The Foundation encourages all theoretical and experimental research relevant to the study of cancer and the search for cancer causes, mechanisms,

Cancer Genetics and Prevention Program Seminar

**February 28; 2:30PM**

Orchard Medical Center, 107-109

Learn More >>

Yale Liver Cancer CME Symposium

**March 1; 7:30AM**

West Campus

*The Changing Landscape of Hepatocellular Carcinoma (HCC) Management*

Experts from Yale

Learn More >>

Hematology Research Seminar Series

**March 1; 12PM**

Brady Auditorium

*A Cure Within Reach? Genomic Therapies for Sickle Cell and Thalassemia*

Alexis Thompson, MD, MPH

Learn More >>

Dr. Jasjit S. Bindra Memorial Community Cancer Lecture Series

**March 2; 12PM**

Smilow Waterford

*The Science of Well-Being*

Laurie Santos, PhD

Learn More >>

Connecticut Brain Freeze

**March 3; 9:30AM**

Westbrook Elks Lodge

Learn More >>

Yale Cancer Answers

**March 3; 7:30PM**

WNPR

*Skin Cancer Awareness and Surgical Treatment Options*

David Leffell, MD

Learn More >>

Cell Biology Thesis Defense Seminar
therapies and prevention. Awards are made to institutions for the support of the Fellow under direct supervision of the Sponsor.  
**Application Deadline:** March 15, 2019  
[Learn More >>]

**NCCN Preclinical and Clinical Studies of CDK4 and 6 Inhibition with Abemaciclib for Breast Cancers**
NCCN has received a $2 million research grant from Eli Lilly and Company to support the performance of preclinical, clinical and correlative studies of abemaciclib in the treatment of breast cancer.  
**RFP Due:** March 22, 2019  
[Learn More >>]

**Charles H. Hood Foundation Child Health Research Awards Program**
The intent of this Award is to support newly independent faculty, provide the opportunity to demonstrate creativity, and assist in the transition to other sources of funding. Research projects must have direct relevance to child health.  
**Application Deadline:** March 28, 2019  
[Learn More >>]

**NCI Awardee Skills Development Consortium: Research Education Short Courses (UE5)**
The overarching goal of this NCI UE5 program is to support educational activities that complement and/or enhance the training of a workforce to meet the nation's biomedical, behavioral and clinical cancer research needs.  
**Application Deadline:** April 1, 2019  
[Learn More >>]

**Innovative Molecular Analysis Technology Development for Cancer Research and Clinical Care (R43/R44)**
This FOA encourages Small Business Innovation Research grant applications from small business concerns proposing research for commercial development of novel cancer-relevant technologies.  
**Application Deadline:** April 5, 2019  
[Learn More >>]

**Cancer Prevention, Diagnosis, and Treatment Technologies for Low-Resource Settings (R43/R44)**
This FOA encourages Small Business Innovation Research grant applications from small business concerns proposing commercially-directed research for the development of cancer prevention, diagnosis, or treatment technologies to improve cancer outcomes in low- and middle-income countries, and low-resource settings in the US.

**Application Deadline:** April 5, 2019

**Learn More >>**

**Request for Information to Better Facilitate Cancer Systems Epidemiology Research**

The NCI seeks broad input from members of the scientific community to identify areas of need and opportunities for interdisciplinary, systems science research focused on cancer risk and prognosis, particularly data analysis and interpretation when applying comprehensive analytical approaches, such as systems or computational modeling, to study of the etiology of cancer.

**Response Date:** April 30, 2019

**Learn More >>**

**Recent Publications**

- Loss of BOP1 confers resistance to BRAF kinase inhibitors in melanoma by activating MAP kinase pathway.
  *Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A.* 2019 Feb 19.
  **Read More >>**

- Leukocyte Cancer Cell Fusion-Genesis of a Deadly Journey.
  Laberge GS, Duvall E, Haedicke K, Pawelek J.
  *Cells.* 2019 Feb 18;8(2).
  **Read More >>**

- Multi-institutional Investigation: Circulating CD4:CD8 ratio is a prognosticator of response to total skin electron beam radiation in mycosis fungoides.
  **Learn More >>**
Local tumor response and survival outcomes after combined stereotactic radiosurgery and immunotherapy in non-small cell lung cancer with brain metastases.
Singh C, Qian JM, Yu JB, Chiang VL.
Read More >>

The Combination of MEK inhibitor with Immunomodulatory Antibodies Targeting PD-1 and PD-L1 Results in Prolonged Survival in Kras/p53-Driven Lung Cancer.
Read More >>

Treatment exceeds expectations in a patient with non-small cell lung adenocarcinoma with an EGFR exon 20 mutation.
McAuliffe A, Bindal P, Haley M, Vredenburgh J.
Read More >>

Unique mutation patterns in anaplastic thyroid cancer identified by comprehensive genomic profiling.
Read More >>

Combined Aurora kinase A (AURKA) and WEE1 inhibition demonstrates synergistic antitumor effect in squamous cell carcinoma of the head and neck.
Radiation therapy treatment facility and overall survival in the adjuvant setting for locally advanced head and neck squamous cell carcinoma.

Psychosocial predictors of hope two years after diagnosis of colorectal cancer: Implications for nurse-led hope programmes.

Moderate hypofractionation and stereotactic body radiation therapy in the treatment of prostate cancer.
Beckta JM, Nosrati JD, Yu JB. Urol Oncol. 2019 Feb 6. Read More >>