

AACR VIRTUAL PATIENT ADVOCATE FORUM

THE IMPACT OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES ON CANCER RESEARCH

Speakers

-in order of appearance



JON RETZLAFF, MBA, MPA

Chief Policy Officer

Vice President, Science Policy and Government Affairs

American Association for Cancer Research

Washington, DC

Before joining the AACR in 2010 as the chief policy officer and vice president of science policy and government affairs, Mr. Retzlaff led the health and biomedical practice for a government relations firm in D.C. Prior to these two positions, he served as legislative director for the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology from 2004-2007.

Additionally, he worked for the National Institutes of Health, first as a program analyst within the Office of the Director's legislative office; then as a senior legislative advisor to the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke; and finally as the executive officer of the National Library of Medicine. Mr. Retzlaff was assigned to the House (1998) and Senate (2000-2001) appropriations subcommittees on labor, health and human services, education and related agencies on health research funding issues, as well as within the Office of the Secretary for Legislation at the Department of Health and Human Services. He entered the Federal Government as a Presidential Management Intern in 1993 and completed a rotation in the Office of Senator Herb Kohl (D-Wis.) during his training.



GRACE CORDOVANO, PHD, BCPA

Founder and President

Enlightening Results

West Caldwell, NJ

Upon recognizing significant unmet needs and challenges in patients' experiences throughout their cancer diagnosis, Dr. Grace Cordovano, BCPA, founded Enlightening Results in 2010. As the culmination of her life's experiential learning and education, Dr. Cordovano is dedicated to fostering personalized patient advocacy services, specializing in oncology. She strategically guides patients & their carepartners through survivorship or end-of-life care planning with empathy, ensuring individuals are armed with the most pertinent, medically credible, easy-to-understand information and tools to make empowered decisions about their care.

Dr. Cordovano is an advocate for leveraging digital technologies and data access to enhance the treatment of the whole person in the context of life-altering diagnoses, as well as for digital health and innovation to meet patients where they are. She co-founded Unblock Health to empower patients and their carepartners with modernized tools to request their all their electronic health information (EHI) as well as to request corrections to their EHI. Dr. Cordovano has been repeatedly recognized as Patient Advocate of the Year, most recently at the 2019 Health IT and Marketing & PR Community Conference Medigy Awards. She has been featured in StatNews, KevinMD, Tincture, The Healthcare Blog, MobiHealthNews, US News & World Report, Kaiser News, and Politico.



ELAINE R. MARDIS, PHD, FAACR

**Co-Executive Director, Institute for Genomic Medicine
Steve and Cindy Rasmussen Endowed Chair in Genomic Medicine
Professor of Pediatrics, The Ohio University College of Medicine
Nationwide Children's Hospital
Columbus, OH**

An internationally recognized leader, Dr. Mardis has spearheaded innovative DNA sequencing efforts that have impacted the fields of precision medicine and cancer genomics. Dr. Mardis was a central contributor to the Human Genome Project and co-led efforts to sequence the first complete genome from an acute myeloid leukemia (AML) patient using next-generation sequencing, comparing the genomes of cancerous and normal cells that demonstrated the discovery potential of this unbiased approach. Dr. Mardis also shared leadership of the St. Jude-Washington University Pediatric Cancer Genome Project as well as The Cancer Genome Atlas project, which is now heralded for contributing to the molecular characterization of over 20,000 biospecimens spanning 33 tumor types, including 10 rare cancers. Recently, she developed a clinical test for Lynch Syndrome mutations and microsatellite status of endometrial cancers and contributed to the development of personalized Variant Antigens by Cancer Sequencing (pVac-Seq), a computational approach to neoantigen discovery that has been used in personalized vaccine clinical trials. Collectively, these pivotal breakthroughs have been vital to ongoing precision medicine efforts that identify therapeutic treatment strategies for cancer patients.

Dr. Mardis has authored over 350 articles in prestigious peer-reviewed journals and has written book chapters for several medical textbooks. She serves as an associate editor for three peer-reviewed journals (Disease Models and Mechanisms, Molecular Cancer Research, and Annals of Oncology) and is Editor-in-Chief of Molecular Case Studies, published by Cold Spring Harbor Press. Dr. Mardis has given lectures at scientific meetings worldwide and was awarded the Morton K Schwartz award from the American Association for Clinical Chemistry in 2016. She has been listed since 2013 as one of the most highly cited researchers in the world by Thompson Reuters. Dr. Mardis has been a member of the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) since 2007, was the program committee chair for the 2018 AACR Annual Meeting, and AACR President in 2019.



JOEL H. SALTZ, MD, PHD

**Cherith Professor and Founding Chair, Department of Biomedical Informatics
Vice Chair, Laboratory and Digital Medicine, Department of Pathology
Vice President, Clinical Informatics, Stony Brook Medicine
Associate Director, Stony Brook Cancer Center
Stony Brook School of Medicine
Stony Brook, NY**

Dr. Joel Saltz is a leader in research on advanced information technologies for large scale data science and biomedical/scientific research. He has developed innovative pathology informatics methods, including: the first published whole slide virtual microscope system; pioneering pathology computer-aided diagnosis techniques; and methods for decomposing pathology images into features and linking those features to cancer “omics”, response to treatment and outcome. He has broken new ground in big data through development of the filter-stream based DataCutter system, the map-reduce style Active Data Repository and the inspector-executor runtime compiler framework. He has also been an active contributor in clinical informatics, having developed predictive models for hospital readmissions, point of care laboratory testing quality assurance systems, decision support systems for electrophoresis interpretation and graphical user interfaces to support clinical data warehouse queries.

Dr. Saltz has been a pioneer in establishing the field of biomedical informatics; he founded and built two highly successful departments of biomedical informatics, one at Ohio State University and one at Emory University. In 2013, he joined Stony Brook as Vice President for Clinical Informatics and Founding Department Chair of Biomedical Informatics – to create a living laboratory for biomedical informatics and to create a third unique biomedical informatics department dually housed in the School of Medicine and the College of Engineering. Dr. Saltz is trained both as a computer scientist and as a physician through the MSTP program at Duke University. He has deep experience in computer science, having served on the computer science faculties at Yale University and the University of Maryland. He completed his residency in clinical pathology at Johns Hopkins University and he is a practicing, board-certified clinical pathologist.



LUIS ALBERTO DIAZ JR, MD, FAACR

**Head, Division of Solid Tumor Oncology, Department of Medicine
Grayer Family Chair
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center
New York, NY**

Luis Alberto Diaz, Jr. is an internationally recognized physician-scientist with a special interest in cancer genetics and immuno-oncology. Dr. Diaz researched the development of a liquid biopsy that can be used to test for the presence of cancer and to monitor its response to therapy. He and his colleagues developed a Pap smear to detect early-stage ovarian and endometrial cancers. Dr Diaz also led a study of pembrolizumab to target tumors that share a particular biomarker called mismatch repair deficiency. It was the first FDA approval for a cancer treatment based on a biomarker rather than the location in the body where the tumor originated.

Dr. Diaz earned his undergraduate and medical degree at the University of Michigan and Michigan Medicine, respectively. He completed his residency in internal medicine and medical oncology fellowship at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. Dr. Diaz was a faculty member in the Department of Oncology at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. He was also a member of the Ludwig Center for Cancer Genetics and Therapeutics and head of the Swim Across America Laboratory at Johns Hopkins.

In 2017, Diaz became Head of the Solid Tumor Oncology division at Memorial Sloan Kettering. The same year, he was selected to lead the Stand Up to Cancer “Dream Team” against colorectal cancer. Diaz has founded several companies that focus on genomic analyses of cancers, including Inostics, PapGene, and Personal Genome Diagnostics.

Moderator



ANNA D. BARKER, PHD

Founder and Chair, AACR Scientist↔Survivor Program®

Chief Strategy Officer, Lawrence J. Ellison Institute for Transformative Medicine

Distinguished Visiting Fellow, Complex Adaptive Systems Arizona State University

Los Angeles, CA

Dr. Barker is the founder and chair of the AACR Scientist↔Survivor Program® and chief strategy officer of the Lawrence J. Ellison Institute for Transformative Medicine and distinguished visiting fellow at Arizona State University. She develops information-based strategies through internal research and engagement of networks of leading experts in medicine, science, and engineering to solve complex problems in cancer and other diseases. Previously, Dr. Barker served as the principal deputy director of the National Cancer Institute (NCI) where she led the development of Foundational platforms (Clinical Proteomics and National Cancer Nanotechnology Centers) and national programs (e.g., TCGA, Physical-Sciences Oncology Centers) to support the emerging concept of precision medicine. Hallmarks of these strategic innovative programs were networks of global institutions, team science and publicly available data.

Post NCI, Dr. Barker served as director of Transformative Healthcare Networks, co-director of Complex Adaptive Systems -Biomedicine (CAS) and professor of practice, School of Life Sciences at Arizona State University (ASU), where she maintains a courtesy academic appointment. At ASU, she employed CAS approaches through “knowledge networks” to enable progress in areas ranging from clinical trial designs to biomarker discovery and applying concepts from the physical sciences to fundamentally understand and control complex diseases such as cancer.

Dr. Barker also spent several years at Battelle Memorial Institute, a nonprofit transdisciplinary research organization, where she progressed from a research scientist to serve in several senior executive roles. She has received numerous awards for her contributions to cancer research, cancer patients and patient advocates, professional organizations, and the ongoing national effort to prevent and cure cancer. Dr. Barker received her doctoral degree from the Ohio State University.