

HOLLINGS

The Newsletter of Hollings Cancer Center
Medical University of South Carolina

HORIZONS

Winter 2017



A New Era

**Hollings welcomes
new director
Gustavo W. Leone, PhD**

**Training the Next Generation:
A Cancer Research Pipeline**

■ With Gratitude

It is with great pleasure that we, as senior leaders of the Hollings Cancer Center, write to express our gratitude to Anthony J. Alberg, PhD, MPH. Since accepting the position of Interim Director of the Hollings Cancer Center (HCC) in summer 2014, Dr. Alberg has led the HCC with the upmost integrity while fostering the HCC's forward momentum during this time of transition.



We have worked closely with Dr. Alberg for the past three years and have witnessed firsthand his steadfast leadership and unwavering dedication to the Hollings Cancer Center. On several accounts, he has served the Center well beyond the duties of an interim director. He has been instrumental in reorganizing the reporting line of the HCC Director to MUSC leadership, enabling direct oversight for both the clinical and research missions. He also led the recruitment of numerous successful junior and senior faculty members to expand the capacity of population sciences research within the HCC. Because of his leadership, the Cancer Control Program was presented as a full research program for the HCC's competitive renewal of the NCI's Cancer Center Support Grant in 2013.

Dr. Alberg's leadership and service at MUSC began well before his appointment as Interim Director. Since 2006, he has served as Associate Director for Population Sciences, building statewide interactions in cancer control. In addition to his own research endeavors, Dr. Alberg has also been an outstanding ambassador for the Hollings Cancer Center and MUSC.

Dr. Alberg has been a leader on every front. He made a selfless decision to put his academic work on the back burner when he accepted the role of Interim Director, driving the center toward its strategic goals while helping to align the clinical and research missions of the HCC.

It has been a privilege and a pleasure to have served under the leadership of Dr. Alberg. We look forward to his continued success as a nationally and internationally renowned cancer epidemiologist.

Hollings Cancer Center Senior Leadership

A NEW ERA FOR THE HOLLINGS CANCER CENTER

HCC Welcomes New Director

It is with great excitement and anticipation that we announce Gustavo W. Leone, PhD, as the new Director of the Hollings Cancer Center. A renowned cancer researcher, Dr. Leone brings the stature and experience to lead the only NCI-Designated Cancer Center in South Carolina to even greater heights.

Dr. Leone's resume boasts more than an impressive list of leadership roles. A preeminent cancer researcher, his longstanding record of innovative and interdisciplinary methodology offers a fresh approach to fostering the next generation of cancer researchers. In addition to enhancing the training and mentorship programs at the Hollings Cancer Center, Dr. Leone will continue to expand cancer-related research efforts in order to achieve and promote transdisciplinary and translational collaborative research among the HCC's 120 faculty level cancer scientists.

Originally from Uruguay, Dr. Leone spent most of his childhood in Canada, where he studied biochemistry and obtained a PhD in Virology at the University of Calgary. Following his education at Calgary, Dr. Leone completed a postdoctoral fellowship at Duke University in the Department of Genetics. In 1998, he was appointed his first academic position at Ohio State University's Comprehensive Cancer Center, The James. Dr. Leone established his outstanding reputation at The James as he rose in the ranks to hold several key positions. By 2011, Dr. Leone was appointed Director of the Solid Tumor Biology Program, named the Klotz Chair in Cancer Research, and served as Associate Director of Basic Research.

During his tenure, Dr. Leone introduced a number of initiatives that were instrumental in the rise of The James to a top tier cancer center. Bridging basic research and clinical care, he developed multidisciplinary, cancer-focused teams for major disease types such as lung and breast cancer. In order to provide the most comprehensive treatment plan, each team consisted of the full spectrum of the clinical care team, including oncologists, radiation technicians, pathologists, statisticians, and bioinformaticians. Dr. Leone also designed an intermural seed funding mechanism at The James, providing students with a vigorous grant application process that included internal and external reviews by leading cancer researchers.

In one of his most influential initiatives, Dr. Leone expanded mentoring, recruitment, and collaborative research efforts by establishing the Pelotonia Training Program in Cancer Research. The university-wide program funds cancer-related training at all academic levels for undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral students. The program has supported more than 350 students since its inception in 2011, funded in part by the highly successful Pelotonia bike ride. In



DAVID M. MAHVI, MD

Chief of Oncology, Integrated Center of Clinical Excellence

The Hollings Cancer Center welcomes David M. Mahvi, MD, who was appointed Chief of the Oncology Integrated Center of Clinical Excellence in July. Dr. Mahvi manages the clinical activities of the Hollings Cancer Center and will work closely with the new Director, Dr. Gustavo Leone, plus faculty and staff, to further facilitate program development, clinical growth, and patient access. He is also responsible for managing the clinical operation's finances.

A surgical oncologist, Dr. Mahvi joined MUSC from Northwestern University, where he served as the James R. Hines Professor of Surgery and Chief of Gastrointestinal and Oncologic Surgery. During his tenure there, he was also appointed Vice Chair of Clinical Affairs and Interim Chair for the Department of Neurologic Surgery. Dr. Mahvi completed his undergraduate work in microbiology and pre-medicine at the University of Oklahoma and earned his medical degree at MUSC.

Formerly President of Northwestern Medical Group, he was responsible for implementing an enterprise-wide management structure that integrated community- and specialty-based physicians into the health care system. The Hollings Cancer Center is excited about the impact Dr. Mahvi's leadership will have on further cultivating partnerships with care providers, research entities, and advocacy organizations throughout the state that share our mission of reducing the cancer burden in South Carolina.



just eight years, Pelotonia, The James' signature fundraising event, has generated over \$125 million dollars to fund cancer research and student training.

Dr. Leone will continue to conduct laboratory and translational research at MUSC when he assumes his role as Director in March of 2017. Trained in virology and genetics, his research focuses on identifying molecular pathways, signaling, and gene damage that contributes to uncontrolled cell growth, a defining characteristic of cancer. Dr. Leone currently studies how genes outside the tumor cell affect the community of cells around a cancer cell, a research area that may reveal new cancer treatment strategies. He has received numerous recognitions for his contributions to cancer research, and has authored more than 120 peer-reviewed publications. Committed to education, he has mentored not only numerous faculty but also hundreds of trainees ranging from college undergraduates to postdoctoral fellows.

Building on the solid foundation the Center has laid since receiving NCI-designation in 2009, Dr. Leone brings a new era of excellence. The Hollings Cancer Center, with Dr. Leone's leadership and expertise, will continue to strive and succeed in the fight against cancer.

TRAINING THE NEXT GENERATION

A CANCER RESEARCH PIPELINE

As part of an academic medical center, Hollings Cancer Center has always been committed to fostering an educational environment that supports the next generation of cancer physicians and scientists. MUSC has provided nearly two centuries of medical education and training to students across the country and from around the world. Traditionally, MUSC's educational programs focused on students at the graduate level and beyond. Today, the Hollings Cancer Center provides specialized medical and scientific training at virtually every academic level, from high school students to junior investigators seeking their first academic appointment. The following programs demonstrate how HCC is training the next generation.

SC CURE

Through the South Carolina Continuing Umbrella of Research Experience (SC CURE), high school sophomores and juniors learn first-hand about cancer research and health disparities. The Program is offered to underrepresented students at Burke High School, located just blocks from the Hollings Cancer Center. Burke High School serves as one of the largest public high schools in the city and remains a beacon for the African American community.

Focusing on biomedical education and cancer research, SC CURE will provide training to 20 students over a two-year period. SC CURE's curriculum emphasizes cancer biology and cancer health disparities issues that affect South Carolinians. Through traditional classroom-style learning, laboratory-based experiments, and mentoring from leading cancer researchers at HCC, students will discover a spectrum of research opportunities spanning the basic, clinical, and population sciences.

Launching in the spring of 2017, SC CURE will be led by HCC's Dr. Marvella Ford, Associate Director of Cancer



Michael Lilly, MD, Program Director of the K12 Paul Calabresi Clinical & Translational Oncology Training Program

Disparities, and Dr. Dennis Watson, Associate Director of Education and Training. Drs. Ford and Watson have garnered the commitment of nearly 90 faculty cancer scientists to teach, mentor, and lead the students at Burke High School through this unparalleled learning experience.

SC CHEC

To address South Carolina's most prevalent cancers, the South Carolina Cancer Health Equity Consortium (SC CHEC) provides an innovative undergraduate-level summer course on breast, prostate, head/neck, and cervical cancer. Health outcomes, particularly for these types of cancers, are influenced by race, ethnicity, urban/rural residence and socioeconomic position, and biological factors. By introducing students to the factors driving these diseases, SC CHEC prepares undergraduates for a career in cancer research. Eighty juniors and seniors will be selected from the University of South Carolina and three Historically Black Colleges and Universities — Claffin University, South Carolina State University, and Voorhees College — to complete the 14-week career development program at MUSC.

Through engagement with HCC investigators, this inter-institutional program teaches students about the latest advances in biomedical research with an emphasis on the devastating cancer disparities in South Carolina. Topics cover research from all angles, including basic science, clinical and patient-centered care, and population sciences such as public health and epidemiology.

MUSC provides SC CHEC student fellows an educational environment committed to the development and implementation of effective health interventions and therapies. By promoting interest, career development, and commitment from future cancer scientists, MUSC and HCC are positioned to help South Carolina achieve health equity and attain improved health outcomes.



SC CADRE

In 2011, Dr. Marvella Ford was awarded federal support for the National Institute of Health’s Comprehensive Partnerships to Advance Cancer Health Equity, an effort to establish an inter-institutional partnership addressing the state’s underserved populations and underrepresented students. Several contextual and sociocultural factors contribute to South Carolina’s cancer morbidity and mortality rates, reinforcing the need for more focused research in cancer disparities as well as enhanced biomedical and biobehavioral research training. HCC continues this important work through the South Carolina Cancer Disparities Research Center (SC CADRE), a unique educational experience for undergraduate students at South Carolina State University designed to expand cancer disparities research.

The program continues MUSC’s dedication to supporting South Carolina’s underserved populations and reducing health disparities through several educational themes. Students will explore the factors that contribute to these disparities including hormone-related cancers, tumor-associated bioinflammatory responses, genetic and ancestral informative markers, and specific environmental influences that affect South Carolina’s Sea Island/Gullah population.

Students are exposed to cancer disparity-focused research projects, gain access to state-of-the-art shared resource facilities, and are integrated into ongoing faculty-level activities such as research retreats and journal clubs. Together, MUSC and South Carolina State University will facilitate a longitudinal research education pipeline, catalyzing the next generation of cancer researchers.

ITOS T32

One of the most critical points in a young scientist’s career development, postdoctoral training presents many challenges. The Integrative Training in Oncogenic Signaling (ITOS) T32

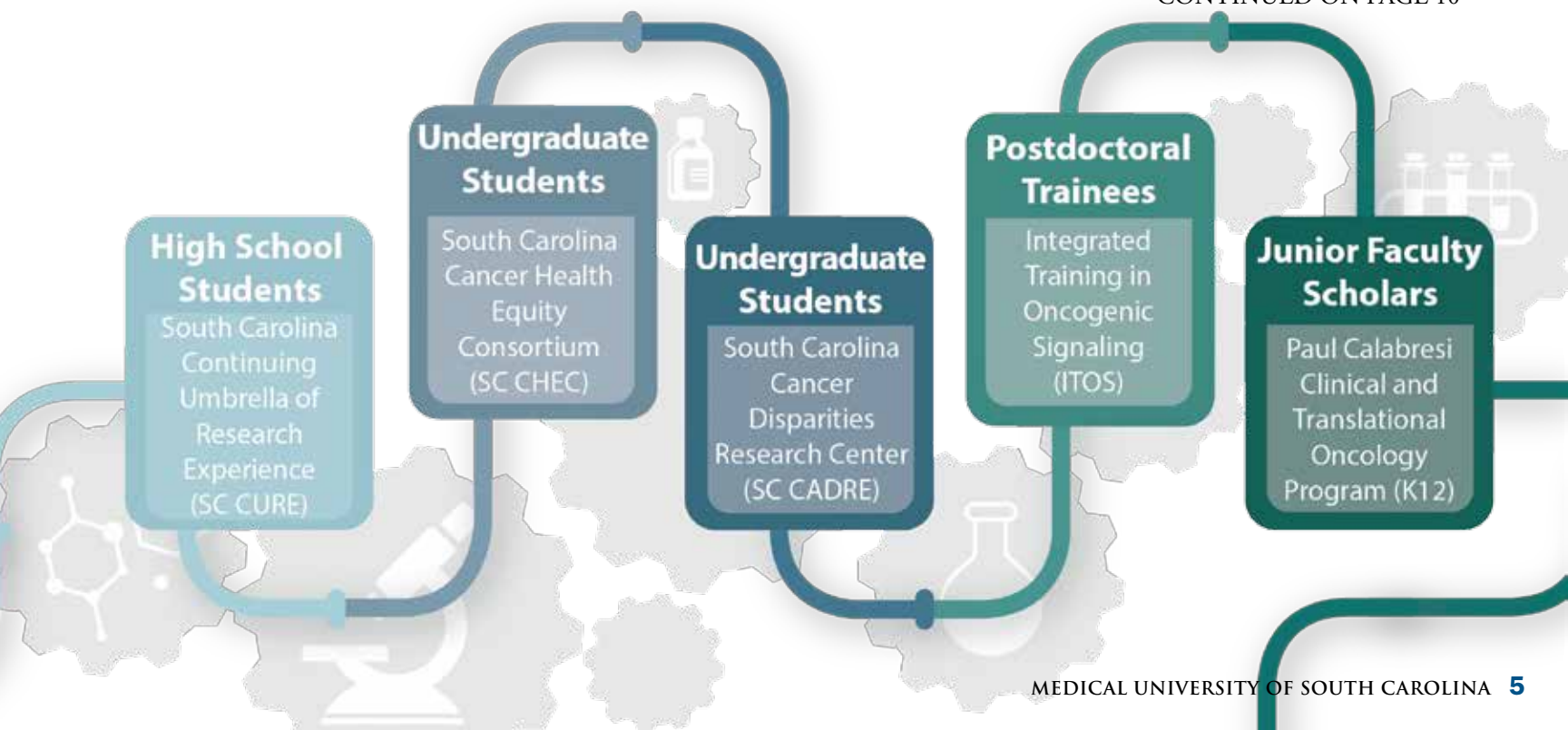
Program, currently in its pilot year, is designed to prepare five junior investigators each year for an independent career in cancer research. Shaped by proactive mentoring and research training in cutting-edge methodology, the ITOS Program offers experiences and opportunities only afforded to selected trainees who will not only witness but engage in the innovative research conducted at the Hollings Cancer Center.

In a state ranked 13th in the nation for cancer mortality with 75% of the state designated as medically underserved, the need to support and maintain career development and training for cancer scientists is more important than ever. Through this education pipeline, students, research fellows, and junior faculty are equipped to conduct transdisciplinary research, prepare competitive grant applications, develop innovative clinical trials, and conduct scientific discoveries that will bring new therapies from the laboratory to the patient’s bedside.

Continuing the pipeline’s focus on the importance of mentorship, the ITOS Program includes a commitment from over 30 HCC faculty members with robust mentoring portfolios. ITOS Fellows receive one to two years of hands-on mentorship and experience in the laboratories of their mentors. ITOS Fellows are given the advantage of a scientifically diverse pool of mentors, ensuring distinct and valuable perspectives that will enhance the overall training experience. Program Faculty have been selected from more than 10 departments, with varying expertise and research interests, giving Fellows the benefit of studying under a mentor who is best able to facilitate their career goals.

The ITOS Program, similar to SC CADRE, offers Fellows engagement in several interactive research activities. To immerse Fellows into the activities of an NCI-Designated Cancer Center, integration into one of the three research programs at Hollings starts on day one. Each program meets monthly and holds regular seminars and journal clubs to facilitate critical thinking and collaboration on promising research topics. In addition to these activities, the ITOS Program is committed to promoting career development through workshops and training sessions on grantsmanship and career transitions. These courses, specifically designed for ITOS Fellows at the Hollings Cancer Center, offer a tailored postdoctoral fellowship program to support and encourage cancer research.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10



WHAT ARE CLINICAL TRIALS?

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Clinical trials test new cancer treatments through a series of steps called phases. If a new treatment is successful in one phase, it will proceed to further testing in the next phase. During the early phases (phases 1 and 2), researchers figure out whether a new treatment is safe, what its side effects are, and the best dose of the new treatment. They also make sure that the treatment has some benefit, such as slowing tumor growth. In the later phase (phase 3), researchers study whether the treatment works better than the current standard therapy. They also compare the safety of the new treatment with that of current treatments. Phase 3 trials include large numbers of people to make sure that the result is valid.

There are also very early (phase 0) and later (phase 4) phase clinical trials. These trials are less common. Phase 0 trials are very small trials that help researchers decide if a new agent should be tested in a phase 1 trial. Phase 4 trials look at long-term safety and effectiveness. They take place after a new treatment has been approved and is on the market.

The following shows the number of patients that take part and the purpose of the most common phases. Although the trial phases are explained in the context of drug treatment trials, the same concepts apply to most types of clinical trials.

Some researchers design trials that combine two phases (phase 1/2 or phase 2/3 trials) in a single study. In this combined design, there is a seamless transition between trial phases, which may allow research questions to be answered more quickly or with fewer patients.

Phase 1

Purpose:

- To find a safe dose
- To decide how the new treatment should be given (by mouth, in a vein, etc.)
- To see how the new treatment affects the human body and fights cancer

Number of people taking part: 15–30

Phase 2

Purpose:

- To determine if the new treatment has an effect on a certain cancer
- To see how the new treatment affects the body and fights cancer

Number of people taking part: Less than 100

Phase 3

Purpose:

- To compare the new treatment (or new use of a treatment) with the current standard treatment

Number of people taking part: From 100 to several thousand



FEATURED CLINICAL TRIALS

Hollings Cancer Center strives to bring its patients cutting edge cancer treatment options. Below are featured trials available at Hollings Cancer Center.

A Phase II Trial of Adjuvant PROSTVAC-V/F in Subjects at High Risk for Relapse after Radical Prostatectomy

NCT02772562

Principal Investigator: Michael Lilly, MD

Study Coordinator: Alan Brisendine

Contact: brisend@muscc.edu

Phase 3 Chemotherapy-Naïve Stage IV or Recurrent Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer (NSCLC) utilizing BMS-936558 and BMS-734016 compounds

NCT02477826

Principal Investigator: John Wrangle, MD, MPH

Study Coordinator: Joni Harris

Contact: harrisj@muscc.edu

A Phase 1b Dose Escalation Study to Assess Safety, Pharmacokinetics, Pharmacodynamics, and Preliminary Efficacy of PLX51107 in Subjects with Advanced Malignancies

NCT02683395

Principal Investigator: Carolyn Britten, MD

Study Coordinator: Alan Brisendine

Contact: brisend@muscc.edu

A Phase IB/II Study of Nivolumab in Combination with ALT-803 In Patients with Pretreated, Advanced or Metastatic Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer

NCT02523469

Principal Investigator: John Wrangle, MD, MPH

Study Coordinator: Joni Harris

Contact: harrisj@muscc.edu

A PERFECT MATCH

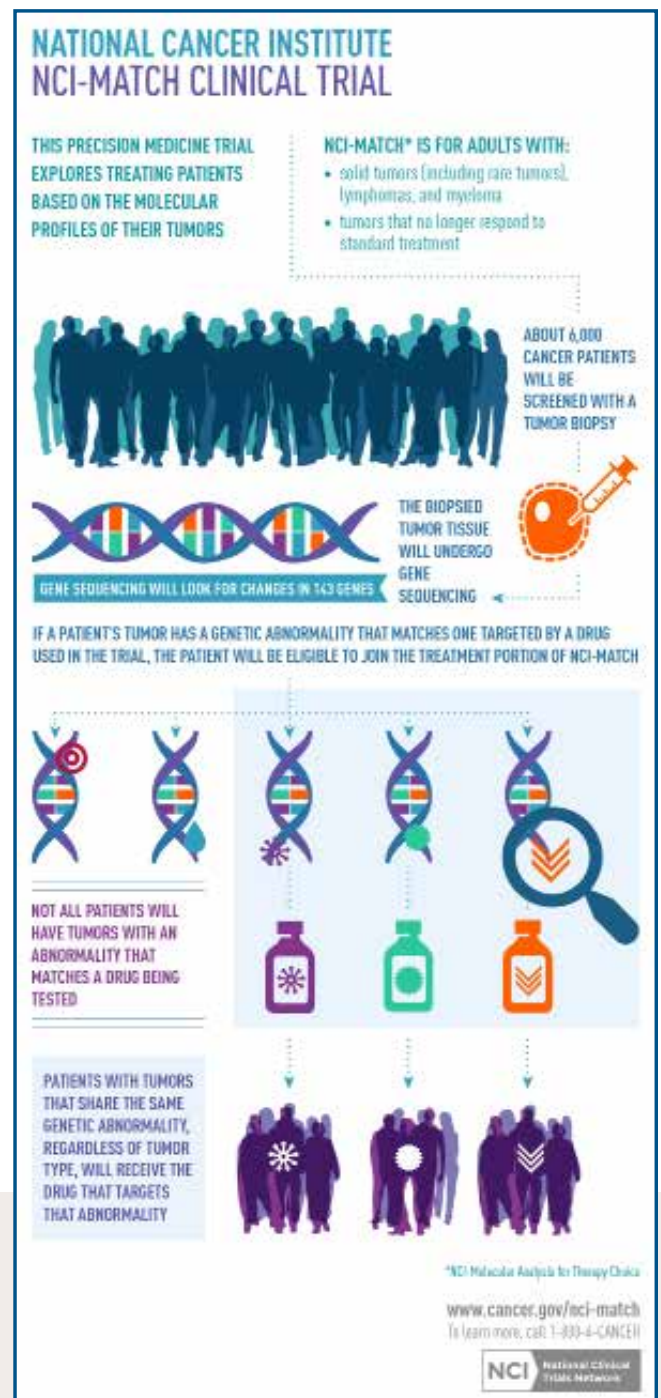
Every treatment that has made a difference in cancer care was once a part of a clinical trial. The Hollings Cancer Center is committed to offering the best treatments available today while searching for even better ones for the future. As an NCI-Designated Cancer Center, Hollings offers clinical trials and therapies not available elsewhere in South Carolina, including MATCH, the Molecular Analysis for Therapy Choice.

Often, the most difficult aspect of clinical trials is eligibility. It can be frustrating and overwhelming for patients to research clinical trials, only to find the specific one needed is not available. Enter MATCH. This trial is a unique study initiated by the National Cancer Institute that pairs patients with a specific trial based on the genetic abnormality of their disease.

For patients, this means MATCH provides a cohort of patients' access to treatment that targets the tumor's genetic abnormality, not the tumor. This is sometimes referred to as a "basket study." As a result, trial participants are not restricted access based on the location of their tumor, which is the traditional approach to treatment of solid tumors. Patients with various diseases, such as breast or colon cancer, could potentially be paired on the same clinical trial if their tumor is detected with the same genetic mutation.

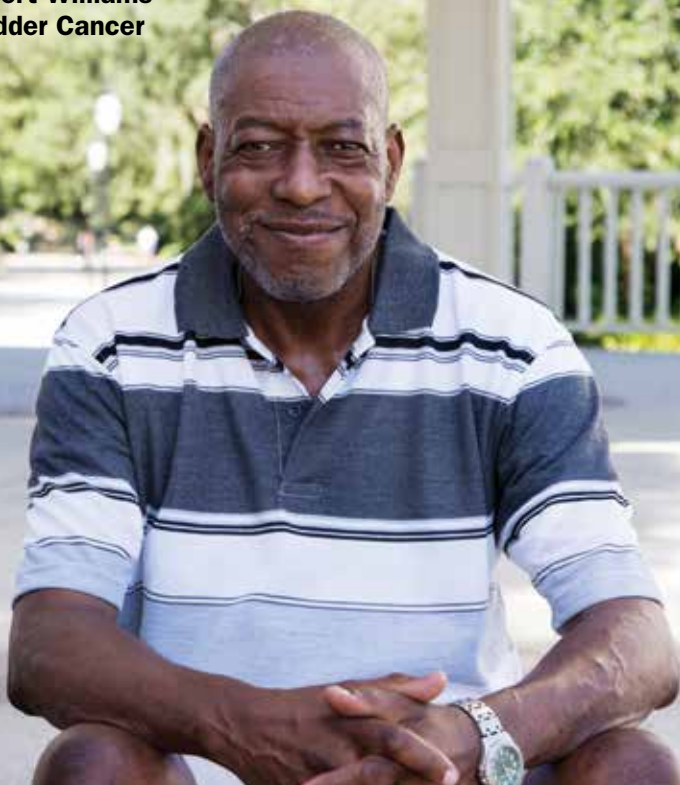
Currently, MATCH consists of more than 20 sub-studies, each treating a different mutation. Since re-opening in 2016, MATCH has also been initiated into Vice President Joe Biden's Cancer Moonshot program.

Learn more about the MATCH trial at
www.cancer.gov/nci-match



Clinical Trials Participant

Hollings Clinical Trials Participant
Robert Williams
 Bladder Cancer



THE NEXT BREAKTHROUGH COULD BE YOURS

Robert Williams was working at MUSC when diagnosed with bladder cancer in 2011. After noticing blood in his urine, he was referred to Dr. Stephen Savage, a HCC urologist who diagnosed the cancer. Soon after, he met Dr. Carolyn Britten, who oversees clinical trials for Hollings. "She told me about the clinical trial and said there would be no guarantee, but asked if I'd like to try it," says Robert. "I said 'yes.' I had nothing to lose," Today, Robert feels that his treatment in the clinical trial has helped him recover and get back to the things that matter most. "At one time, I couldn't walk around the block without getting tired," he says. Now Robert has enough energy to spend time with his grandchildren – he can even chase them around the block.

HCC FACULTY RECOGNIZED AT 2016 CONVOCATION

Gerard Silvestri, MD, MS,

was awarded the MUSC 2016 Distinguished Faculty Service Award, recognizing his exceptional service and contributions to teaching, research, and health care. He is known for this excellence both within and well beyond MUSC. Dr. Silvestri holds the George C. and Margaret M. Hillenbrand Endowed Chair and serves as the vice-chair of Faculty Development. As a lung cancer pulmonologist, Dr. Silvestri has invested much of his career in evaluating and establishing new technologies for the diagnosis and staging of lung cancer. Most recently, Dr. Silvestri was appointed President of The American College of Chest Physicians.



Zihai Li, MD, PhD,

was awarded the peer-nominated Peggy Schachte Research Mentor Award. Dr. Li is the Chair of the Department of Microbiology & Immunology and is a cancer immunologist leading efforts in what many believe may be the most exciting approach to cancer therapy in years. Immunology is a ground-breaking therapy that uses the body's cells and immune system to target cancerous tumors, resulting in treatments that are less damaging to the surrounding healthy cells, tissues, and organs. The award acknowledges Dr. Li's excellence in mentoring faculty on methods of obtaining research support. Dr. Li has mentored students at all academic levels, including postdoctoral students and junior faculty, who have since obtained over \$9 million dollars in research support. He serves as Program Leader of the Cancer Immunology Research Program and Principal Investigator on a multi-institutional research project funded by the National Institutes of Health.



Bei Liu, MD, MPH,

was awarded the Developing Scholar Award at the 2016 MUSC faculty convocation held in August. Dr. Liu, Assistant Professor in the Department of Microbiology & Immunology, is recognized for her scientific contributions to the Cancer Immunology Research Program and toward several interdisciplinary research grants on campus. Since joining MUSC in 2010, Dr. Liu has served as Principal Investigator on two national research projects, receiving funding from the American Cancer Society as well as the National Cancer Institute to study the mechanisms and effects of the protein gp96 on multiple myeloma. Dr. Liu also researches cancer immunotherapy, stem cell-based cancer vaccines, and innate immunity.



SCIENTIFIC FINDINGS MAKE AN IMPACT

The Hollings Cancer Center works to ensure that the research our scientists produce is shared with the larger scientific community. MUSC and HCC use the news release forum EurekAlert!, where media interest generates publication views, or "hits." This service acts as a media outlet for scientific news and findings that have yet to be publicly distributed, offering the opportunity to share breaking findings with scientific media across the nation. Below are some recently featured publications shared on EurekAlert!

1. U.S. study links Increased Ovarian Cancer Risk with Lower Socioeconomic Status in African-American Women

PRIMARY AUTHOR: Anthony J. Alberg, PhD, MPH

SUMMARY: Results of a U.S. study indicate that higher socioeconomic status was associated with lower ovarian cancer risk in African American women. The study showed the risk of ovarian cancer was 29 percent lower among women with a college degree. Additionally, women with a household income of \$75,000 or more were at lower risk of ovarian cancer compared to those with household incomes of \$10,000 or less. The population-based case-control study evaluated women from 10 states.

**11,927
TOTAL HITS!**

2. N-Acetyl Cysteine Improves T Cell Survival and Efficacy of Adoptive T Cell Immunotherapy for Melanoma

PRIMARY AUTHOR: Christina Voelkel-Johnson, PhD

SUMMARY: Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) and Loyola investigators report pre-clinical research showing that culturing T cells in N-acetyl cysteine (NAC) significantly improves persistence, which reduces tumor growth. Rapid in vitro expansion makes T cells susceptible to death. Data show that NAC significantly improves T cell survival by inhibiting the DNA damage marker H2AX. Adding NAC to current melanoma immunotherapy protocols is likely to improve outcomes. This was featured in the September 2016 issue of *Cancer Research*.

**9,643
TOTAL HITS!**

3. Transcriptome Differences in Prostate Cancer Highlight Racial Disparities and Vitamin D

PRIMARY AUTHOR: Sebastiano Gattoni-Celli, MD

SUMMARY: Investigators at the Medical University of South Carolina and Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center report clinical research showing that African-American and European-American men with prostate cancer exhibit significantly different expression of genes associated with immune response and inflammation. Systems-level, RNA analyses support the concept that inflammatory processes may contribute to racial disparities in disease progression and that vitamin D3 supplementation can modulate pro-inflammatory transcripts. This was featured in the July 2016 issue of *Pharmacogenomics*.

**5,472
TOTAL HITS!**

THE ABNEY FOUNDATION: A LEGACY OF GIVING

Since 1996, The Abney Foundation has supported the educational mission of Hollings Cancer Center by providing more than 120 scholarships to students, postdoctoral trainees, and faculty members conducting research in a variety of cancer-related fields. This fall, we were honored to celebrate 20 years of partnership when trustees from The Abney Foundation traveled to Charleston to learn first-hand what scholars have achieved since being awarded the prestigious Abney Scholarship.

“By contributing to training the next generation of cancer researchers who are already making breakthroughs in the fight against cancer and will in the future make discoveries that are unimaginable to us now, the impact of The Abney Foundation funding is immeasurable.”

*-Anthony J. Alberg, PhD, MPH
Interim Director, Hollings Cancer Center and Abney Scholar Mentor*

In addition to touring laboratories and exploring the latest developments in pharmacology, immunotherapy, and pathology, these honored guests also had the opportunity to meet with five past Abney Scholars. They shared their accomplishments and experiences in the laboratory, clinic, and the community, giving glowing tribute and thanks to the Abney Foundation for their support.

This visit served as an opportunity to celebrate the progress achieved over the past two decades, while providing attendees with an inside look at how they are supporting the next generation of ground-breaking work in cancer care and research. Over the past two decades, The Abney Foundation has given more than \$7 million in support of the Abney Scholars Program, as well as providing additional resources for research space and facilities. “By contributing to training the next generation of cancer researchers who are already making breakthroughs in the fight against cancer and will in the future make discoveries that are unimaginable to us now, the impact of The Abney Foundation funding is immeasurable,” shared Anthony J. Alberg, PhD, MPH.





**Thank you to all signature sponsors of the
9th annual Gourmet & Grapes:**























Gourmet & Grapes offers five-diamond service during a variety of events including a black-tie dinner, a culinary demonstration, our signature Wine Odyssey Gala featuring celebrated chefs and a lively auction, the farewell brunch, and more. This annual event brings together beloved chefs from the Lowcountry and beyond, as well as, celebrated wineries from around the world to raise support for Hollings Cancer Center’s research and patient care programs. In its first eight years, Gourmet & Grapes raised a record breaking \$1.5 million. Visit the Gourmet & Grapes social media channels to find out how much was raised in 2017, view event photos, and to receive information about our 10th annual event in 2018!


 @gourmetgrapes


 @hollingscancercenter


 @muschollings

THE LINDA FLOYD FORUM ON WOMEN'S CANCERS

Women from around the Lowcountry gathered at Charles Towne Landing last spring for an informative, open conversation about cancer at the One-in-Three Afternoon Tea, the first annual Linda Floyd Forum on Women's Cancers.

Linda Floyd was one of 55,000 women diagnosed with endometrial cancer in 2007. After receiving treatment at Hollings Cancer Center and successfully battling her disease, Linda became an advocate for raising awareness and funding to fight women's cancers. Together, Linda and her husband, Dalton, developed a vision of bringing women together from varying backgrounds and communities to empower, encourage, and inform them about cancer. The couple dreamed of an event that would provide the latest in prevention and treatment, practical

"Our care here at MUSC does not end at the corner of Calhoun and Ashley."

- Natalie Hahn



Save the Date • May 3, 2017

tips that women could easily implement, and information to address the concerns women may face. After talking with the team at Hollings, Linda and Dalton Floyd made a generous donation to establish the Linda Floyd Forum on Women's Cancers, and from their vision and generosity, the event was born.

As more than 200 attendees arrived, the program began with a panel of experts from the Hollings Cancer Center who shared their expertise on women's cancers.

Guests were educated on the importance of knowing one's family health history to determine genetic risk factors, the proper age to begin screenings, the importance of the HPV vaccine, and myth-busting tips. In addition to providing a wealth of practical information, this discussion offered an opportunity for attendees to learn about the multi-disciplinary approach that Hollings uses to address each cancer diagnosis.

When the panel discussion concluded,

ovarian cancer survivor and MUSC Gift Administrator Natalie Hahn shared her cancer journey story. Diagnosed at 19, Natalie discussed the treatment and care she received – and the lessons learned along the way. Hahn spoke about the importance of screenings and preventive measures and praised how Hollings' staff members provided care beyond the walls of the treatment rooms. "Our care here at MUSC does not end at the corner of Calhoun and Ashley," said Natalie.

Armed with information and resources, the women adjourned to continue their conversations and to empower peers in their communities, encouraging one another to finally make a screening appointment. Hollings is most grateful to the Floyds for their vision and generosity in establishing this event and is confident that lives will be changed through the information shared. Building on the success of this inaugural event, Hollings Cancer Center looks forward to the next gathering on May 3rd at Founders Hall.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

K12

Faculty appointments with protected time for junior clinical investigators are increasingly difficult to obtain. However, Hollings Cancer Center leadership has made preparing junior faculty for academia a vital component of the education pipeline through the support of a highly competitive grant to fund a formal program to train and mentor junior physician scientists.

The Paul Calabresi Clinical & Translational Oncology Training (K12) Program focuses on three components: cancer drug development, immunotherapy, and cancer population sciences. Each trainee participant, known as a Calabresi Scholar, is provided the time and resources to conduct research and clinical care alongside an expert mentoring team. In order to properly prepare translational research investigators, the Program provides shared research resources, a diverse and growing patient population, a Master of Science in Clinical Research program, and a core of faculty mentors, comprised of physician and laboratory-based scientists, who have well-established track records of funding for collaborative translational research.

Upon completion of the two-year program, Scholars will have designed and initiated their own clinical trial or translational research study, published an article in a peer-reviewed journal, and submitted a grant application for funding support. Each milestone represents an essential skill for Scholars entering academic medicine. Scholars will bridge the knowledge derived from the laboratory and clinic and establishing new, effective cancer interventions among the many challenges of establishing new standards of cancer care, prevention, and control.

In a state ranked 13th in the nation for cancer mortality with 75% of the state designated as medically underserved, the need to support and maintain career development and training for cancer scientists is more important than ever. Through this education pipeline, students, research fellows, and junior faculty are equipped to conduct transdisciplinary research, prepare competitive grant applications, develop innovative clinical trials, and conduct scientific discoveries that will bring new therapies from the laboratory to the patient's bedside.

SURVIVOR'S FIT CLUB

A cancer diagnosis can lead to a long, often tough time of treatment and uncertainty. Fortunately, an increasing number of patients find themselves entering a new phase – one of celebration – as they become survivors. Yet many find themselves asking, “Now what?”

This is a question that the Hollings Cancer Center is answering through the Survivors' Fit Club, a program led by the MUSC Wellness Center. Since its launch in February 2016, 32 breast cancer survivors have enrolled in this 10-week program focusing on exercise, nutrition, and behavioral change. Its aim is to improve cardiovascular fitness, muscle strength, and body composition to decrease fatigue, anxiety, and depression while improving self-esteem.

The Survivors' Fit Club addresses many quality of life factors that affect cancer survivors. They teach participants how to implement a new, healthy lifestyle that may have long term effects on their cancer journey. Participants have reported improved balance, confidence, and energy, and decreased weight. In the most recent program, participants lost a combined 60 pounds of fat and gained nearly 24 pounds of muscle. Eighty percent of participants in the first session implemented lifestyle changes that allow them to exercise moderately three or more days per week.

Thanks to this program, participants are not only able to celebrate beating cancer but are also able to live healthier, fuller lives. By placing a priority on their health, fitness, and eating habits, these women have the opportunity to reduce the risk of cancer recurrence while gaining confidence and reclaiming control of their lives. One participant shared, “The nutrition education and exercise were very important in making lifestyle changes that I plan to continue. The staff was wonderful, pushing us to see what we were capable of accomplishing physically. I came to care about the other members of the group and looked forward to every session. I am so thankful for the program in its effort to prevent recurrence of cancer through lifestyle changes.”



The Survivors' Fit Club is supported by the Racquets for Recovery annual tennis tournament hosted by the Pine Forest Ladies Tennis Association. Established in 2005, Racquets for Recovery has raised more than \$164,000 to support the mission of Hollings Cancer Center and local breast cancer patients. Co-founders Shirley Hunter and Kelley Johnson share how their support of Hollings has empowered them: “Like many, we have friends and family on and off the court who battle breast cancer. In friendship, we take time to share and celebrate the joy of each other's lives.”

The Hollings Cancer Center and MUSC Wellness Center are proud to support the fourth session of the Survivors' Fit Club beginning February 2017.



ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL HCC GOLF TOURNAMENT

The 21st Annual Hollings Cancer Center Golf Tournament was held September 19, 2016, at Osprey Point Golf Course at Kiawah Island Golf Resort. A total of 116 golfers teed up to raise over \$138,000 to support clinical trials, research, and patient care programs. Special thanks to our title sponsor, Firefly Distillery, for providing refreshments and extra fun on the course, and to sponsors Rick Hendrick BMW, Southern Eagle, and Charles Schwab for adding extra competition with two hole-in-one contests and a longest drive challenge. Thank you to all our corporate and individual sponsors and golfers for making this tournament such a success. We hope to see you on the links next year!

■ New Faculty

Daniel B. Aruch, MD

Assistant Professor
Department of Medicine
Division of Hematology/Oncology
From Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai

David M. Cachia, MD, MRCP

Assistant Professor
Department of Neurosurgery
From M.D. Anderson Cancer Center

Antonio Giordano, MD, PhD

Assistant Professor
Department of Medicine
Division of Hematology/Oncology
From M.D. Anderson Cancer Center

Brian T. Hess, MD

Assistant Professor
Department of Medicine
From Washington University

Antonis Kourtidis, PhD

Assistant Professor
Department of Regenerative Medicine & Cell Biology
From The Mayo Clinic

Anand S. Mehta, Dphil

Professor
Department of Cell & Molecular Pharmacology
and Experimental Therapeutics
SmartState Endowed Chair in Proteomic Biomarkers
From Drexel University

Stephane Meystre, MD, PhD

Associate Professor
Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences
From University of Utah

Amarendra K. Neppalli, MD, MPH

Assistant Professor
Department of Medicine
Division of Hematology/Oncology
From Stanford University

Adriana Olar, MD

Assistant Professor
Department of Pathology & Laboratory Medicine
From M.D. Anderson Cancer Center

Rinah I. Shopnick, DO

Associate Professor
Department of Medicine
From Cancer and Blood Specialists of Nevada;
Touro University

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For more information on how you can leave your legacy, please contact:

Linda Cox
Director of Planned Giving, MUSC
843-792-9562 or CoxL@muscc.edu

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