RWJBarnabas HEALTH

RUTGERS HEALTH
Rutgers Cancer Institute

NCI Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center

Cancer Health Equity Center of Excellence (CHECoE)

Annual Cancer Disparities Research Symposium

May 7, 2026
8:30am to 6:30pm

Rutgers Cancer Institute
Auditorium A & B 195 Little Albany Street
New Brunswick, NJ

TABLE OF CONTENTS

This event is partially funded by the Cancer Research Training and Education (CRTEC) department and the Scholars and Early Stage Advancement (SEA) Initiative at Rutgers Cancer Institute, NIH 3P30CA072720-24S2.

Welcome

A message from the CHECoE Director

Welcome to the Cancer Health Equity Center of Excellence (CHECoE) Annual 2026 Cancer Disparities Research Symposium.

On behalf of the Symposium Planning Committee, I am pleased to welcome you to what promises to be an informative and engaging day. This symposium is designed to foster collaboration and open dialogue among researchers, practitioners, and community members as we work collectively to advance cancer health equity and disparities research.

Throughout the day, you will have opportunities to exchange knowledge, share perspectives, and explore innovative approaches to community engagement. Our agenda features dynamic sessions that encourage thoughtful discussion, collaboration, and strategic thinking among colleagues.

We are honored to welcome two inspiring keynote speakers who will share their expertise and personal journeys centered on empowering communities. Their messages will undoubtedly challenge us to think critically and creatively about the important work that lies ahead.

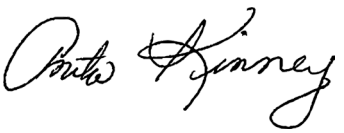
I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the Symposium Planning Committee for their unwavering dedication and hard work in organizing this event.

We hope you leave today feeling energized and inspired by the connections made and conversations shared. Our featured sessions are designed to spark collaboration, and we invite you to enjoy our interactive discussions and the "Mocktails and Mingles" poster session.

We are also grateful to the Cancer Research Training and Education (CRTEC) Department and the Scholars and Early-Stage Advancement (SEA) Initiative for their continued support.

Finally, I would like to thank every participant and speaker for your invaluable contributions. We sincerely appreciate the time and effort you've put into submitting abstracts, and we recognize the importance of your enthusiasm for today's discussions. As we network throughout the day, I look forward to personally welcoming and connecting with you.

Sincerely,



Anita Kinney, PhD, RN
Professor, Department of Biostatistics and Epidemiology
School of Public Health
Director, Cancer Health Equity Center of Excellence (CHECoE)
Associate Director for Population Science and Community Outreach
Rutgers Cancer Institute
Director, ScreenNJ

Rutgers Cancer Insitute

Cancer Health Equity Center of Excellence (CHECoE)

About the Cancer Health Equity Center of Excellence (CHECoE)

The Cancer Health Equity Center of Excellence (CHECoE) is a formal partnership between the Rutgers School of Public Health and the Rutgers Cancer Institute, which will serve as a catalyst for training and education, research, community engagement, and public policy advocacy surrounding cancer health equity in one of the nation's most ethnically and racially diverse states.

Advancement and impact drives everything we do at the Cancer Health Equity Center of Excellence (CHECoE). Our goal is to contribute in a lasting and meaningful way for all communities throughout the state, to build strong community partnerships and reduce cancer health disparities. This impact report unequivocally demonstrates our dedication to cancer health equity and our strong efforts in research, community outreach and engagement, training and education, and public policy advocacy and communication with all the communities across our catchment area of New Jersey. Our hope is to build upon our successes each year to make the Cancer Health Equity Center of Excellence (CHECoE) the leading center in the nation for achieving cancer health equity.

Learn more about CHECoE.

We Are Guided by Our Aims

Aim 1
Assess and Monitor NJ's Cancer Burden

Assess and monitor New Jersey's cancer burden, to identify and prioritize Catchment Area needs, outreach, and research.

Aim 2
Cancer Control Outreach

Implement, evaluate, and disseminate evidence-based cancer prevention and control interventions and policies in collaboration with community partners to reduce the Catchment Area cancer burden.

Aim 3
Facilitate Catchment Area (CA) Research

Foster impactful research that responds to community needs and catchment area priorities.

Cancer Disparities Research Annual Symposium
Cancer Health Equity Center of Excellence (CHECoE)
2026 Planning Committee Members

Anita Kinney, PhD, RN
Professor, Department of Biostatistics and Epidemiology
School of Public Health
Director, Cancer Health Equity Center of Excellence (CHECoE)
Associate Director for Population Science and
Community Outreach
Rutgers Cancer Institute
Director, ScreenNJ

Sarah J. Scharf, DrPH, MPH
Executive Director
Cancer Health Equity Center of Excellence (CHECoE)
Rutgers Cancer Institute
Deputy Director, ScreenNJ

Antoinette (Nan) Stroup, PhD
Professor of Epidemiology
Department of Biostatistics & Epidemiology
Rutgers School of Public Health
Director, New Jersey State Cancer Registry
Rutgers Cancer Institute

Evelyn Arana, DrPH
Assistant Professor
Department of Medicine
Rutgers Cancer Institute

Sunita Chaudhary, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Surgery
Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School
Interim Associate Director for Education and Training
Director, Research Education
Rutgers Cancer Institute

Jian Cao, PhD
Associate Professor
Department of Medicine
Rutgers Cancer Institute

Daniel Herranz, PharmD, PhD
Associate Professor
Pharmacology
Rutgers Cancer Institute

Racquel Kelly Kohler, PhD, MSPH
Instructor, Department of Health Behavior, Society, and Policy,
School of Public Health
Resident Member, Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey

Yonaira M. Rivera, PhD, MPH
Assistant Professor
School of Communication & Information
Rutgers University

Tamara Horn
Program Manager – Administration
Cancer Health Equity Center of Excellence (CHECoE)
Rutgers Cancer Institute

Theresa R. Lofton
Program Coordinator
Cancer Health Equity Center of Excellence (CHECoE)
Rutgers Cancer Institute

Nicole Etienne
Marketing & Communications Coordinator
Cancer Health Equity Center of Excellence (CHECoE)
Rutgers Cancer Institute

Jasmine Bagner
Staff Assistant
Cancer Health Equity Center of Excellence (CHECoE)
Rutgers Cancer Institute

Today's Agenda

8:00am – 8:30am	Registration and Continental Breakfast		
8:30am – 9:15am	**Welcome and CHECoE Progress and Impact**	Speaker: Anita Kinney	
9:15am – 10:15am	**Distinguished Scientist Keynote** **Cancer Genomics to Advance Equity Across the African Diaspora**	Speaker: Sophia George Slyvester Cancer Center University of Miami	
10:15am - 10:30am	Break and Networking		
10:30am – 11:30am	**Impact of Bi-Directional Community Engagement in Research**	Moderator: Antoinette (Nan) Stroup	
11:30am – 12:30pm	**You Spoke, We Reflected:** How Community Feedback Changed Our Research	Moderator: Mariam Eskander	
12:30pm – 1:30pm	Lunch and Networking		
1:30pm – 2:15pm	**Community Advocate Keynote** **Survivorship and Advocacy: Understanding Our Assignments**	Speaker: Melanie Nix Diagnosis to Destiny	
2:15pm – 3:00pm	**You Speak, We Listen:** A Community Scientist Panel Discussion	Moderator: Yakima Deloach	
3:00pm - 3:15pm	Break and Networking		
3:15pm – 4:15pm	**Featured Abstracts Talks on Cancer Disparities Research**	Moderator: Kelly Kohler	
4:15pm - 4:30pm	**Wrap Up and Evaluation**	Speaker: Sarah Scharf	
4:30pm – 6:00pm	Mocktails and Mingles Poster Session		

About Dr. Anita Kinney

Anita Kinney, PhD, RN

Professor, Department of Biostatistics and Epidemiology
School of Public Health
Director, Cancer Health Equity Center of Excellence (CHECoE)
Associate Director for Population Science and Community Outreach
Rutgers Cancer Institute
Director, ScreenNJ

Dr. Anita Kinney joined Rutgers University School of Public Health in 2018 as professor of Biostatistics and Epidemiology, and inaugural Director of the Cancer Health Equity Center of Excellence (CHECoE) and Director of ScreenNJ, a statewide cancer prevention and screening program. Dr. Kinney also serves as the Associate Director for Population Science and Community Outreach for the Rutgers Cancer Institute. Her research has been funded by the National Institutes of Health for over 25 years. Dr. Kinney's research brings a combination of behavioral science, clinical, and epidemiologic perspectives to address unsolved cancer prevention and control problems in diverse populations and settings. She is internationally regarded for her translational cancer disparities practice and policy changing research.

In her roles at the Rutgers University within the Cancer Institute, School of Public Health, and ScreenNJ, Dr. Kinney seeks to advance cancer health equity in prevention and care delivery through community partnerships and engagement, outreach, and a team science approach. Being highly prolific, she is co-author nearly 200 peer-reviewed publications, serves on numerous advisory boards for other NCI designated cancer centers, and recently served as a member of the National Institutes of Health Study Cancer Centers Study Section. In addition, she recently served as Chair of the Governor's Task Force on Cancer Prevention and Treatment, helping develop our state's Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan. Dr. Kinney also serves as Senior Editor for Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers and Prevention, and an editorial board member of Genetic Testing and Biomarkers, and Cancer Prevention Research. She is an elected fellow of the American Academy of Nursing and Academy of Behavioral Medicine Research, and President of the American Society of Preventive Oncology.

Distinguished Scientist
Keynote Speaker

Cancer Genomics to Advance Equity Across the African Diaspora

Sophia George, PhD
Associate Director, Global Oncology Research Strategy
Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center
Professor
Department of Ob, Gyn and Reproductive Sciences
Division of Gynecologic Oncology
University of Miami Miller School of Medicine

Sophia George, PhD is a Professor in the Division of Gynecological Oncology within the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the Leonard M. Miller School of Medicine. She is a member of the cancer control program and a leader of cancer genetics and health disparities at Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center.

Dr. Sophia George, PhD is a molecular geneticist graduate from the University of Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Dr. George then did her post-doctoral training in molecular pathology in Gynecological Pathology at Princess Margaret Cancer Center within the Ontario Cancer Institute and a second post-doc at Duke University in the Department of Medical Oncology in Hereditary breast cancer syndrome. She began her faculty position at the University of Miami, Miller School of Medicine in 2015.

Dr. George is a native of the Caribbean and is part of a team of multi-disciplinary team who studies the incidence of Hereditary Breast and Ovarian Cancer syndrome genetic mutations. Her research interests lie in studying pathogenesis of sporadic and hereditary breast and ovarian cancers. She uses molecular genetics, epigenetics and transcriptomics to study disease pathogenesis, variation across populations and overall outcomes of women diagnosed with these diseases. She is co-Principal Investigator and founder of the Transatlantic Gynecologic Cancer Research Consortium.

Community Advocate
Keynote Speaker

Survivorship and Advocacy: Understanding Our Assignments

Melanie A. Nix
Chief Visionary
Diagnosis to Destiny

Melanie A. Nix, triple negative breast cancer survivor and health and wellness advocate, uses her endowments as a storyteller, coach, and celebrator to bring joy and fulfilment to the lives of everyone she touches. Melanie frequently speaks about timeless life lessons on survivorship, resilience, reconstruction and growth drawn from her personal and professional experiences. The chief visionary of Diagnosis to Destiny, she shares lessons learned surviving breast cancer that can pave the road from diagnosis to destiny. She is also the cofounder of Breast Cancer Comfort Site.

She has served on numerous health advisory councils and boards and has been a spokeswoman for public service campaigns. Melanie is the chair of the Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center Community Advisory Council. She is co-chair of the Community Advisory Board for the research study Personalized Oncology Promoting Equity for Black Lives (PROPEL).

In addition to her dedicated social media following, she has been profiled by several media outlets including CURE Magazine. Running is part of her daily routine and she considers restorative naps an imperative. She became a post cancer distance runner whose #Exercising4MyLife campaign highlights the health and wellness benefits of running and offers lessons on training and discipline.

She is a celebrator of life and milestones big and small. A movie and music lover, she enjoys travel and appreciates the serenity of being oceanside. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Virginia and an MBA from the Robert H. Smith School of Business – University of Maryland, College Park. Melanie lives with her husband, Raymond; son, Carter; and daughter, Kennedy.

COE Program Liaison Moderator

Impact of Bi-Directional Community Engagement in Research

Antoinette (Nan) Stroup, PhD

Professor, Department of Biostatistics and Epidemiology
Professor of Epidemiology
Department of Biostatistics & Epidemiology
Rutgers School of Public Health
Director, New Jersey State Cancer Registry
Rutgers Cancer Institute

Dr. Antoinette Stroup earned her BS and MS degrees from the University of Utah in Salt Lake City and her PhD from the University of California, Berkeley in Epidemiology. She is a Professor of Cancer Epidemiology in the Department of Biostatistics and Epidemiology at the Rutgers School of Public Health; and is the Director of the Cancer Epidemiology Services (CES) and New Jersey State Cancer Registry at the New Jersey Department of Health. As Director, Dr. Stroup manages and oversees all administrative and operational aspects of the State's population-based cancer surveillance system and research-related activities (e.g., protocol development, institutional review board compliance, patient contact) through the CES Cancer Research Program.

With more than 15 years of experience in cancer surveillance and cancer registry management, Dr. Stroup has received funding for over 40 cancer research studies, covering a wide array of research topics for a variety of cancer types including breast, prostate, cervical, colorectal, ovarian, and liver cancers as well as cancers among adolescents and young adults. Her current research projects include multi-registry collaborations studying risk and outcomes among Latino and Asian race and ethnic subgroups with breast, colorectal and cervical cancer and African-American men with prostate cancer.

Dr. Stroup is also the Assistant Director of Research and Catchment Data at the Community Outreach and Education Center of Excellence, working closely with Dr. Kinney and Community Outreach and Education team to ensure that research conducted by the Cancer Institute addresses the catchment area priorities for cancer, risk factors, and disparities.

Moderating the following panelists and topics:

1. **Cancer Prevention and Control (CPC)**— COE Program Liaison, Evelyn Arana, DrPH
2. **Cancer Metabolism and Immunology (CMI)**— COE Program Liaison, Jian Cao, PhD
3. **Cancer Pharmacology (CP)**—COE Program Liaison, Mi-Hyeon Jang, PhD
4. **Genomic Instability and Cancer Genetics (GICG)**—COE Program Liaison, Bing Xia, PhD

COE Program Liaison Panelists

Impact of Bi-Directional Community Engagement in Research

Cancer Prevention and Control (CPC)

Evelyn Arana, DrPH

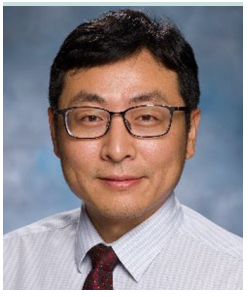
Assistant Professor
Department of Medicine
Rutgers Cancer Institute

Dr. Arana is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Medicine at the Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School (RWJMS) and an Affiliate Member of the Rutgers Cancer Institute. Before joining Rutgers in 2023, she was a Research Assistant Professor/T32 Fellow at the University of Rochester Medical School, Division of Supportive Care in Cancer.

Dr. Arana's research program focuses on the development of culturally and linguistically appropriate interventions to improve quality of life and reduce cancer symptom burden in historically marginalized populations, particularly Hispanic cancer survivors. She has led multiple projects grounded in community-based participatory approaches to assess and address cancer disparities. Dr. Arana has extensive experience recruiting and engaging Hispanic populations in clinical research and has contributed to studies examining biopsychosocial factors influencing cancer outcomes and survivorship.

Her work includes leading qualitative research to understand the needs of rural older adult cancer survivors and evaluating behavioral interventions, such as yoga, to improve cancer-related fatigue and quality of life in diverse populations. She is currently developing and testing a culturally informed Latin dance intervention to address sleep disturbances among Hispanic cancer survivors. In addition, Dr. Arana is leading the cultural adaptation and pilot testing of the TELESCOPE-H intervention, a telehealth-based shared decision-making coaching and navigation program designed to improve lung cancer screening uptake among Hispanic adults.

Dr. Arana also serves as the Cancer Prevention and Control (CPC) Program Liaison acting as a key bridge between Rutgers Cancer Institute's CPC Program and COE to strengthen engagement with CPC members, align research with catchment area needs, and maximize use of COE support services.



Cancer Metabolism and Immunology (CMI)

Jian Cao, PhD

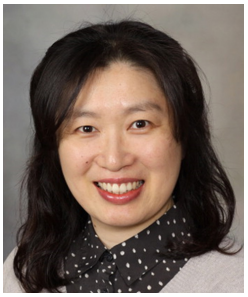
Assistant Professor
Department of Medicine
Rutgers Cancer Institute

Dr. Cao is an Assistant Professor in the Cancer Metabolism and Immunology (CMI) research program at the Rutgers Cancer Institute. His research centers on the epigenetic regulation of cancer immunity. His team uses bioinformatics and high-throughput screening to identify key epigenetic regulators of anti-tumor immune responses, validating their roles through cell-based assays and animal models. The ultimate goal is to develop novel strategies to enhance anti-tumor immunity.

Dr. Cao also serves as the Cancer Metabolism and Immunology (CMI) Program Liaison acting as a key bridge between Rutgers Cancer Institute's CMI Program and COE to strengthen engagement with CMI members, align research with catchment area needs, and maximize use of COE support services.

COE Program Liaison Panelists

Impact of Bi-Directional Community Engagement in Research



Cancer Pharmacology (CP)

Mi-Hyeon Jang, PhD

Professor, Department of Neurosurgery
Rutgers, Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

Dr. Mi-Hyeon Jang has had a longstanding interest in the field of regenerative medicine. The focus of research in Dr. Jang's laboratory is to understand the underlying neurobiological mechanisms that promote regenerative processes of adult neurogenesis, oligodendrogenesis, and myelination. We hope to discover novel regenerative strategies for improving learning and memory function in brain aging, as well as neurological and neurodegenerative disorders. Building on my earlier work in brain aging, Dr. Jang's laboratory pursues a new direction focused on chemotherapy-induced cognitive impairment (also known as chemobrain) which resembles the brain aging process. Given that multiple molecular pathways contribute to the pathogenesis of chemobrain, we aim to uncover the molecular contributors driving chemobrain to direct development of rationally designed synergistic "disease-modifying therapeutic strategies" to ameliorate chemobrain, thus ultimately improving quality of life for cancer survivors. Dr. Jang is a core member of Rutgers Brain Health Institute (BHI) and an active full member of the Cancer Pharmacology Program at Cancer Institute of New Jersey (CINJ). Dr. Jang serves as the COE Cancer Pharmacology (CP) Program Liaison, acting as a key bridge between Rutgers Cancer Institute's CP research program and COE to strengthen engagement with CP members, align research with catchment area needs, and maximize use of COE support services.

Genomic Instability and Cancer Genetics (GICG)

Bing Xia, PhD

Professor of Radiation Oncology
Rutgers Cancer Institute
Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

Dr. Bing Xia received his B.S. degree in Biochemistry from Wuhan University, China in 1992. Between 1992 and 1996, he worked at Sino-American Biotechnology Company (SABC) in China, first as a R&D scientist and then as a sales representative. He came to the United States to pursue graduate studies in 1996 and obtained his Ph.D. degree in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology in 2001 from the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (now Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences), under the mentorship of Dr. Masayori Inouye. After that he completed his postdoctoral training in Dr. David M. Livingston's laboratory at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and Harvard Medical School. In 2007, Dr. Xia was recruited to Rutgers Cancer Institute and appointed to the faculty of the Department of Radiation Oncology, Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. Dr. Xia was promoted to Associate Professor in 2013 and professor in 2019. Dr. Xia is internationally recognized for his discovery of the PALB2 tumor suppressor and the establishment of the BRCA1-PALB2-BRCA2 DNA damage response and tumor suppression pathway. The discovery of PALB2 is considered a significant advance in cancer genetics and the gene is now routinely tested for genetic counseling and precision medicine. Additionally, Dr. Xia's research has also shed light on the roles of oxidative stress and autophagy in breast cancer. Dr. Xia serves as the Genomic Instability and Cancer Genetics (GICG) Program Liaison acting as a key bridge between Rutgers Cancer Institute's GICG Program and COE to strengthen engagement with GICG members, align research with catchment area needs, and maximize use of COE support services.

CHECoE Researcher Moderator

How Community Feedback Changed Our Research

You Spoke, We Reflected: How Community Feedback Changed Our Research

Mariam F. Eskander, MD, MPH
Surgical Oncologist
Assistant Professor in the Department of Surgery,
Division of Surgical Oncology,
and Section of Gastrointestinal Oncology
at the Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

Dr. Mariam Eskander is a surgical oncologist and Assistant Professor of Surgery at the Rutgers Cancer Institute. She treats patients with gastrointestinal cancers, including pancreas, liver, colorectal and stomach and strives to provide effective, patient-centered, and compassionate care. Dr. Eskander's team at the Gastrointestinal/ Hepatobiliary Oncology Program at the Rutgers Cancer Institute includes medical oncologists, radiation oncologists, interventional radiologists, gastroenterologists, and other specialists who are experts their fields and will spend the time to discuss each patient and the nuances of their care. A goal she aims with her patients is that they understand their diagnosis and all the treatment options available, including clinical trials.

Dr. Eskander has a master's degree in public health from Harvard. After graduating from Chicago Medical School, she completed general surgery residency at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston. She completed her surgical oncology fellowship training at the Ohio State Wexner Medical Center and James Cancer Hospital in Ohio. In addition to providing individual care to her own patients, Dr. Eskander's research focuses on achieving equitable health outcomes for vulnerable patient populations.

Moderating The Following Panelists And Topics:

1. **Induced Weight Loss on Treatment Outcomes in Early Triple-Negative Breast Cancer** — Carol Omene, MD, PhD
2. **From Disparity to Delivery: Rethinking Prostate Cancer Care in Vulnerable Populations** — Evan Kovac, MD CM FRCSC

CHECoE Researcher Panelists

How Community Feedback Changed Our Research

Induced Weight Loss on Treatment Outcomes in Early Triple-Negative Breast Cancer

Coral Omene, MD, PhD

Assistant Professor of Medicine
Division of Medical Oncology
Rutgers Cancer Institute
Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

Dr. Coral Omene is a medical oncologist, specializing in breast cancer at Rutgers Cancer Institute. She has a passion for women's health and is dedicated to the care and management of a diverse pool of breast cancer patients. She began her career upon completion of a combined MD/PhD degree at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons. This was followed by an Internal Medicine residency at New York Presbyterian Hospital-Columbia University Medical Center. After residency, she pursued a fellowship at NYU School of Medicine, in the field of Hematology/Oncology, with a special interest in breast cancer. In addition to taking care of breast cancer patients, she conducts extensive translational and clinical research in all subtypes of breast cancer with particular areas of interest including triple negative breast cancer; the interplay with obesity and treatment outcomes; and the impact on cancer disparities and has developed clinical trials in this regard. She serves as the Program Director, Breast Cancer Disparities Research at Rutgers Cancer Institute and served as a program liaison for CHECoE. She is a Principal Investigator for numerous clinical trials and serves on multiple national committees including as the Co-Chair of the BIG Ten Cancer Research Consortium Breast Cancer Clinical Trial Working Group and Co-Chair of the BIG Ten CRC Health Equity Committee.

From Disparity to Delivery: Rethinking Prostate Cancer Care in Vulnerable Populations

Evan Kovac, MD CM FRCSC

Associate Professor
Director of Urologic Oncology
Residency Associate Program Director
Division of Urology
Department of Surgery
Rutgers New Jersey Medical School
Rutgers Cancer Institute

Dr. Kovac is a board-certified and fellowship-trained urologic oncologist, specializing in the evaluation and treatment of cancers of the urinary tract, including prostate, kidney, bladder, testicular, adrenal and penile cancers.

Dr. Kovac is currently the Director of Urologic Oncology and the Associate Program Director of the urology residency program at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School in Newark, New Jersey. He has won numerous teaching awards and has a specific passion for teaching and mentoring medical students and residents.

He earned my medical degree at McGill University in Montreal, Canada and also completed his residency in Urology at McGill. He then completed a two-year fellowship in Urologic Oncology and Robotics at the Cleveland Clinic in Cleveland, OH.

Dr. Kovac is experienced in the latest diagnostic modalities and has specific expertise in transperineal ultrasound-MRI fusion biopsy for the diagnosis of prostate cancer, and single-port robotic surgery for the treatment of prostate, kidney, adrenal and bladder cancers.

Dr. Kovac has authored more than 40 peer-reviewed publications and book chapters on urologic oncology, presented over 40 abstracts at national and international meetings, and has worked to optimize prostate-specific antigen (PSA) screening for the early detection of prostate cancer. In addition, Dr. Kovac published an online training module for performing retroperitoneal lymph node dissection for the treatment of metastatic testicular cancer that is accessible to surgical trainees worldwide.

Featured Abstracts Moderator

Abstracts Talks on Cancer Disparities Research

Selected Abstracts Talks on Cancer Disparities: Population/Clinical Science

Racquel Kelly Kohler, PhD, MSPH
Instructor, Department of Health Behavior, Society, and Policy, School of Public Health
Resident Member, Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey

Dr. Kelly Kohler received her MSPH in Health Policy and Management and her PhD in Health Services Research at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She lived and worked in Malawi as a Fogarty fellow to conduct her mixed methods dissertation study on breast cancer early diagnosis. Dr. Kohler completed her postdoctoral training fellowship in Cancer Prevention at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and Dana-Farber Cancer Institute where she examined the implementation of various HPV self-sampling interventions to increase cervical cancer screening in Southern Africa, South America, and women experiencing homelessness in the USA.

Moderating the following selected abstract presenters:

1. **Beyond Nativity: Acculturation and Breast Cancer Stage at Diagnosis Among Multiracial and Ethnic U.S. Women**
   Presenter: Tina Dharamdasni, PhD Candidate

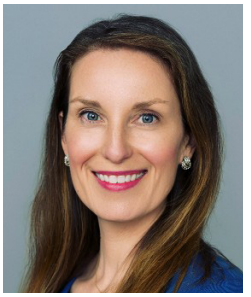
2. **Fairness-Aware Coreset Selection Using Phenotype-based Clustering for Equitable Skin Cancer Detection**
   Presenter: Yehuda Perry, PhD

3. **Mindfulness Interventions for Lung Cancer Stigma in Underserved Population: Preliminary CBPR-MOST Trial Findings**
   Presenter: Kristen Riley, PhD

Full abstracts available in Featured Abstracts section.

Featured Abstracts Panelists

Featured Abstracts Talks on Cancer Disparities Research

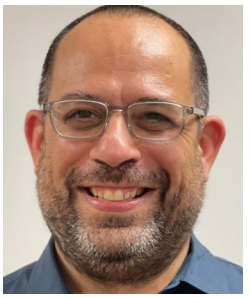


Beyond Nativity: Acculturation and Breast Cancer Stage at Diagnosis Among Multiracial and Ethnic U.S. Women

Tina Dharamdasni

PhD Candidate
Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics
Rutgers School of Public Health

Tina Dharamdasani is a doctoral candidate in epidemiology at the Rutgers School of Public Health. Her research focuses on acculturation as a sociocultural determinant of breast cancer disparities in the United States. Using data from population-based breast cancer survivorship cohort studies, her dissertation examines the role of acculturation in shaping clinical and survivorship outcomes among Black, Hispanic, and South Asian women in New Jersey. Tina holds a Master of Science in Health Outcomes, Policy, and Economics from the Rutgers School of Public Health and a Bachelor of Dental Surgery from the Maharashtra University of Health Sciences, India. Her broader research interests include cancer epidemiology, survivorship, health equity, and the application of epidemiologic methods to improve cancer outcomes. She has presented her research at national and state cancer research conferences and is committed to contributing to research that informs equitable cancer prevention, care, and survivorship efforts.



Fairness-Aware Coreset Selection Using Phenotype-based Clustering for Equitable Skin Cancer Detection

Yehuda Perry, PhD

Lecturer \ Research Assistant
School of Communication and Information (LIS Department)
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

A researcher in AI for health and biomedicine whose work focuses on artificial intelligence, machine learning, deep learning, computer vision, and neural networks for clinically relevant healthcare applications, particularly in cancer research. His research centers on developing, validating, and translating robust and responsible AI methods for cancer detection and biomedical decision support, with an emphasis on diagnostic performance, fairness, robustness, and real-world utility.

Featured Abstracts Panelists

Featured Abstracts Talks on Cancer Disparities Research

Mindfulness Interventions for Lung Cancer Stigma in Underserved Population: Preliminary CBPR-MOST Trial Findings

Kristen Riley, PhD

Assistant Professor
Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology
Rutgers University

Kristen E. Riley, PhD, is an Associate Professor in Clinical Psychology at GSAPP. She received her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology with a certificate in Health Psychology is from the University of Connecticut and completed a health psychology internship at the Miami VA Medical Center and postdoctoral fellowship in Psycho-Oncology and cancer prevention at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (MSKCC).

Research: Dr. Riley studies Health Equity. She leads the Behavioral Medicine Lab at GSAPP. Current projects develop mindfulness-based stigma-reduction and smoking cessation interventions for diverse and underserved lung cancer patients, treat insomnia in Black pregnant women to reduce maternal mortality and mordidity, and integrate psychology and behavioral medicine into primary care, cancer, and medical settings for underserved groups, in English and Spanish.

Community Scientist Moderator

Community Voices in Cancer Health Equity Panel

Community Driven Approaches to Addressing Cancer Health Disparities

Yakima Deloatch
CCAB Member
Consultant
Speaker
Author

Yakima Deloatch is a relentless advocate, entrepreneur, keynote speaker, and author, whose tenacity and resilience mirror that of a phoenix—rising, reinventing, and soaring higher with every challenge. As a breast cancer survivor and mentor, she is dedicated to empowering others through advocacy, storytelling, and community-building. She has shared her journey on Dr. Oz, ABC News, The Wendy Williams Show, and other major media platforms while using her social media presence to highlight fellow survivors, educate on breast health and lymphedema care, and amplify the mission of impactful organizations. Her latest venture, The Pink Escape, is a luxury travel community where breast cancer survivors and their friends celebrate life, resilience, and sisterhood.

With over 15 years of expertise in partnerships, marketing, and brand development, Yakima has executed high-impact events for brands like Samsung, AWS, and LinkedIn and led one of New Jersey's largest Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walks. She is a master at fostering relationships, securing sponsorships, and creating transformative experiences that leave a lasting impact. Whether she's advocating for survivors, inspiring audiences as a keynote speaker, or curating unforgettable travel experiences, Yakima continues to uplift and empower—proving that even after the fire, the phoenix always rises stronger.

About the Community Scientist Program

The Community Scientist Training Program is a course offered by the Community Outreach and Engagement team at Rutgers Cancer Institute that trains community members to work directly with the science and research communities and foster bidirectional communication. ScreenNJ collaborates to connect the communities these individuals represent with our team of scientists to ensure that our research is reflective of the needs of these communities that we serve. Our goal is to educate and train individuals on how to effectively collaborate with research and ensure their respective communities understand the research being done that the community may ultimately benefit from. To do this, we use learning modules that cover topics like research 101, research ethics, types of research studies, informed consent, stakeholder engagement, overview of clinical trials, cancer basics, and cultural competency to ensure our Community Scientists are equipped with the knowledge and expertise to inform researchers. The program runs for a total of 9 weeks with new learning modules each week and a graduation at the end of the final session.

Trained community scientists have opportunities to engage with researchers through Science Cafes and work in progress connections, assist with ScreenNJ community grant reviews, provide program input, partner with ScreenNJ and more. Community Scientists have provided valuable feedback to researchers that shape their research efforts.

Community Scientist Panelists

Community Voices in Cancer Health Equity

Walter "Walee" Jackson

Community Scientist

I am a mission-driven human resources strategist and community health equity leader committed to transforming how underserved communities access, understand, and benefit from lifesaving information, research, and care. As Vice Chairman of Jazz for Prostate Cancer Awareness® (Jazz4PCA®), I help lead a statewide movement focused on closing the deadly prostate cancer gap affecting African American men, who face the highest incidence and mortality rates in the nation. My work centers on culturally attuned outreach, survivor-centered storytelling, and partnerships that bring education, screening access, and advocacy directly into the community.

I became a Community Scientist to turn lived experience, community leadership, and training into real influence over the research that shapes our health outcomes. The program grounded me in clinical trials, research ethics, and cancer disparities, but what drives me is the reality I see every day. Serving in this role allows me to ensure research reflects lived experiences, cultural realities, and urgent community needs.

Meg McQuarrie

Community Scientist

I am the co-founder and Executive Director of the Elixir Fund, a nonprofit that provides support to cancer survivors and their caregivers. I am also the chair of the Survivorship Workgroup for the NJ State Cancer Coalition.

I was introduced to the Community Science program by a friend and colleague who graduated from the first cohort. I thought that the program would allow me to learn more about current research in oncology. I also saw it as a great opportunity to learn more about health equity and provide some insight on how to better address some of the issues that cause barriers to care. I graduated from the 2nd cohort in early 2022.

What I enjoy most are the Science Cafes. I appreciate the opportunity to learn not only from the presentations, but from the questions that arise. The cafes are a great opportunity for the Community Scientist to represent the needs of survivors and caregivers.

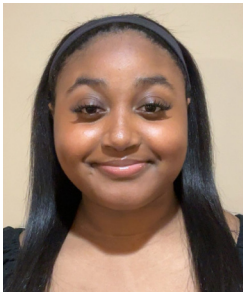
Community Scientist Panelists

Community Voices in Cancer Health Equity

Beatriz Pachas

Community Scientist

Beatriz Pachas is a public health professional and Project Manager at Atlantic Health, where she leads community outreach and education programs focused on preventing chronic diseases. She started her career as a Community Health Worker, which gave her a firsthand look at how important it is to stay connected to the people you serve. Beatriz holds a degree in Public Health with a minor in Social Justice and Women's and Gender Studies. She is also a Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES) and a Tobacco Treatment Professional (CPAHA, CTTS), and she makes sure to bring a focus on fairness and equity to every project she handles. In addition to her daily work, Beatriz is a Community Scientist and a graduate of Cohort 5. She joined the program to help bridge the gap between clinical research and everyday people, especially in communities that are often left out of the conversation. Her goal is to make the research process easier to understand and to build the kind of genuine trust needed to make healthcare more accessible for everyone. What she enjoys most about being a Community Scientist is the chance to improve cancer health equity by making sure research is designed with real people in mind. By speaking up for better, more inclusive outreach, she helps community members move from being just participants to becoming true partners in the fight against cancer.



Jayla Vazquez

Community Scientist

My name is Jayla Vazquez, and I am currently a junior at Woodbridge High School. In the summer of 2025, I had the opportunity to participate in the RUYES program at the Rutgers Cancer Institute, where I worked in the Kinney Lab under Dr. Anita Kinney on Project CARE. In September 2025, I became a Community Scientist as part of Cohort 5. I was drawn to this role because I recognize that people grow up in different communities, which shapes how they understand and approach cancer prevention. I believe it's important for everyone to have a clear and accessible understanding of cancer screening. One of the aspects I value most about being a Community Scientist is learning how and why perspectives on cancer prevention differ, as it broadens my awareness of the diverse experiences and environments people come from.

Beyond Nativity: Acculturation And Breast Cancer Stage At Diagnosis Among Multiracial And Ethnic U.s. Women

Tina Dharamdasani[1], Nur Zeinomar[2], Bo Qin2, Chi-Chen Hong[3], Antoinette Stroup[1,2,4], Elisa V. Bandera[2], Jaya M. Satagopan[1,2]

[1]Rutgers School of Public Health;[2]Rutgers Cancer Institute;[3]Roswell Park Cancer Center; [4]NJ State Cancer Registry

Purpose
To examine the association between acculturation and breast cancer stage at diagnosis in a pooled sample of Black, Hispanic, and South Asian women in New Jersey (NJ).

Methods
Data were drawn from the NJ Breast Cancer Survivors Study (NJBCS) of Black and Hispanic survivors and the Cancer Analytics and South Asian Health–Breast Cancer (CANSAH-BC) Study of South Asian survivors. Participants in both studies were recruited through the NJ State Cancer Registry (NJSCR) and completed a common questionnaire during the study interview. Acculturation was measured using percentage of life lived in the continental U.S. at diagnosis and the Short Acculturation Scale for Hispanics (SASH), adapted for use across groups and scored from 1 (low acculturation) to 5 (high acculturation). Breast cancer stage at diagnosis was obtained through linkage with the NJSCR and categorized as advanced vs. localized. Multivariable logistic regression was used to estimate associations between acculturation measures and advanced stage in the pooled sample, adjusting for age, year of diagnosis, and socioeconomic and lifestyle factors.

Results
The sample size was 508 cases diagnosed in NJ from 2017–2023 (126 Black, 281 Hispanic, and 101 South Asian). Median percentage of life lived in the continental U.S. at diagnosis was highest among Black women (100%), intermediate among Hispanic women (50%), and lowest among South Asian women (47%). Median SASH scores were 5.0, 1.5, and 2.9, respectively. In adjusted models, a 10% increase in percentage of life lived in the continental U.S. was associated with 10% lower odds of advanced stage (OR=0.90, 95% CI: 0.84–0.97). A one-unit increase in SASH score was associated with 24% lower odds of advanced stage (OR=0.76, 95% CI: 0.61–0.95).

Conclusion
Higher acculturation was associated with localized (i.e., early) stage at diagnosis. These findings highlight the importance of improving early detection efforts among less acculturated populations.

Fairness-Aware Coreset Selection Using Phenotype-Based Clustering For Equitable Skin Cancer Detection

Yehuda Perry, PhD[1]; Muntasir Rahman, PhD[1]; Yonira M. Rivera, PhD, MPH[1]; Adewole S. Adamson, MD, MPP[2]; Bahar Dasgeb, MD[3]; David J. Foran, PhD[3]; Vivek K. Singh, PhD[1;]

[1]Rutgers University; [2]The University of Texas at Austin; [3]Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey

Abstract
Skin cancer remains a public health concern, with an estimated 5.4 million new non-melanoma cases (basal and squamous cell skin cancers) and 212,000 melanoma diagnoses expected in the United States in 2025, and 8,400 deaths. Basal and squamous cell carcinomas are most common, while melanoma, though less frequent, accounts for a disproportionate share of mortality when detection is delayed. Artificial intelligence (AI) shows promise for early diagnosis, yet many models continue to exhibit performance disparities across diverse skin tones, risking amplification of healthcare inequities.

Purpose
To improve equity across skin tones in AI-based skin cancer detection while reducing the amount of training data required.

Methods
We propose FAIR-SCOPE (Fairness-Aware Subset Selection using Clustering and Observed Phenotype Equity), which selects diversity-aware coresets by combining Local Diversity (LD) and Global Equity (GE) scores. Using InceptionV3 trained on Fitzpatrick-17k and Diverse Dermatology Images (DDI), we evaluated adaptive subsets (25%, 50%, 75%, 100%) drawn from the top-ranked half of the training data.

Results
We propose FAIR-SCOPE (Fairness-Aware Subset Selection using Clustering and Observed Phenotype Equity), which selects diversity-aware coresets by combining Local Diversity (LD) and Global Equity (GE) scores. Using InceptionV3 trained on Fitzpatrick-17k and Diverse Dermatology Images (DDI), we evaluated adaptive subsets (25%, 50%, 75%, 100%) drawn from the top-ranked half of the training data.

Conclusion
Phenotype-driven coreset selection can support scalable, transparent development of more equitable skin cancer classifiers with efficient data use.

Funding
None.

Mindfulness Interventions For Lung Cancer Stigma In Underserved Populations: Preliminary Cbpr-Most Trial Findings

[1]Kristen Riley, PhD, [1]Jamie Ostroff, PhD, MSKCC; [1]Karen D'Alonzo, PhD, RN; [2]Lisa Carter-Harris, PhD; [3]Timothy Williamson, PhD; [4]Linda Collins, PhD; [1]Francesca Gany, MD, MSKCC; Lester Lee; [1]Eva Niemeijer; [1]Alex Peterson; [1]Holly Siu; [1]Philippa Sone; [1]Sofia Moore; [1]Mirjam Burger-Calderon; [1]Rutgers; [2]Hackensack Meridian Health; [3]LMU; [4]NYU

Purpose

Lung cancer stigma (LCS) is blame, guilt, and shame about diagnosis and harms treatment adherence, patient-provider communication, and cessation engagement, amplifying health disparities in underserved groups. Mindfulness interventions reduce stigma in other health contexts but are untested for LCS. Using Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) and Multiphase Optimization Strategy (MOST), we optimize a virtual mindfulness intervention to reduce LCS in diverse lung cancer patients.

Methods

Patients were randomized to 3 brief video components: (1) mindfulness, (2) forgiveness, (3) ACT values. Measures: LCSI, ISSI, SCS-SF, FMI, PANAS-SF, and quit motivation, pre- and post-intervention. Data collection is currently ongoing; the following are preliminary results.

Results

75 completed responses (mean age 37.2 ± 11.4 years); 68% Black/African American, 8% Hispanic/Latinx, 48% LGBTQ+, 55% low-income; Stages II (36%), III (44%), IV (13%); 67% smoking history. Mean LCSI = 3.3/5 (SD = 1.1), indicating moderate-to-high stigma. Quit motivation was high and increased post intervention (M = 6.81 to 6.92), especially for the forgiveness-focused intervention ($p = 0.021$).

Conclusion

High LCS burden in a predominantly Black and LGBTQ+ sample confirms urgent need for stigma-targeted interventions. The CBPR-MOST design successfully reaches health disparity groups. Final analyses will identify optimal components for reducing LCS and improving cessation engagement.

Acknowledgement

Supported by the LUNGevity Foundation Health Equity for Communities Research Award.

Featured Posters

1. **Material Hardship and Emerging Disparities in Cognitive Function at the End of Childhood Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia Treatment.** Beth Savage, PhD, CPNP, CPON [1]; Peter Cole, MD[2], Stephen Sands[3], Sameera Ramjan[3], Kira Bona[4];*[1]Rutgers University School of Nursing, [2]Rutgers Cancer Institute, [3]Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, [4]Harvard Medical School*

2. **Neighborhood Child Opportunity is Associated with Disparities in Cognitive Function Among Adolescents During the Treatment of Childhood Acute Lym-phoblastic Leukemia.** [1] Beth Savage, PhD, CPNP, CPON; [2]Peter Cole, MD, [3]Stephen Sands, [3]Sameera Ramjan, [4]Kira Bona;*[1]Rutgers University School of Nursing, [2]Rutgers Cancer Institute, [3]Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, [4]Harvard Medical School*

3. **Mindfulness Interventions for Lung Cancer Stigma in Underserved Populations: Preliminary CBPR-Most Trial Findings.** [1]Kristen Riley, PhD, [1]Jamie Ostroff, PhD, MSKCC; [1]Karen D'Alonzo, PhD, RN; [2]Lisa Carter-Harris, PhD; [3]Timothy Williamson, PhD; [4]Linda Collins, PhD; [1]Francesca Gany, MD, MSKCC; Lester Lee; [1]Eva Niemeijer; [1]Alex Peterson; [1]Holly Siu; [1]Philippa Sone; [1]Sofia Moore; [1]Mirjam Burger-Calderon; *[1]Rutgers; [2]Hackensack Meridian Health; [3]LMU; [4]NYU*

4. **Colorectal Cancer Screening among the Garifuna.** Lois E. Rockson, PhD; *Rutgers School of Health Professions, Rutgers School of Nursing*

5. **Tobacco, Nicotine, Cannabis, and Alcohol Use among LGBTQ+ Patients with Cancer: Real-world Data from an NCI-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center.** Min-Jeong Yang, PhD; Department of Cancer Epidemiology, H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute, Tampa, Florida, USA

6. **Outcomes Of Asian and Non-Hispanic White Patients with Colorectal Cancer in RWJBH System.** Christina Boatwright[*1], Abhiraj Saxena[*1] Hritik Kumar[1], Aakash Shetty[2], Patrick Boland[3], Lyudmyla Berim[3], Sanjay Goel[1,3]; *[1]Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School; [2]Rutgers University School of Arts and Sciences; [3]Rutgers Cancer Institute; *Co-first authors*

7. **Cervical Cancer Screening Gaps in New Jersey College and University Census Tracts.** Daniel Pearson, MA; *Rutgers Cancer Institute*

8. **Targeting Prostate Cancer in New Jersey Non-Hispanic Blacks Using NJSCR Zone Design Tool.** Gerald Harris[1]; Prachi Trivedi[1];AKM Islam[1]; Lisa Paddock[1,2]; Antoinette Stroup[1,2,3]; *[1]Rutgers Cancer Institute; [2]NJDOH; [3]Rutgers School of Public Health;*

9. **Characterizing Momentary Smoking Patterns During a Quit Attempt Using Ecological Momentary Assessments.** Nazife Pehlivan, PhD[1,2]; Andrea C. Villanti, PhD, MPH[2]; Michael Businelle,PhD[3]; Karen Gamble,PhD[4]; Donald Hedeker,PhD5; Michael B. Steinberg, MD,MPH2; Andrea Spaeth, PhD[6]; Prianca Nadkarni,BS[1]; & Chaelin K. Ra,PhD,MPH[1,2]; *[1] Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey, Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, Rutgers University; [2] Rutgers Institute for Nicotine & Tobacco Studies, Rutgers University;[3] TSET Health Promotion Research Center, Stephenson Cancer Center, University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center;[4] Behavioral Neurobiology, Psychiatry, School of Medicine, University of Alabama;[5] Department of Public Health Sciences, University of Chicago;[6] Department of Kinesiology and Health, Rutgers University*

Featured Posters

10. **Stakeholder Engaged Co-Creation of HPV Self Collection Screening Intervention in Emergency Departments.** Ruth Salas, MPH, *Rutgers*

11. **Racial Disparities in Outcomes Among Hospitalized Breast Cancer Patients with Pulmonary Embolism.**
Safia Ansari, DO; *Rutgers New Jersey Medical School*

12. **Analysis Of Timely Completion of Chemoradiation for Locally Advanced Cervical Cancer.** Christina Boatwright[1], Prianca Nadkarni[1], Michael Shu[2], Lara Hathout[2], Eugenia Girda[2]; *[1]Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School;[2]Rutgers Cancer Institute*

13. **Comparing The Risk of Hospitalization Within 90 Days Among Patients Receiving Chemoimmunotherapy Compared to Chemotherapy Only.** Isha Patel, BA; *Rutgers School of Public Health, Center for Pharmacoepidemiology & Treatment Science*

14. **Health Disparities in Radiation Therapy for Benign and Atypical Meningiomas: Implications for Neurocognitive Outcomes and Quality of Life.** Jingyi Nie, MS; *Rutgers University, School Of Graduate Studies*

15. **Delayed Care and Psychological Distress Among Adults with Lymphoma in the United States.**
Kristy Bono, MD, MS; *Rutgers New Jersey Medical School*

16. **Beyond Nativity: Acculturation And Breast Cancer Stage at Diagnosis Among Multiracial and Ethnic U.S. Women.** Tina Dharamdasani[1], Nur Zeinomar[2], Bo Qin2, Chi-Chen Hong[3], Antoinette Stroup[1,2,4], Elisa V. Bandera[2], Jaya M. Satagopan[1,2,]*[1]Rutgers School of Public Health;[2]Rutgers Cancer Institute;[3]Roswell Park Cancer Center; [4]NJ State Cancer Registry*

17. **Fairness-Aware Coreset Selection Using Phenotype-Based Clustering for Equi-table Skin Cancer Detection.** Yehuda Perry, PhD[1]; Muntasir Rahman, PhD[1]; Yonira M. Rivera, PhD, MPH[1]; Adewole S. Adamson, MD, MPP[2]; Bahar Dasgeb, MD[3]; David J. Foran, PhD[3]; Vivek K. Singh, PhD[1]; *[1]Rutgers University; [2]The University of Texas at Austin; [3]Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey*

18. **Systematically Addressing HPV-Induced Cancers in High-Risk Populations Through Integrated Epidemiological Modeling in The State Of New Jersey.** Zion Harris, BS; *Center for Computational and Integrative Biology, Rutgers*

STRIDE Dashboard

Surveillance, **T**racking and **R**eporting through **I**nformed **D**ata Collection and **E**ngagement

For Researchers (internal version)

- Match CINJ trials to affiliates
- Tumor registry
- Biospecimen availability
- Clinical trial accruals

Cancer InFocus provides datasets for cancer center catchment areas and the United States

- Datasets include over 150 variables across 10 categories
- Available at county and census tract level
- Area boundaries (food deserts, etc.)
- Site locations (FQHCs, screening facilities, etc.)

For Community Users (public version)

- Central hub for public cancer data
- Environmental hazards
- Transportation mapping

Four data visualization applications:

- Cancer InFocus: data maps with locations or boundaries
- CIF Profiles: download data profiles for individual counties vs. state median
- CIF Bivariate: maps and scatterplots to show relationship of two variables

STRIDE (Internal)*: rsc03.cinj.rutgers.edu/stride/

STRIDE (Public): published.cinj.rutgers.edu/stride/

Cancer InFocus™: published.cinj.rutgers.edu/cif/

CHECoE in the Community

Get Involved

If you are a community member, student researcher, or patient advocate, we welcome your voice at the Cancer Health Equity Center of Excellence (CHECoE). From our Community CARES program to our Community Scientist program, we are actively working to expand our network of community members with a passion to reduce the cancer burden. **Join us**

Contact Us for More Information

How Community-Research Collaboration Can Help You

Engaging communities is beneficial to your work and produces the following likely outcomes:

- More relevant research questions
- Greater recruitment success
- Increased external validity
- Greater retention of participants
- Enhanced understanding of findings

How the CHECoE Team Can Help You

We facilitate community-researcher dialogue to help enhance your research by:

- Helping researchers obtain feedback from community members that produces more impactful science
- Assisting researchers to effectively disseminate research to relevant communities
- Supporting researcher access to New Jersey (catchment area) data

CHECoE Facilitates Opportunities for Engaging with Community Members

- Community Scientist Training Program Graduates
- Community Science Cafés
- Community Cancer Action Board Meetings
- Catchment Area And Coe Research Program Integration Meetings
- Works In Progress Meetings

This resource is designed to help you engage in bi-directional conversations with community members, enhancing your research no matter where your work falls in the cancer research continuum. Download the guide by visting:

go.rutgers.edu/ResourceGuide

To connect with CHECoE, **click here**,
or visit: **go.rutgers.edu/CHECoE_ForYOU**

Thank you for your participation and for contributing to a successful and meaningful event. We greatly value your feedback on our strengths and opportunities for improvement as we plan for next year's symposium.

Please take a moment to complete the feedback survey by visiting:

go.rutgers.edu/chechoe-symposiumps

RWJBarnabas HEALTH

RUTGERS HEALTH
Rutgers Cancer Institute

NCI Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center