AACR American Association for Cancer Research On Campus

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

UNIVERSIDAD EL BOSQUE

UNIVERSIDAD DEL NORTE

Vigiladas Mineducación

Welcome Message

Welcome to **AACR on Campus Colombia (Bogotá and Barranquilla)**. The **American Association for Cancer Research (AACR)**, in partnership with **Universidad El Bosque (UEB)** and **Universidad del Norte (UN),** is pleased to bring together early career investigators, clinicians, students, and trainees from Colombia and across Latin America and the Caribbean for an engaging program dedicated to advancing cancer research, education, and collaboration.

Founded in 1907, AACR is the world's first and largest professional organization dedicated to advancing cancer research and accelerating progress toward the prevention and cure of cancer. With more than 65,000 members across 143 countries, AACR hosts over 30 scientific meetings and educational workshops each year, including the AACR Annual Meeting. AACR on Campus (AACRoC) extends AACR's educational mission directly to institutions and regions where supporting early-career investigators and expanding research capacity are priorities. AACRoC Colombia (Bogotá and Barranquilla) reflects AACR's commitment to fostering local talent, strengthening international collaboration, and supporting sustainable growth in cancer research and innovation.

Across this 1.5-day program at each host institution, participants will explore emerging advances in cancer science through sessions **on Integrating Molecular Epidemiology and Health Data to Advance Cancer Prevention and Equity, Cancer Genomics in Admixed Populations, Immunogenomics and the Tumor Microenvironment: Personalizing Immunotherapy, and Artificial Intelligence for Cancer Equity in Low-Resource Settings.** The scientific program is complemented by career development workshops covering **Leveraging AACR Project GENIE for Collaborative Precision Oncology** and **Emerging Applications of Artificial Intelligence in Cancer Science.** To recognize outstanding scientific contributions, one Best Poster Prize recipient from each location will receive a **USD $2,500** travel award to attend the **2027 AACR Annual Meeting.**

We hope this program serves not only as a forum for learning but also as an opportunity to exchange ideas, establish meaningful collaborations, and build lasting professional connections. By bringing together experts and emerging leaders from across the region, AACR on Campus Colombia (Bogotá and Barranquilla) seeks to strengthen a vibrant community of cancer researchers committed to improving cancer prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and patient outcomes throughout Colombia and the broader Latin American and Caribbean region.

AACR on Campus Colombia (Barranquilla) Program

Universidad del Norte
Kilómetro 5, Vía Puerto Colombia, Área Metropolitana de Barranquilla, Atlántico, Barranquilla, Colombia.

Advancing Cancer Science and Equity through Genomics, AI, and Global Collaboration

Day 1: Thursday, October 29, 2026

OPENING

8:00 – 9:00 **Registration and Coffee Reception**
9:00 – 9:15 **Chairs' Welcome**
9:15 – 9:30 **Opening Remarks: AACR on Campus Colombia: Advancing Cancer Science and Equity Through Genomics, AI, and Global Collaboration**

Session 1: **Immunogenomics and the Tumor Microenvironment: Personalizing Immunotherapy**
This session will examine how the integration of immunogenomics and tumor microenvironment profiling is reshaping the future of personalized cancer immunotherapy. It will highlight current scientific advances and their application to real-world treatment strategies, particularly in underrepresented populations such as those in Latin America.

9:30 – 9:45 **Molecular Profiling in Cancer: Connecting Genomic Insights to Personalized Treatment**.
Dra. Marcela Galvez, Scientific Medical Director Gencell Pharma

9:45 – 10:30 **From Tumor Genomics to Immune Resistance: Expanding the success of Immunotherapy**
Professor Jennifer Guerriero, PhD, Brigham and Women's Hospital/Harvard Cancer Center, Boston, Massachusetts

10:30 – 10:45 **Coffee Break and Poster Exhibition**

Session 2: **Cancer Genomics in Admixed Populations**
This session will explore the unique genomic landscape of admixed populations in Latin America, with a focus on Colombia, where Indigenous,

African, and European ancestries converge. The session will emphasize the need to generate and analyze local genomic data to identify population-specific cancer risk variants and treatment responses.

10:45 – 11:00 **From ProCaM to Precision Oncology: Cancer Genomics in the Colombian Caribbean.**
Dr. Oscar Vidal, Director of the Cancer Research program in the Caribbean (ProCaM)

11:00 – 11:45 **Understanding Breast Cancer Genomics in Latino Populations: From Ancestry and Risk to Precision Medicine.**
Professor Laura Fejerman, MSc, PhD, UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center, Sacramento, California

12:00 – 14:00 **Lunch & "Meet the Experts"**

Session 3: **Integrating Molecular Epidemiology and Health Data to Advance Cancer Prevention and Equity**
This session will explore how combining molecular epidemiology with routinely collected health and environmental data can drive targeted cancer prevention and early detection strategies, particularly in underserved populations.

14:00 – 14:15 **From Prevention to Diagnosis: Understanding Cancer Care Gaps in the Colombian Caribbean Health System.**
Ing. Adalgisa Alcocer, Cancer Caribbean Registry, National Epidemiological Association.

14:15 – 15:00 **From Data to Action: Integrating Biology, Behavior, and Community to Advance Cancer Prevention and Equity**
Professor Brian M. Rivers, PhD, MPH, Morehouse School of Medicine, Atlanta, Georgia

15:00 – 15:30 **Coffee Break and Poster Exhibition**

Session 4: **Artificial Intelligence for Cancer Equity in Low-Resource Settings**
This session will explore the transformative potential of artificial intelligence (AI) to improve cancer care in resource-limited settings by enhancing diagnostic accuracy, treatment decisions, and healthcare efficiency.

15:30 – 15:45 **Who Is Missing from the Data? Genetics, AI, and Cancer Equity in Latin America**
Dr. Jorge Velez Assistant Professor in Data Analytics at the Department of Industrial Engineering.

15:45 – 16:30 **From Multimodal Real-World Data to Precision Oncology for All: Opportunities for Equitable AI**
Professor Francisco Sanchez Vega, PhD, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, New York, New York

16:30 – 17:00 **Closing Remarks for Day 1**

Day 2: Friday, October 30, 2026

8:00 – 8:30 **Check-In and Coffee Reception**

8:30 – 9:30 **Workshop: Leveraging AACR Project GENIE for Collaborative Precision Oncology**
This session will introduce participants to the AACR Project GENIE, a global data-sharing initiative that links genomic and clinical data to advance precision cancer medicine.

Kelli M. Rasmussen, MS, Associate Director, Project GENIE, American Association for Cancer Research, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

9:30 – 10:30 **Panel Session: Emerging Applications of Artificial Intelligence in Cancer Science**
This session will introduce participants to cutting-edge AI applications and explore how these tools can be integrated into cancer research within Colombia's unique healthcare and data infrastructure.

Chair / Moderator:
Oscar Vidal MSc. PhD., Director of the Cancer Research program in the Caribbean (ProCaM)

Panelists:
Kelli M. Rasmussen, MS, Associate Director, Project GENIE, American Association for Cancer Research, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Francisco Sanchez Vega, PhD, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, New York, New York
Brian M. Rivers, PhD, MPH, Morehouse School of Medicine, Atlanta, Georgia
Laura Fejerman, MSc, PhD, UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center, Sacramento, California
Jennifer Guerriero, PhD, Brigham and Women's Hospital/Harvard Cancer Center, Boston, Massachusetts

10:30 – 11:30 **Coffee Break and Poster Competition**

11:30 – 12:30 **Panel Session: Building a Caribbean Colombian Cancer Research and Innovation Agenda**

Chair / Moderator:
Oscar Vidal, MSc, PhD, Director of the Cancer Research Program in the Caribbean (ProCaM)

Panelists:
Kelli M. Rasmussen, MS, Associate Director, Project GENIE, American Association for Cancer Research, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Francisco Sanchez Vega, PhD, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, New York, New York
Brian M. Rivers, PhD, MPH, Morehouse School of Medicine, Atlanta, Georgia
Laura Fejerman, MSc, PhD, UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center, Sacramento, California
Jennifer Guerriero, PhD, Brigham and Women's Hospital/Harvard Cancer Center, Boston, Massachusetts
Local Health and Research Leaders

Perspective
Building on the scientific themes explored throughout the AACR On Campus program, for a **Caribbean Colombian Cancer Research and Innovation Agenda**.

12:30-1:30 **Lunch**

1:30-2:00 **Award Ceremony and Final Remarks**

AACR Distinguished Speakers



Jennifer Guerriero, PhD

Dr. Guerriero is a PhD immunologist and runs an R01/R37/DOD funded independent laboratory at Brigham and Women's Hospital (BWH) / Harvard Cancer Center (HCC) that focuses on developing novel strategies to modulate tumor associated macrophages (TAMs). The Guerriero laboratory works on unraveling the complexity of TAM biology, ontogeny and metabolic regulation with the goal of developing clinically effective strategies to target TAMs to promote T-cell activation and weaken the immune-suppressive TME to improve immunotherapy response rates. As a faculty member of the Breast Oncology Program at DFCI Dr. Guerriero leads and supports translational research to investigate innovative methods to modulate the immune response in breast cancer as well as to better understand the mechanistic basis for sensitivity and resistance to currently available immunotherapies. Dr. Guerriero received a BS in biochemistry from Northeastern University while on a Division I pole vault scholarship. She received a PhD in molecular and cellular biology and immunology and pathology from Stony Brook University. She completed her postdoctoral fellowship at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and joined the faculty in 2017 as an Instructor, before joining Brigham and Women's Hospital as an independent investigator in 2020. Dr. Guerriero has served as an elected Director At-Large for the Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC) and currently serves on the Executive Council. She also serves on the AACR Cancer Immunology Working Group Steering Committee. She is an Associate Editor for the Journal for ImmunoTherapy of Cancer (JITC). Dr. Guerriero is also co-founder of The Myeloid Network, a monthly international seminar series aimed to connect researchers worldwide to promote communication and advancement in the field of myeloid cell biology.



Laura Fejerman, MSc, PhD

Dr. Fejerman is the Placer Breast Cancer Endowed Chair and Professor in the Department of Public Health Sciences, School of Medicine at the University of California Davis. She is the Associate Director for Community Outreach and Engagement and the Director of the Women's Cancer Care and Research Program (WeCARE) at the UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center. She completed her undergraduate degree in Social Anthropology at the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina and earned her PhD in Biological Anthropology and MSc in Human Biology at the University of Oxford, England. Dr. Fejerman's research focuses on the discovery of genetic and non-genetic factors that contribute to breast cancer risk and prognosis. She built the Peruvian Genetics/Genomics of Breast Cancer (PEGEN-BC) Study collaborating with the Instituto Nacional de Enfermedades Neoplasicas, Lima, Peru, which includes ~3,300 women with breast cancer. She also leads the Latin America Genetics and Genomics of

Breast Cancer Consortium (LAGENO-BC) which brings together researchers from the U.S. and Latin American countries to study the genetics of breast cancer in individuals of Latin American heritage. Dr. Fejerman is passionate about cancer prevention and control and dedicates part of her time to the development and implementation of cancer education and navigation programs tailored to underserved and under resourced communities in California.



Brian M. Rivers, MPH, PhD

Dr. Brian Rivers is a Professor and Director of the Cancer Health Equity Institute at Morehouse School of Medicine (MSM). Dr. Rivers is nationally and internationally recognized as a leader in health disparities research and a retired member of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) National Advisory Council on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NACMHD). Dr. Rivers is an active member in the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) community and serves in several ledership capacities. Dr. Rivers is a behavioral scientist with a broad background in implementation science and public health, with specific training and expertise in methodologies commonly used to addressing health disparities. To date, Dr. Rivers has secured more than $30 million in extramural funding through NIH. The goal of Dr. Rivers program of research is to contribute to advancing cancer health equity. More specifically, Dr. Rivers research portfolio has endeavored to expand the application of population-based intervention science to understand how to address cancer health disparities in clinical and community-based settings, using multi-level approaches, such as medical mobile apps and/or Community Health Workers/Patient Navigators. Currently, Dr. Rivers is leading several large randomized controlled trials, funded by Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) and NIH National Institute on Minority Health and Health (NIMHD R01, to evaluate and characterize app usage and acceptability for education and care coordination among African American men diagnosed with prostate cancer. Dr. Rivers is a Multiple-Principal Investigator for the NIH National Cancer Institute (NCI) funded PACHE U54 Cancer Research Partnership between MSM, Tuskegee University, and the University of Alabama-Birmingham O'Neil Comprehensive Cancer Center (UAB CCC). Dr. Rivers also serves as the Director of the Integrating Special Populations Core of the NIH National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) funded Georgia Clinical and Translational Science Alliance. Dr. Rivers has over 350 scientific communications and his work has been presented in a diverse settings including the First Congress on Oncology Clinical Trials (Lagos, Nigeria), Movember International Prostate Cancer Consortium (Queensland, Australia), The Atlantic Magazine, The People vs Cancer, South by Southwest (SXSW) conferences, and the National Press Foundation.



Francisco Sanchez Vega, PhD,
Dr. Francisco Sánchez-Vega is an Associate Attending in the Computational Oncology Service within the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (MSK) in New York, with a secondary appointment in the Colorectal Service of the Department of Surgery. He also serves as Head of Real-World Data Analysis at the Halvorsen Center for Computational Oncology. Dr. Sánchez-Vega earned his PhD in Applied Mathematics and Statistics, specializing in Computational Medicine, from The Johns Hopkins University, followed by postdoctoral training at the National Human Genome Research Institute. Over the past decade, Dr. Sánchez-Vega has led influential pan-cancer studies integrating clinical, genomic, and molecular data to characterize oncogenic processes and disease trajectories. His current research combines computational genomics, machine learning, and mathematical methods for multimodal integration of real-world data to enhance diagnostic accuracy, refine risk stratification, and support personalized treatment decisions across a broad range of tumor types. His group works closely with pathology, surgery, and medical oncology teams at MSK to translate data-driven insights into clinically meaningful advances for cancer care.



Kelli M. Rasmussen, MS
Kelli Rasmussen is the Associate Director of AACR's Project GENIE, where she brings over a decade of expertise in cancer epidemiology, data science, and strategic communication to drive advancements in precision medicine. She is instrumental in managing the day-to-day operations of the Project GENIE Coordinating Center, overseeing collaborative efforts across international institutions, and ensuring the integration of real-world data to enhance clinical decision-making. Prior to joining the AACR, Kelli served as a senior data scientist at the University of Utah's Division of Epidemiology, where she spearheaded innovative projects like the VetConnect Cancer Navigator within the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). Her work has significantly improved cancer care coordination and the use of advanced computational techniques for oncology research. Kelli holds a Master of Science degree in sociology with an emphasis on population health sciences from the University of Utah. Her passion for improving patient outcomes through data-driven insights and fostering multidisciplinary collaboration continues to drive her work at the forefront of oncology research and precision medicine.

UN Distinguished Speakers - Barranquilla



Adalgisa Esther Alcocer Olaciregui is a systems engineer, holds a Master's degree in Epidemiology, and is a field epidemiologist with expertise in public health research, epidemiology, and health management. Her professional work focuses on health situation analysis, territorial health planning, and the use of epidemiological evidence to inform public health decision-making. She has extensive experience in public health administration through her work at the Barranquilla District Health Secretariat, as well as in university teaching and research. Her academic experience includes biostatistics, research methodology, health data analysis, and the supervision of undergraduate and postgraduate research projects. Her scientific contributions span several areas of public health, including breast cancer, cancer survival, mortality, and health risk factors. Her research on breast cancer survival and the economic burden of cancer care contributes to understanding cancer-related challenges in the Colombian Caribbean. Her work integrates epidemiological research, health data analysis, and public health management to support evidence-informed strategies addressing regional health priorities.



Oscar Marino Vidal Orjuela

Dr. Vidal is a cancer scientist and founder and director of the Cancer Research Program (ProCaM) at Universidad del Norte in Barranquilla, Colombia. His research focuses on cancer genomics, molecular epidemiology, and translational cancer research, particularly breast and prostate cancer in the Colombian Caribbean. Through ProCaM, he leads multidisciplinary research integrating molecular, genomic, clinical, and epidemiological approaches to investigate cancer susceptibility, health disparities, and opportunities for precision oncology in Latin American populations. Dr. Vidal earned his PhD in Molecular and Cellular Biology from the University of Sheffield, United Kingdom, and has conducted research and received training at internationally recognized institutions, including the U.S. National Institutes of Health, the Karolinska Institute in Sweden, and the Max Planck Institute in Germany. His research spans cancer biology, molecular signaling, stem cell-based disease modeling, and human genetics, contributing to scientific publications in oncology and related biomedical fields. At Universidad del Norte, Dr. Vidal promotes collaborative cancer research through national and international partnerships, including participation in the National Cancer Institute's Confluence Consortium and LAGENO-BC. His work also focuses on strengthening regional research capacity and advancing the integration of genomics, multi-omics, and artificial intelligence into cancer research, with the ultimate goal of improving scientific understanding and patient outcomes.



Marcela Gálvez

Dr. Gálvez is a physician specializing in medical genetics and serves as Medical and Scientific Director for Latin America at Gencell Pharma. Her work focuses on clinical genetics, genetic epidemiology, and the application of genomic technologies to diagnosis and personalized patient care. She has postgraduate training in medical genetics at Universidad del Rosario in Colombia, a Master's degree in Genetic Epidemiology from Erasmus University Rotterdam in the Netherlands, and additional training in genetic counseling for hereditary cancer at the University of Chile and Clínica Las Condes. Her clinical and scientific experience includes the assessment of genetic disorders and counseling on hereditary cancer predisposition. Her work explores the integration of genetic and molecular information into risk assessment and clinical decision-making, with particular interest in advancing precision medicine strategies. At Gencell Pharma, Dr. Gálvez contributes to initiatives aimed at strengthening diagnostic capabilities in genetics and molecular biology, as well as advancing scientific education among healthcare professionals. Her activities include promoting knowledge of genomics in oncology, hereditary cancer, and molecular testing interpretation, supporting the evidence-based integration of these tools into clinical practice.



Jorge Iván Vélez Valbuena

Dr. Vélez Valbuena is a researcher and faculty member in the Department of Industrial Engineering at Universidad del Norte in Barranquilla, Colombia. His research integrates bioinformatics, population genetics, genetic epidemiology, and machine learning to investigate genetic variation and its relationship with human diseases. His work focuses on developing and applying statistical and computational methods to understand the genetic architecture of complex diseases and advance precision medicine. Dr. Vélez earned his PhD in Medical Sciences from the Australian National University, as well as a Master's degree in Statistics and a degree in Industrial Engineering from the National University of Colombia. His international research experience includes work in statistical genetics and bioinformatics at the U.S. National Human Genome Research Institute. His scientific contributions encompass research on Alzheimer's disease, genetic factors associated with cognitive decline, and computational methods for genomic data analysis. At Universidad del Norte, Dr. Vélez conducts interdisciplinary research on complex diseases, particularly Alzheimer's disease, integrating genetic, molecular, statistical, and computational approaches. His work includes investigating biomarkers and genetic modifiers associated with disease risk and progression. By combining genetics, statistical modeling, and artificial intelligence, his research contributes to advancing the understanding of complex diseases and supporting the development of data-driven approaches to precision medicine.