Hello fellow colleagues,

I am excited to share with you the newest version of our University of Arizona Cancer Center Newsletter. This is a monthly publication that is intended for Cancer Center Members, associates, and employees. The intent of this newsletter is to provide you with up-to-date announcements concerning the UACC; highlight grant awards and journal publications; announce upcoming events; introduce new members to the UACC team; and keep you connected to your peers.

The innovative work that we are doing at the Cancer Center will reach many beyond our facilities. It is important that you are provided with information that helps you succeed as a Member of the UACC family. We are incorporating into this newsletter the elements that you provided in the employee survey back in August. This is your newsletter, and we are striving to give you the information that you want.

Especially at such a unique place as the UACC, we are constantly evolving. This newsletter will do much the same. Your feedback is welcome. Please
send news items, announcements, calls for collaborations, upcoming events, comments, and anything else that you can think of to Cody Cassidy, ccassidy@uacc.arizona.edu.

Enjoy,

Andrew S. Kraft, MD  
Director of the University of Arizona Cancer Center  
Sydney E. Salmon Endowed Chair  
Associate Vice President for Oncology Programs for UAHS  
Professor of Medicine, Department of Medicine, Hematology/Oncology  
Senior Associate Dean for Translational Research, College of Medicine

UA Cancer Center Support Video

We wanted to show the members of the CCSG site visit committee what our cancer center truly means to the state of Arizona. So we asked some of our friends to tell us what the University of Arizona Cancer Center means to them. Check out the video!
Exciting News & Need to Know

We Have Renewed Our Subscription to The Cancer Letter

The Cancer Letter is a national publication for and about NCI-designated Cancer Centers where science, the funding climate, and other interesting topics are discussed.

Go To The Cancer Letter or Click Here for Help Logging In
NCI Site Visit to UA Cancer Center Highlights Strong Research and Clinical Capabilities

The University of Arizona Cancer Center highlighted its multidisciplinary research, clinical, and community outreach programs when it hosted representatives from the National Cancer Institute (NCI) on Jan. 27. The site visit took place as part of the NCI’s formal review of the UA Cancer Center’s competitive renewal application for continuation of the NCI Cancer Center Support Grant (CCSG).

The 16-member site-visit committee consisted of directors, administrators, research program leaders, and clinical department heads from other NCI-designated cancer centers across the nation.

Paramount to the CCSG is the coveted NCI designation of "Comprehensive Cancer Center" that distinguishes the nation's very best cancer institutions. Of the 69 NCI-designated cancer centers in the United States, 45 are designated by the NCI as Comprehensive Cancer Centers. Comprehensive centers are noted for their breadth and depth of multidisciplinary research that bridges basic, clinical, and population science. The University of Arizona Cancer Center first received its NCI designation in 1978 and was elevated to Comprehensive Cancer Center status in 1990.

Seventeen individual presentations were delivered to the site review committee as part of the daylong visit. Multiple breakout sessions included interviews with select leaders and tours of shared resource units and core facilities.

"The presenters each did an excellent job, and stressed the importance of taking novel science from the bench to the bedside," said Andrew Kraft, MD, UA Cancer Center director and principal investigator on the CCSG grant.

The NCI comprehensive designation has tremendous impact that goes beyond the confines of the UACC. It attracts top research and clinical talent to the UA Health Sciences, hastens the dissemination of research findings, and enhances the center’s statewide economic impact. This impact is expected to increase exponentially as the Cancer Center expands its clinical and research portfolio. For example, the center recently opened a 220,000-square-foot outpatient clinic and research facility at Dignity St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center on the Phoenix Biomedical Campus.

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) is one of 11 agencies that make up the
National Institutes of Health, and it serves as the federal government's primary unit for cancer research and training.

UACC recently received its draft Site Visit Report. As the results will not be official until after the Study Section meets on May 5, 2016, we are not broadly distributing the preliminary feedback. Please stay tuned!

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New Supportive Cancer Care Book
Edited by UACC Team

David Alberts, Maria Lluria-Prevatt, Stephanie Kha, and Karen Weihs

Supportive Cancer Care provides a highly coordinated, interdisciplinary model for future clinical cancer supportive care programs in NCI-designated Cancer Centers and NCI Community Oncology Research Programs. At the same time, it is intended to serve as an up-to-date resource for oncologists and primary care providers that addresses the many aspects of supportive care associated with cancer survivorship. Accordingly, the book covers a wide range of areas and topics, including but not limited to psychosocial oncology, patient and family education, lifestyle change counseling, palliative care, symptom management (e.g., pain control), cancer risk and genetic counseling, financial planning, and patient navigation.

Supportive Cancer Care is the first book of its type concerning an integrated approach to supportive cancer care.

Get the Book Now
UACC Members Joe G.N. "Skip" Garcia, MD, and Yves A. Lussier, MD, Lead UA Effort in White House Precision Medicine Initiative

In his 2015 State of the Union address, President Obama announced the Precision Medicine Initiative (PMI), a bold new research effort to usher in "a new era of medicine that delivers the right treatment at the right time to the right person," according to the White House. The initiative will pioneer a new model of patient-powered research that promises to accelerate biomedical discoveries and provide clinicians with new tools, knowledge and therapies to select treatments that will work best for individual patients. The PMI will make data shareable between health-care providers, researchers, patients and research participants, while protecting patient privacy.

Read More

UACC’s Rick Kittles, PhD, Breaks New Ground in Genetics

UA News sat down with Rick Kittles, PhD, to discuss how a lifelong quest for self-discovery led toward a number of significant findings for African Americans.

"There simply wasn't a strong database in place or any kind of access to information on African genetics," Kittles said. "Records were either inaccurate or nonexistent, so there were a number of hurdles in place for African-Americans to try to figure out their ancestry."

Read More

Recently Published Research
Long-term benefit of electron beam radiation therapy in the treatment of scleredema Buschke

Advances in Radiation Oncology

Tijana Skrepnik, MD, Silvia Gottesma, MD, Baldassarre Stea, MD, PhD

Scleredema of Buschke is a rare connective tissue disorder presenting with woody thickening and induration of the nuchal and shoulder regions resulting in progressive decrease in the range of motion of the neck. Treatment options include several forms of systemic therapy with variable results. Local radiation therapy (RT) is often thought of as a secondary form of therapy. Few reports exist in the literature about the durability of its benefit, however. Here, we present a case report with the longest known follow-up after primary treatment with electron beam RT.

Scleredema of Buschke is a rare connective tissue disorder commonly treated with multimodal therapy, but it can be effectively and durably controlled with RT alone. This case report documents the durability of the benefit achieved with RT and suggests that RT should be considered earlier in the treatment of this disease.

Read More

Associations Between Serum Vitamin D and Adverse Pathology in Men Undergoing Radical Prostatectomy

Journal of Clinical Oncology, Published online on February 22, 2016

Authors: Yaw A. Nyame, Adam B. Murphy, Diana K. Bowen, Gregory Jordan, Ken Batai, Michael Dixon, Courtney M.P. Hollowell, Stephanie Kielb, Joshua J. Meeks, Peter H. Gann, Andre Kajdacsy-Balla, William J. Catalona, and Rick Kittles

Insufficiency/Deficiency in serum 25-OH D is associated with increased odds of adverse pathology
in men with localized disease undergoing radical prostatectomy. Serum 25-OH D may serve as a useful biomarker in prostate cancer aggressiveness, which deserves continues study.

Read More

Upcoming Events

CANCER BIOLOGY SEMINAR SERIES
CBIO596h
Disruption of RAB11 Establishes a Pro-tumor Microenvironment

March 7, 2016
9:00am - 10:00am
Kiewit Auditorium

Nan Gao, PhD
Assistant Professor, Cell and Molecular Biology
Rutgers University

Host: Jean Wilson, PhD, CMM
jeans@email.arizona.edu

Contact Anne Cione, cionea@email.arizona.edu to view this password protected presentation live or archival.
GENOMICS SYMPOSIUM

Written in Blood: DNA Analysis for Improved Cancer Management

Friday, March 10, 2016
9:00am - 1:30pm
Kiewit Auditorium,
University of Arizona Cancer Center

Keynote Speaker:
Rita R. Colwell, PhD
Distinguished University Professor, University of Maryland at College Park
Distinguished University Professor, Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health
Senior Advisor and Chairman Emeritus, Canon US Life Sciences, Inc.
President and CEO of CosmosID, Inc.
11th Director of the National Science Foundation

Confirmers Speakers:
Baldour Salhia, PhD
Assistant Professor, Translational Genomics Institute, Integrated Cancer Genomics Division, Phoenix, AZ

Taylor J. Jensen, PhD
Director of Research and Development, Sequenom Inc., San Diego, CA

Debrah Thompson, PhD
Director of Research, HTG Molecular Diagnostics, Tucson, AZ

George S. Watts, PhD
Research Associate Professor, University of Arizona Cancer Center
Co-Director, Genomics Shared Resource

Lukas Vrba, PhD
Assistant Research Scientist, Genomics Shared Resource, University of Arizona Cancer Center
UACC SCIENTIFIC RETREAT

Friday, April 8, 2016
9:00am - 4:30pm
Westward Look Resort
Tucson, AZ

Keynote Speaker:
David R. Piwnica-Worms, MD, PhD
Professor, Department of Cancer Biology
Scientific Director Ad Interim
The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

Dr. Piwnica's research interests are molecular imaging of signal transduction pathways and protein-protein interactions in vivo; dynamic analysis of the NF-kB, b-catenin and EGFR signaling pathways; genetically-encoded reporters for bioluminescence, PET, and SPECT imaging; high throughput screening with siRNA to functionalize the genome; cell-penetrating activatable near-infrared fluorescent peptides for imaging; therapeutic cell-penetrating peptides; mechanisms and regulation of the ATP-binding cassette (ABC) superfamily of transporter proteins; multidrug resistance in cancer; radiopharmaceutical chemistry; medicinal utility of metal complexes.

Register Now - Deadline to register is March 30.
OPEN HOUSE: National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month & National Social Work Month

March 10, 2016
5:00pm-7:00pm
UACC - North
3838 N. Campbell Ave.
Tucson, AZ 85719

Colorectal Cancer: Incidence, Risk Reduction, and Research Updates
Valentine Nfonsam, MD, MS, & Emad Elquza, MD

The Psychosocial Impact of Cancer
Jill Winter, MSW, & Laura Hagerty, MSW
Social Work Team at UACC

Information will be available from the American Cancer Society and the Colon Cancer Alliance

Current Funding Opportunities

NIH NCI P30 CURE Supplements and Upcoming R25 Youth Enjoy Science (YES) FOA

The NCI is currently accepting applications for P30 CURE Supplements during the submission period of Feb 1 - Mar 30, 2016. This is the last submission period for P30 CURE Supplements. All Cancer Centers are encouraged to apply.

The Continuing Umbrella of Research Experiences (CURE) to Cancer Centers will no longer be awarded as supplements to the parent P30. They are replaced by an R25, as described in the following:


The anticipated R25 YES FOA is expected to be published in the summer of 2016, with the first submission deadline in the fall of 2016. All Cancer Centers, with or without active P30 CURE Supplements, are encouraged to apply. Other eligible institutions are also encouraged to apply.
The anticipated R25 YES FOA does not affect currently active P30 CURE Supplements. All P30 CURE Supplements may continue until the originally awarded period finishes.

Cancer Centers with active P30 CURE Supplements are especially encouraged to apply for the anticipated R25 YES FOA in order to continue the P30 CURE programs. If an application for a R25 YES is awarded while a P30 CURE Supplement is still active in the same institution, the P30 CURE Supplement will be terminated to allow the R25 award to be accepted. Each institution may apply for more than one R25 YES grant, provided each R25 YES is distinct and unique.

Please feel free to contact Alison Lin at CRCHD (linaj@mail.nih.gov) with further questions.

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2016 PCF Challenge Awards for Metastatic, Lethal Prostate Cancer

The Prostate Cancer Foundation (PCF) is pleased to announce a Request for Applications for PCF Challenge Awards for investigations of metastatic, lethal prostate cancer. These awards will be funded depending on the level of innovation in applications received. High risk, currently unfunded projects are most desired.

Read More

New to the UACC Family
Erik S. Knudsen, PhD
Associate Director of Basic Sciences
Professor of Medicine

We are excited to welcome Dr. Erik Knudsen to the UACC family! Dr. Knudsen comes to us from UT Southwestern Medical Center and the Simmons Cancer Center. There he held a faculty appointment in the Department of Pathology and served as a member of the Scientific Program Leaders Committee as well as on the Breast Cancer Disease Oriented Team.

Dr. Knudsen received his PhD in Biology and completed two postdoctoral fellowships at the University of California San Diego before joining the University of Cincinnati as an assistant professor in the College of Medicine's Department of Cell Biology.

Please give Dr. Knudsen a warm welcome!

Daruka Mahadevan, MD, PhD
Director, Phase I Program
Professor of Medicine

We are excited to welcome back Dr. Daruka Mahadevan to the UACC family! Dr. Mahadevan is a Professor of Medicine and a recognized expert and highly experienced Physician-Scientist in Hematology and Oncology, and currently the Director of Phase I clinical trials and Co-Director of the Therapeutic Development Program at the UA Cancer Center. He received his medical degree from the University of London, England, UK. He is certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine, subspecialty of Medical Oncology.

Please give Dr. Mahadevan a warm welcome!

Welcome New UACC Team Members
We would like to welcome all those who are new to the UACC family and have just joined our team:

Ali Ahad - Research Scientist
Shariful Islam - Graduate Assistant
Larry Cooke - Laboratory Manager

Call for Collaborations

This section is intended to provide a platform for UACC Members to propose collaborative efforts with each other. Any and all ideas are welcome. Contact Cody Cassidy with your proposal to be posted here.

Visit the UACC Website

University of Arizona Cancer Center
1515 N. Campbell Ave.
Tucson, AZ 85724

STAY CONNECTED: