

2024 American Cancer Society National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable
ANNUAL MEETING BIOGRAPHIES

Nkem Akinsoto, MSc-PH

Nkem Akinsoto, MSc-PH, is the Assistant Director at UW Medicine Primary Care and Population Health. She provides programmatic oversight for programs to support UW Medicine's shift to wellness, disease prevention, and achieving population health goals. Nkem is responsible for implementing strategies to achieve success in key population health-focused metrics at the UW Medicine Primary Care Clinics. She monitors the progress of priority quality measures and maintains visibility for their reporting. Nkem has several years of experience working in health care and population health. Since 2016, she has been in various positions leading Process and Quality Improvement project teams, and instrumental in winning awards and grants recognizing and supporting UW Medicine's Population Health programs.



Samar Aslam, MD

Samar Aslam, MD, is a dedicated and board-certified Family Medicine Physician with a passion for providing comprehensive healthcare to individuals and families. With more than seven years of professional experience, Dr. Aslam has earned a reputation for her commitment to patient well-being and her expertise in various facets of medicine. Having completed her Family Medicine residency at South Nassau Communities Hospital, Dr. Aslam possesses a diverse range of clinical skills and knowledge. Her practice is marked by a deep-seated interest in women's health, mental wellness, and geriatric care. She is dedicated to addressing the unique healthcare needs of her patients at every stage of life.



Priti Bandi, PhD

Priti Bandi, PhD, is Scientific Director leads the cancer risk factors and screening research team in the Surveillance & Health Equity Science department at the American Cancer Society. She received her MS (2004) in Population Health Sciences from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a PhD (2019) in Public Health from the New York University School of Global Public Health. She studies patterns of major modifiable cancer risk factors and screenings, and how they relate to evolving patterns of cancer incidence and mortality, with a focus on social inequities in these outcomes. Bandi leads the team that updates and publishes the Cancer Prevention & Early Detection (CPEd) Facts & Figures bi-annually and is a contributing author to other ACS surveillance publications.

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Emily Bell, MPH

Emily Bell, MPH, provides vision and strategic direction for the ACS NCCRT's events and programmatic work as one of its Directors. Having worked in the field of cancer prevention and control for over 12 years, she is passionate about improving the quality of health and health care for underrepresented communities. Emily received her master's in public health from Boston University and lives in Salem, Massachusetts with her husband and two young children.



Rebecca Birch

Rebecca Birch is the Director for State Policy & Advocacy at Susan G. Komen and leads Komen's state legislative and policy work in support of its mission – to save lives by meeting the most critical needs in our communities and investing in breakthrough research to prevent and cure breast cancer. In her role, she works with her team to advance key legislative priorities, develop and execute strategic advocacy campaigns and provide training and support to engage advocates and build advocacy capacity. Rebecca also builds and fosters relationships with partner organizations, stakeholder coalitions and policymakers. She joined Komen in 2007 as a Public Policy Specialist.



Terry Birkhoff

Terry Birkhoff provides Executive Management services for Taking Aim at Cancer in Louisiana, Inc. (TACL), a non-profit, statewide cancer collaborative whose mission is to reduce cancer mortality by eliminating racial disparities and health inequities. She delivers executive level support to the governing board and the 4 working committees and oversees the day-to-day operations of TACL.

Terry also had a 20-year career with the American Cancer Society (ACS) where she worked in various positions focused on cancer control efforts and strategies. During her last four years with ACS, she worked with clinicians at Federally Qualified Health Centers in three southern states, including Louisiana, to help increase their cancer screening rates. Terry's experience in the cancer field changed when she found herself in a caregiver position for her mother 11 years ago when she was diagnosed with stage 3 Colorectal Cancer. The realization of the critical role of navigation services and resources for cancer patients became a lived experience instead of just a concept. She has been married to her husband Neil for 32 year and enjoys her two pets, Abigail and Molly.



LaToya Brave Heart, MPH

LaToya Brave Heart, MPH, is a dedicated professional with a Master of Public Health and has a passion for helping those who are facing adversity. With extensive experience, including roles as a Program Manager for the Comprehensive Cancer Control Program, Family Service Coordinator/Assistant Head Start Director, and Health Technician, LaToya has gained valuable insights into public health and community service. She is committed to utilizing her education and experience to contribute to public health and make a meaningful difference in the lives of others. Her strong leadership, strategic thinking, and unwavering dedication to making a positive impact in the field of public health are evident in her work and commitment to serving the community.



Andrea Cercek, MD

Andrea Cercek, MD, is a board-certified medical oncologist who specializes in the treatment of patients with gastrointestinal cancers, particularly colorectal and appendix cancer. Her research focus is on regional therapies as well the development of new therapies for patients, including molecular-based therapies. She is the founder and co-director of the Center for Young Onset Colorectal Cancer which has a dual focus of a dedicated research center as well as coordinated clinical care for young adults with colorectal cancer.



Paula Chambers

Paula Chambers is a 9-year colorectal cancer survivor who has used her experience to advocate for change in colorectal cancer screenings and survivorship support. Her work focuses on improving prevention, early detection, and outcomes, particularly for marginalized communities, including communities of color and LGBTQ+ individuals, with a special emphasis on young onset survivors. Paula collaborates with healthcare providers and policymakers to address disparities in cancer care, sharing her story to inspire meaningful change and improve access for those most affected by colorectal cancer.

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Dionne Christopher, PMP

Dionne Christopher, PMP, is the Senior Program Manager for Screen & Prevention at the Colorectal Cancer Alliance. She focuses on improving cancer screening and prevention efforts to lower mortality rates. With over sixteen years of experience at the American Cancer Society, she was a project manager for the National Colorectal and Lung Cancer Roundtables, where she developed resources and built partnerships in cancer advocacy. Ms. Christopher has also been a member of various advisory boards in Atlanta. She holds a bachelor's degree in human resources management from Saint Leo University and has earned a Project Management Professional certification.



Elizabeth Ciemins, PhD, MPH, MA

Elizabeth Ciemins, PhD, MPH, MA, is senior vice president of Research and Analytics at AMGA. Dr. Ciemins helps AMGA support member organizations on their journeys from volume- to value-based care through data-driven insights derived from targeted analytics and implementation science-based research projects. Dr. Ciemins provides oversight for quantitative and mixed methods research projects, measure development and testing, analytics support for disease-specific best practices learning collaboratives, and research projects in partnership with AMGA members, academic institutions, and other partners. She is an expert on balancing lean process improvement methods with insights from complexity science.

Dr. Ciemins received a PhD in research and policy analysis from the school of public health at UC Berkeley, an MPH in population health and epidemiology and an MA in African area studies with a focus on healthcare, from UCLA. She was Peace Corps volunteer in Niger, West Africa working in maternal and child health.



Christopher R. Cogle, MD

Christopher R. Cogle, MD, is Chief Medical Officer for Florida Medicaid, Professor at the University of Florida, and Founding Director of the Florida Health Policy Leadership Academy at the Bob Graham Center for Public Service. His work spans pioneering discoveries in blood stem cells to first-in-human clinical trials, alongside shaping innovative health policies. Dr. Cogle's recognitions by the Harvard Business School, Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, Milbank Memorial Fund, and the National Academy of Medicine Emerging Leaders in Health and Medicine Fellowship highlight his impact in bridging the gap between research and societal change.



Melinda (Mindy) Conklin, MS, MEd,

Melinda (Mindy) Conklin, MS, MEd, has worked in the health and wellness industry for 30 years. She has a master's degree from Virginia Tech in Human Development and a master's degree in counseling from Virginia Commonwealth University. Melinda lost her young husband to colorectal cancer in 2011. After her loss, she left her career as a mental health clinician, and she founded Hitting Cancer Below the Belt - a nonprofit organization dedicated to colon health and colorectal cancer prevention.

Melinda's personal and professional experience in the field of mental, emotional, and physical wellness has prepared her to identify community needs and has produced a strong skill set which encompasses the ability to create and bridge resources which positively impacts community health. Hitting Cancer Below the Belt (HCB2) began serving the Richmond community in 2013 and continues to expand its messages and services across the Commonwealth of Virginia.



Gloria Coronado, PhD

Gloria Coronado, PhD, is an epidemiologist, health disparities researcher, and Associate Director for Population Sciences at the University of Arizona Cancer Center and Professor in the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics at the University of Arizona. She has more than 25 years of experience developing and testing community- and practice-based innovations and leading health disparities research programs in multiple healthcare settings. A key focus of her research centers on leveraging electronic health record information and using risk-stratification tools to deliver appropriate preventive care services, including colorectal cancer screening and follow-up, to patients who may benefit the most. Through this research, she has built successful collaborations with integrated delivery systems, federally qualified health centers, Medicaid health plans, and rural practices. A hallmark of Dr. Coronado's research is its focus on underrepresented racial and ethnic populations. Dr. Coronado is a member of the Board of Scientific Advisors for the National Cancer Institute, and she previously served on the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine Committee on Improving Representation in Clinical Trials and Research.

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Anjee Davis, MPAA

Anjee Davis, MPAA, president of Fight Colorectal Cancer (Fight CRC), has championed growth and impact since joining in 2011. She has expanded the organization's grassroots movement, engaging thousands nationwide, and launched the One Million Strong campaign, inspiring the #strongarmselfie movement. Her advocacy contributed to the lowering of the recommended colorectal cancer screening age from 50 to 45 in 2021, and she is actively working to eliminate out-of-pocket costs for follow-up colonoscopies after positive tests.

Anjee has led international collaborations focusing on early-onset colorectal cancer and immunotherapy, aligning survivors and advocates with the Cancer Moonshot initiative. Her efforts were instrumental in passing the Removing Barriers to Colorectal Cancer Screening Act in 2020 and in founding the State-by-State Catalyst Program, which now supports 12 states with grassroots funding.

She serves on multiple advisory councils and boards, including the NCI's Clinical Trials and Translational Research Advisory Committee, chaired the NCI's Council of Research Advocates for two terms, and was appointed to the President's Cancer Panel. Anjee's work has been recognized with honors such as the Betty Anne Moore Community Leadership Award and the Prevent Cancer Foundation's Laurel Award for Advocacy. Previously, she directed a statewide awareness and screening initiative at the University of South Carolina's Center for Colon Cancer Research and managed a basic science cohort funded by NIH. Anjee holds a bachelor's degree from Southwest Missouri State University and a Master of Public Policy Administration from the University of Missouri St. Louis.



Kyle DeLeon

Kyle DeLeon is the senior operations manager of state & local advocacy at American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. He proudly draws upon his background in grassroots organizing, campaign management, and experience as a testicular cancer survivor to continue the fight for a more equitable future for all.

In his free time, Kyle enjoys cooking, foresting, strength training, and spending time with his fabulous cat, Goldie.

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Neeraj Deshpande, MPH, MHA, MBBS

Neeraj Deshpande, MPH, MHA, MBBS, has been with HRSA's Quality Division as a Public Health Analyst since July 2020. Previously he has practiced as a physician in India and the UK and holds a dual master's in public health and health administration. He has experience working in the public and private sector and has worked in the areas of TB, HIV, and Maternal and Child Health.



Yla Flores

Yla Flores works as a realtor for residential and commercial properties. She was diagnosed with stage III colon cancer without symptoms and with no family history in 2020 just as the world was shutting down because of COVID-19. She went through six months of chemotherapy and have been doing well. Yla is a Fight Colorectal Cancer Advocate, and she also partners with Exact Sciences, the makers of Cologuard, which detected her cancer. She is passionate about raising awareness about colorectal cancer.



Nikki Hayes, MPH

Nikki Hayes, MPH, has been with the CDC's Division of Cancer Prevention and Control (DCPC) in the agency's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (NCCDPHP) since 2002. Before joining CDC, she was a Biologist in the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), where she established and managed the Institute's DNA Sequencing Core Facility for more than 10 years. Nikki is currently the Chief of the DCPC Comprehensive Cancer Control Branch and is responsible for the successful implementation of one of the agency's flagship, multi-million-dollar, cancer prevention and control programs, the National Comprehensive Cancer Control Program (NCCCP). She also manages several other programs that focus on improving the quality of life of cancer survivors, particularly young breast cancer survivors and metastatic breast cancer patients; and advancing commercial tobacco use prevention and cancer prevention in populations experiencing tobacco- and cancer-related health disparities. Nikki has published a number of peer-reviewed manuscripts and presented to national audiences on topics that include disparities in cancer-health outcomes; increasing population-based cancer screening; cancer control planning and implementation; and COVID-19 incidence in disparate populations.

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Esther Hyun

Esther Hyun was diagnosed with stage 4 colorectal cancer at 36 with no family history of colorectal cancer and after many of her symptoms were dismissed by herself and her medical providers. She underwent chemotherapy, chemoradiation, and multiple surgeries, while continuing to work as a lawyer for a global company and parent two young children. Esther is now a speaker that advocates for colorectal cancer awareness and earlier preventative screenings. She also serves as a Board Member of Colon Cancer Stars, Research Advocate with Fight Colorectal Cancer, and shares updates about her cancer journey and life as a parent with cancer on Instagram @parentingwithcancer.



Steven Itzkowitz, MD, FACP, FACG

Steven Itzkowitz, MD, FACP, FACG, is a Professor of Medicine, Oncological Sciences, and Medical Education, and Director of the Gastroenterology Fellowship Program at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. Dr. Itzkowitz is Chair of the National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable and past Co-Chair of its Family History/Early Age Onset Task Group. He is a member of the President's Cancer Panel Subcommittee on Colorectal Cancer Screening. He is a former Chair of the Gastrointestinal Oncology Section of the American Gastroenterological Association, and past Co-Chair of the New York Citywide Colon Cancer Control Coalition ("C5 Coalition"). His research has focused on reducing disparities in colorectal cancer screening in the general population, developing new non-invasive stool DNA tests to screen for colon cancer, and detecting and preventing colon cancer in high-risk individuals: inflammatory bowel disease and hereditary syndromes. His team at Mount Sinai was among the first in the nation to demonstrate the effectiveness of patient navigation to enhance screening colonoscopy adherence, proving also that patient navigation is cost effective. Since 2014 he has been an integral part of the medical school's efforts to enhance anti-racism education and training for students, trainees and faculty.



Djenaba A. Joseph, MD, MPH,

Djenaba A. Joseph, MD, MPH, is board certified in internal medicine and is a Captain in the Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service. She joined the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as an Epidemic Intelligence Service Officer in the Division of Cancer Prevention and Control (DCPC) from 2005–2007. She remained in DCPC as a medical officer (2007 – 2009) and was Medical Director of CDC’s Colorectal Cancer Control Program from 2009 – 2021. She was the Chief Medical Officer at the Arcadia Community Based Outpatient Clinic in the Atlanta VA Medical System from 2021 – 2022. She returned to CDC and is currently the Branch Chief of the Program Services Branch, DCPC.

Dr. Joseph completed her undergraduate education at the University of Michigan, earned her medical degree from the University of Michigan’s Medical School, and a master’s in public health from the University of Michigan, School of Public Health. She completed her residency in general internal medicine at St. Joseph’s Mercy Hospital in Ann Arbor, Michigan.



Rebecca Kaltman, MD

Rebecca Kaltman, MD, is a breast medical oncologist and the inaugural Executive Director of the Saville Cancer Screening and Prevention Center at the Inova Schar Cancer Institute. She obtained her undergraduate honors degree from the University of Michigan followed by her medical degree at MCP-Hahnemann University School of Medicine. She then trained in internal medicine and medical oncology at the University of Pennsylvania and served on the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine as a breast oncologist and clinical researcher in the Rena Rowan Breast Center, part of the Abramson Cancer Center of the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Kaltman has focused her career thus far in caring for patients with breast cancer and those with hereditary cancer syndromes. In her role at Inova, she is expanding the reach of cancer prevention and early detection services for Northern Virginia and beyond. She was named to the Health Policy Committee (HPC) of ASCO (American Society of Clinical Oncology) for a three-year appointment and serves in a leadership role on the Virginia Breast Cancer Taskforce within CACV (Cancer Action Coalition of Virginia).



John W. Kennedy, MD

John W. Kennedy, MD, is president, AMGA Foundation, and chief medical officer, AMGA. Dr. Kennedy previously served as division director of endocrinology at Geisinger Health System in Danville, PA, where he led the clinical, education, research, and quality program development and expansion for the health system. Prior to his role at Geisinger, Dr. Kennedy served as managing partner at Diabetes & Endocrinology Associates, P.A., in Hamilton, NJ. There, he transitioned the hospital-owned group into a four-physician specialty private practice.

Dr. Kennedy is board certified in endocrinology, diabetes, and metabolism. He received his Doctor of Medicine degree from Jefferson Medical College, now the Sidney Kimmel Medical College, in Philadelphia, PA. He performed his internal medicine residency at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital in Philadelphia, PA, and his fellowship in diabetes, endocrinology and metabolism at the Joslin Diabetes Center and Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston, MA. Dr. Kennedy graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Dartmouth College in Hanover, NH, where he received his Bachelor of Arts degree in chemistry.



Mark W. Kennedy, MBA

Mark W. Kennedy, MBA, is a Senior Program Manager in the Chronic Disease Prevention and Control Division at the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC). In this role, Mark is leading the creation and implementation of the first cancer early detection workplan for the Commission and the City of Boston. He spent 13 years developing his knowledge of cancer at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. Before coming to BPHC, he served as Executive Director at the Massachusetts Prostate Cancer Coalition and Director of National Education and Outreach at the Prostate Health Education Network. In addition to his work at the Commission, Mark is the Boston Regional Leader for the Massachusetts Comprehensive Cancer Prevention and Control Coalition (MCCC) for the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and serves on the Steering Committee. Mark also co-chairs the Community Advisory Committee for the Oncology Equity Alliance (OEA) at Boston Medical Center and is a member of the Community Coalition for Equity in Research (CCER), part of the Community Engagement Program at Harvard Catalyst. Mark is faculty for 'Shared Decision-Making: Essential Skills for Prostate, Lung and Breast Cancer Screening', an online CME at the Massachusetts Medical Society. Mark received his Executive MBA from Northeastern University and teaches graduate and undergraduate courses at Regis College and Emerson College.



Peter S. Liang, MD, MPH

Peter S. Liang, MD, MPH, is an Assistant Professor of Medicine and Population Health at the NYU Grossman School of Medicine and an attending gastroenterologist at the VA New York Harbor Health Care System Manhattan Medical Center. Dr. Liang's primary research interest is colorectal cancer prevention. He studies sociodemographic and geographic disparities in colorectal cancer screening and outcomes, the comparative effectiveness of different screening strategies, novel methods to increase screening adherence, and early-onset colorectal cancer. His research has been supported by the National Cancer Institute, National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities, Veterans Health Administration, American Gastroenterological Association, American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy, New York Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy, ReMission Foundation, and industry.



Xavier Llor, MD, PhD

Xavier Llor, MD, PhD, obtained his medical doctorate from the Autonomous University Barcelona and then trained in basic research and Internal Medicine at the University of Chicago and completed his GI fellowship at the University of Illinois at Chicago. He complemented his training with a PhD degree in molecular biology from the University of Barcelona. A clinically active gastroenterologist, Dr. Llor's research and clinical interests relate to gastrointestinal cancer prevention. He has a very active basic and translational research program mainly focusing on three different aspects of gastrointestinal cancer: hereditary and familial forms, screening and prevention, and disparities. This work has resulted in over 100 scientific publications in this field. He has made seminal contributions to the fields of Lynch syndrome and other non-polyposis syndromic colorectal cancer cases, diffuse gastric and lobular breast cancer syndrome (DGLBC), and systematic approaches to inherited cancers.

Dr. Llor is Chair of Practice Implementation & Professional Education (PEPI) Health Systems of the American Cancer Society-CDC National Colorectal Cancer Round Table (NCCRT); vice-Chair of the colorectal cancer screening panel; and member of the Genetic/Familial High-Risk Assessment: Colorectal, Endometrial, and Gastric panel of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) guidelines. He is commonly invited to lecture in gastrointestinal cancer genetics in the US and abroad.

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Katie Lucey, JD, leads the Cologuard Gap Closure Program at Exact Sciences. Her team partners with health plans, health systems, and government entities to launch programmatic, scalable colon cancer screening campaigns. Katie is a lawyer by training and joined Exact Sciences supporting its Market Access team in 2018.

**Tala Mahmoud, MD**

Tala Mahmoud, MD, is a third-year Internal Medicine resident at the University of Virginia (UVA). Prior to her residency, she completed a postdoctoral research fellowship in gastroenterology at the Mayo Clinic. Tala's passion for colorectal cancer awareness stems from a personal connection, as she has a family history of the disease. This background has fueled her commitment to advancing CRC education and early detection initiatives, particularly among young adults.

**Laura Makaroff, DO**

Laura Makaroff, DO, is a family physician and Senior Vice President of Prevention and Early Detection at the American Cancer Society. She oversees a broad portfolio of cancer prevention and early detection initiatives including health equity, cancer screening, HPV vaccination, tobacco control, comprehensive cancer control, and other national partnerships. Prior to joining ACS, Dr. Makaroff served as a Senior Clinical Advisor for the Bureau of Primary Health Care at the Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA). Dr. Makaroff completed a fellowship in health policy at Georgetown University and The Robert Graham Center in Washington, DC. She completed her residency in family medicine at the University of Colorado Hospital and was previously in solo, private practice outside of Denver, CO.

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Jared Marquardt, MD

Jared Marquardt, MD, is a family medicine physician located in Grafton, ND. He was born and raised in rural North Dakota and graduated from Minto High School followed by his undergraduate studies at North Dakota State University. He received his Doctorate of Medicine from UND School of Medicine and Health Sciences and completed his residency in Bismarck, ND. He sees patients of all ages, but especially enjoys pediatrics. He practices across multiple settings, including clinics, the hospital, skilled nursing facilities, and the emergency department.

Dr. Marquardt is married with three children and enjoys spending time with his family, being outdoors, hunting, fishing, playing softball, golfing, and curling.



Trevor Maxwell

Trevor Maxwell is founder and CEO of Man Up to Cancer, a non-profit organization that inspires men to connect and avoid isolation during their cancer journeys. He is the author of “Open Heart, Warrior Spirit: A Man’s Guide to Living with Cancer.” Trevor has been living with stage IV colon cancer since March of 2018. He has undergone seven major surgeries, chemotherapy, immunotherapy, and a clinical trial. As a patient leader, he has received the Annette Cook Cancer Warrior Award and the Amanda Dempsey Award. Trevor lives in Cape Elizabeth, Maine, with his wife, Sarah, and their two daughters, Sage and Elsie.



Nathan Merriman, MD, MSCE

Nathan Merriman, MD, MSCE, joined the Intermountain Health team as the Medical Director of Gastroenterology and Digestive Health in August 2020. Dr. Merriman received his medical school training at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He completed his internal medicine residency, gastroenterology fellowship, and clinical epidemiology training at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. Dr. Merriman works with patient teammates to evaluate and improve their gastrointestinal symptoms, conditions, and quality of life. Dr. Merriman works closely with clinical and administrative team members to prioritize human centered, team-based care with patients, families, and care team members. Colon cancer screening and prevention continues to be a passion and personal mission of Dr. Merriman’s and is the core reason he pursued a career in gastroenterology.



Stacie Miller, MSN, MPH, RN

Stacie Miller, MSN, MPH, RN, is a registered nurse with over 20 years of experience in public health and community health settings. Ms. Miller has served as the Nurse Program Manager for the colorectal cancer screening and patient navigation program since 2012. Her primary responsibilities included the daily management of screening activities, ensuring timely mail out of screening kits, and assisting with screening outreach and patient navigation. In her current role as Oncology Clinic Manager, she is responsible for all cancer screening and patient navigation programs including breast, cervical, colorectal, lung, and prostate cancer screenings. She supervises the programs' clinical staff and manages screening and diagnostic follow-up workflows. She has also been involved in the implementation of process improvement protocols for cancer screenings within a safety-net health system. She has received recognition in nursing excellence for leadership and quality. Ms. Miller has experience in building partnerships and collaborations among multidisciplinary teams to develop and deliver cancer screening programs. Her special interest is in program development to improve quality and access to health care for underserved populations.



Alyson Moadel-Robblee, PhD

Alyson Moadel-Robblee, PhD, is health psychologist, professor of clinical epidemiology, and Founding Director of the BOLD Cancer Wellness Program, a Psychosocial Oncology initiative of the Montefiore Einstein Comprehensive Cancer Center (MECCC) that has served many Bronx residents at risk for or living with cancer regardless of where they receive medical care since 2008. Dr. Moadel-Robblee is also Deputy Director of Community Engagement & Cancer Health Equity at MECCC where her charge is to ensure our cancer center's clinical, community, and research aims are focused around promoting equitable and optimal cancer care from screening to treatment and psychosocial care for those affected by cancer in the Bronx.

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Jennifer C. Molokwu, MD, MPH, FAAFP

Jennifer C. Molokwu, MD, MPH, FAAFP, is a Professor in the Department of Family and Community Medicine at the Texas Tech University Health Science Center El Paso. She obtained a master's degree in public health at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health with a concentration in Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology. After completing her residency training in Family Medicine at Hennepin County Medical Center, she joined the faculty at TTUHSC El Paso.

She has strong clinical and research expertise with research interests in cancer early detection and prevention, health disparities, program implementation, patient education, and shared patient decision-making. She is the program director of multiple CPRIT-funded programs developed to improve breast, colorectal, and cervical cancer screening and prevent HPV-associated cancers. In addition, as PD and Co- PD on several CPRIT-funded cancer prevention grants serving El Paso and West Texas, she has built on groundwork previously developed to grow collaborations with many community organizations and programs to promote cancer prevention in the region.

She currently serves as the Vice-Chair for Research in the Department of Family and Community Medicine and the Director for Cancer Prevention and Control in the Department of Molecular and Translational Medicines' Center for Emphasis in Cancer.



Caitlin C. Murphy, PhD, MPH

Caitlin C. Murphy, PhD, MPH, is an Associate Professor at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth Houston) School of Public Health in Houston, TX. Dr. Murphy's research focuses on understanding the causes and outcomes of cancers diagnosed in adolescents and young adults, with a focus on colorectal cancer. She has experience conducting population-based research across the cancer continuum, from etiology to survivorship. Most recently, she is Principal Investigator of a National Cancer Institute-funded project to study environmental exposures in early life (e.g., gestation, infancy) as risk factors for early-onset colorectal cancer. She has also received funding from the U.S. Department of Defense to study fertility and reproductive health of young cancer survivors.

Dr. Murphy received her MPH in Health Promotion and Behavioral Sciences at UTHealth Houston School of Public Health and PhD in Epidemiology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



Swati Patel, MD, MS

Swati Patel, MD, MS, is an Associate Professor at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Center where she is the Director of the Gastrointestinal Hereditary Cancer Program. Her clinical and research interests are in improving identification and management of individuals with hereditary cancer syndromes.

She is active in professional organizations dedicated to cancer risk reduction, including serving on the National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable (NCCRT) Steering Committee and is a past president of the Collaborative Group of the Americas on Inherited GI Cancers. She sits on the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) Colorectal Cancer Screening Guideline Committee and is a member of the United States Multi-Society Task Force on Colorectal Cancer, where she led the updated guidelines supporting expanding colorectal cancer screening to 45-49-year-olds.

Her research program is supported by the National Cancer Institute (NCI), The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI), the American Cancer Society (ACS) and the University of Colorado Cancer Center.



Joseph J. Perez, MD

Joseph J. Perez, MD, joined Lehigh Valley Health Network in August 2021 as a family medicine physician at the Lehigh Valley Bangor practice. Dr. Perez received his medical training at St. George's University School of Medicine and completed his family medicine residency at Hackensack UMC Mountainside Family Medicine in Montclair, New Jersey. In addition to his clinical work, Dr. Perez serves as the Associate Medical Director for Quality Assurance and Patient Safety, and as the clinical champion for colorectal cancer screening. Dr. Perez is passionate about improving quality care in the community and continues to develop strategies for enhancing colorectal cancer screening rates in his region.



Erin Peterson

Erin Peterson began work with the Colon Cancer Coalition in early 2011 after a decade at a Minneapolis-based marketing and public relations agency. She brought her consumer marketing background to public health and colorectal cancer screening, approaching this public health challenge through a marketing lens. During her time with the Coalition, she has developed a passion for colorectal cancer prevention and screening, focusing on erasing health disparities and working towards a solution for early-onset colorectal cancer. She is the incoming chair of the Minnesota Cancer Alliance taking that position in January 2025. As part of MCA, she also co-leads the Early Prevention work group for the 2023 Minnesota Cancer Plan and co-chairs the Colon Cancer Network in the state of Minnesota.



Anay Puente, RN

Anay Puente, RN, is a dedicated and compassionate registered nurse with over 15 years of experience in family practice, providing comprehensive and compassionate care to patients of all ages. Known for her exceptional patient care and advocacy, she approaches every day with a commitment to making a positive impact not just on her patients and their families, but in clinical support staff. With a strong foundation in clinical skills and a genuine desire to help others, she strives at delivering high-quality patient care in a diverse population. Her ability to empathize and connect with patients fosters trust and empowers them during some of their most challenging times. Anay excels in the clinical setting leading the clinical support staff to render high-quality patient care and meet the organizational goals.

Beyond her clinical duties, Anay is actively involved in local community events further demonstrating her commitment to health and wellness in South Central Idaho. She continuously seeks opportunities for professional development to enhance patient outcomes. In her free time, Anay enjoys spending time with her husband and three children in the outdoors, which help her recharge and maintain a healthy work-life balance. Her unwavering dedication to nursing and the well-being of others truly embodies the spirit of compassion and service.



Lisa Richardson, MD, MPH

Lisa C. Richardson, MD, MPH, is Director of the Division of Cancer Prevention and Control (DCPC), where she provides strategic leadership for DCPC's four flagship programs: the Colorectal Cancer Control Program (CRCCP), the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (NBCCEDP), the National Comprehensive Cancer Control Program (NCCCP), and the National Program of Cancer Registries (NPCR). She is cultivating a data-informed culture within the Division and has championed initiatives to modernize cancer surveillance data collection. She provides guidance for DCPC's research agenda which includes the Cancer Prevention and Control Research Network (CPCRN). As part of her work, Dr. Richardson has represented the Division of Cancer Prevention and Control on the National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable since becoming director in 2014.

Dr. Richardson is a medical oncologist by training and does research on breast cancer treatment delivery, health disparities, and access to cancer care. She has authored and co-authored close to 200 peer-reviewed journal articles on breast cancer treatment patterns of care, health policy, access to cancer care, systems of care, and health disparities.



Patricia A. Rodriguez, MD

Patricia A. Rodriguez, MD, is a board-certified pediatrician currently serving as Chief Medical Officer for North Texas Area Community Health Center (NTACHC). She is a passionate healthcare advocate for vulnerable and underserved patient populations but also possesses a strong combination of healthcare insight and expertise in community health, healthcare quality and safety, as well as health equity. Past experiences for Dr. Rodriguez include being Chief Health Equity and Inclusion Officer at one of the largest pediatric healthcare providers in the United States prior to joining NTACHC.

Dr. Rodriguez holds a Doctor of Medicine from the University of Texas McGovern Medical School and a Bachelor of Arts in Biology from Texas A&M University. She also completed her pediatrics residency at the University of Texas McGovern Medical School and is currently obtaining an Executive MBA in Healthcare Management at the University of Texas at Dallas as part of the Alliance for Physician Leadership program.



Allison Rosen, MS

Allison Rosen, MS, has deliberately and consciously chosen to dedicate her life – in and outside of her employment – to use her voice and platform to educate, advocate, and continuously learn how best to represent the collective cancer community. She recently joined the American Cancer Society as the Director of Project ECHO. She serves as an NCCRT Steering Committee member and is a 10-year early age onset colorectal cancer survivor. Prior to joining ACS, Allison had a combined 16 years of experience in the oncology space, 12 years in basic cancer research and four years in public health and cancer health disparities, with much of her work focusing on designing, implementing, and evaluating public health programs and initiatives, to address cancer awareness and care disparities among medically underserved populations. Through her own experience at surviving Stage II colorectal cancer, Allison has experience on both sides of the fence and works to bridge the gap between the healthcare system and the communities that it serves.



David Russo

David Russo is the founder and Executive Director of Cheeky Charity, a non-profit dedicated to advocating for colorectal and anal cancer prevention, early detection, and support for patients and survivors within the LGBTQ+ community. With a Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering and an MBA from NYU, David brings a unique blend of technical expertise and business acumen to the world of healthcare advocacy. He has over a decade of experience in healthcare diagnostics, where he honed his skills in navigating complex healthcare systems and developing patient-centered solutions.

In 2021, David launched Cheeky Charity, motivated by a passion to improve access to cancer care and dismantle the barriers that disproportionately affect LGBTQ+ individuals. His commitment extends beyond Cheeky Charity, as he serves on the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network's LGBTQIA+ & Allies Engagement Group and is an active member of the American Society of Clinical Oncology's (ASCO) LGBTQ+ Community of Practice. Through these roles, David collaborates with leaders in oncology and patient advocacy to advance inclusive cancer care policies and practices nationwide. David's work focuses on creating a supportive environment that fosters awareness and action, striving to ensure that every individual, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, has equitable access to life-saving cancer screenings and compassionate care.



Carolyn Rutter, PhD

Carolyn Rutter, PhD, is Professor in the Hutchinson Institute for Cancer Outcomes Research and the Biostatistics program in the Fred Hutchinson Public Health Sciences Division. Her research focuses on microsimulation modeling to inform policy decisions, microsimulation model calibration, and evaluation of diagnostic and screening tests with a focus on Bayesian approaches. Her primary area of application is colorectal cancer, including the effect racial and ethnic inequities in colorectal cancer care on disparities in incidence and mortality.



Michael Sapienza

Michael Sapienza is the Chief Executive Officer of the Colorectal Cancer Alliance, the largest colon cancer advocacy group in the country. He lost his mother to colorectal cancer in May 2009. He turned his profound grief into action, inspiring and challenging the colorectal cancer community, family, friends, and professional associates to follow his lead and dedicate themselves to ending colorectal cancer within our lifetime—the mission of the Colorectal Cancer Alliance. Michael founded The Chris4Life Colon Cancer Foundation and served as its President from 2010-2015. In 2016, he led the team that merged the Foundation and the Colon Cancer Alliance, creating the nation's largest colon cancer specific nonprofit, which changed its name to Colorectal Cancer Alliance in 2017 to embrace both the colon and rectal cancer communities.

Over the last decade, Michael has become an expert and trusted voice on the topics of colorectal cancer prevention, patient care, and medical research. Michael regularly appears on TV and radio programs throughout the United States. Michael is a member of The Ruesch Center for the Cure of GI Cancer's Advisory Board at Georgetown University, and in 2020 he was appointed to the President's Cancer Panel and NCCRT's 2021 Steering Committee. In 2014, Michael received three prestigious industry awards: David Jagelman, MD Award for advocacy in Colorectal Cancer Awareness by the American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons; the Public Service Award from the Society for Surgery of the Alimentary Tract; and the Champion Award from Preventing Colorectal Cancer. In 2018, Michael was honored with a Luminary Award from OnLive and The Ruesch Center for his lifetime commitment to improving the lives of patients affected by gastrointestinal cancer. Michael holds degrees from both Northwestern University and Rice University and currently resides in the District of Columbia.



Paul C. Schroy III, MD, MPH

Paul C. Schroy III, MD, MPH, is Emeritus Professor of Medicine at Boston University School of Medicine with expertise in colorectal cancer screening and surveillance. His work has been supported by the NCI, ACS, CDC and AHRQ. Dr. Schroy's most recent research activities include exploring the role of shared decision-making as a strategy for increasing patient participation in colorectal cancer screening; better defining the epidemiology of colorectal neoplasia and the development of risk assessment tools for predicting the presence of advanced neoplasia at screening colonoscopy, evaluating the feasibility and validity of novel colorectal cancer screening option, implementation of quality measures related to colorectal cancer screening; and developing strategies to reduce the public health burden of early-onset colorectal cancer. In addition to his commitment to patient care and clinical research, Dr. Schroy is a founding member and former chair of the Massachusetts Colorectal Cancer Working Group and a founding member of the National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable. He has served in numerous leadership positions for the Roundtable, including current co-chair of the Family History and Early Onset Colorectal Cancer Task Group, former member of the Steering Committee, former co-chair of the Public Education Task Group, former co-chair of the Screening 65+ Task Group, and former chair of the Nomination Committee.



Navkiran "Kiran" K. Shokar, MA, MD, MPH

Navkiran "Kiran" K. Shokar, MA, MD, MPH, is a tenured professor and chair of the Department of Population Health, associate dean for community affairs and co-leads cancer prevention and control at Dell Medical School at the University of Texas at Austin.

Dr. Shokar was born and raised in England, where she received her Master of Arts degree from Cambridge University and her medical degree from Oxford University Medical School. She completed family medicine residency training in the U.K. (Banbury, Oxfordshire) and in the U.S. (Houston, Texas), and completed her Master of Public Health degree at the University of Texas Houston School of Public Health. She currently serves as the inaugural Chair of the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT) Prevention Advisory committee.

Dr. Shokar is a clinical scientist whose research interests include interventions in cancer prevention and control, employing community-based approaches to address cancer prevention and early detection health disparities among vulnerable, poor and underserved populations. She has developed innovative population health approaches to bridge the divide between the community, the health care delivery system and public health. Her main focus has been to understand and address colorectal cancer screening disparities integrating community-based health promotion and implementation science approaches to improve the development, delivery and uptake of evidence-based screening interventions. She has developed and led CPRIT-funded comprehensive colorectal, breast and cervical cancer screening interventions and is the PI of the recently funded statewide Colorectal Cancer Screening Coordinating Center (CONNECT). She has received over \$33 million in extramural research funding from the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT), the National Institutes of Health (NCI) and others.



Rebecca Siegel, MPH

Rebecca Siegel, MPH, is a descriptive epidemiologist at the American Cancer Society in Atlanta where she is Senior Scientific Director of Surveillance Research. She is lead author of the annual Cancer Facts & Figures and Statistics article, as well as CRC Statistics, and publishes descriptive epidemiology across the cancer continuum to help inform cancer prevention and control. Rebecca's primary research interest is colorectal cancer with an emphasis on early-onset disease.

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Robert A. Smith, PhD, is a cancer epidemiologist and Senior Vice President and Director, ACS Center for Early Cancer Detection Science. He also is Adjunct Professor of Epidemiology at the Emory University Rollins School of Public Health. At the ACS he leads the Center for Early Cancer Detection Science in the development of cancer screening guidelines and special research and policy initiatives focused on cancer prevention and control. He was one of the founders of the ACS National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable in 1997, served as Vice-Chair for more than 25 years, and now serves as its Scientific Advisor. Dr. Smith has published over 400 peer-reviewed scientific articles, reports, and book chapters, serves on many international and national government and professional advisory committees and working groups, and in 2011, he received the Medal of Honor from the International Agency for Research on Cancer.

**Kaitlyn Sylvester, MPA**

Kaitlyn Sylvester, MPA, provides strategic direction and support for ACS NCCRT's programs and activities supporting the ACS 80% in Every Community national campaign as it's Strategic Director. Prior to this role she served as Senior Manager, Cancer Control Strategic Partnerships for the South Region of the American Cancer Society. Kaitlyn received her Master's in Public Administration from Louisiana State University and is based out of New Orleans, Louisiana. In her spare time, she enjoys running, baking bread, and spending time with her husband and elderly dachshund.

**Aubree Thelen, MPH**

Aubree Thelen, MPH, joined the American Cancer Society in August 2021 and now works as the Program Manager for the ACS NCCRT. Aubree has public health policy and advocacy experience at the federal, state, and local level in topics as wide-ranging as violence, urban planning, and paid leave. She has worked hard to connect these issues to chronic disease and cancer through partnership over the last eight years of her career in Louisiana and Illinois. She is passionate about her career in public health as a way to influence equitable cancer prevention and care in the communities in which we live, work, play and learn. She graduated from Tulane University with her Master of Public Health in 2015. Aubree lives in Chicago, IL with her dog, Stella.



Michelle Tropper, MPH, PCMH CCE

Michelle Tropper, MPH, PCMH CCE, spearheads numerous community-based outreach, research, and educational initiatives to improve public health. She joined HealthEfficient in 2015 and currently serves as the Senior Director, Clinical Quality Improvement and Project Director for the Qual IT Care Alliance Health Center Controlled Network (HCCN). She leads and develops key quality improvement activities and projects in collaboration with health centers and other partners. She led the organization's learning collaboratives to improve documentation in electronic health records (EHR) for self-measured blood pressure monitoring (SMBP), adolescent sexual history assessment and colorectal cancer screening. Ms. Tropper worked with health centers and other primary practices across the country, serving as lead author revising the National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable's signature publication, Steps Guide for Improving Colorectal Cancer Screening in Primary Care. Ms. Tropper earned her bachelor's degree from Binghamton University and Master's in Public Health from Rutgers School of Public Health.



Brent Wallis, MD

Brent Wallis, MD, received his medical degree from the Medical College of Georgia and completed a dual Internal Medicine & Pediatrics residency at the LSU Health Sciences Center in New Orleans. He spent several years in group practice before returning to LSU to teach residents. He served as CMIO of the LSU Healthcare Network bringing needed technology to the LSU faculty practice after Hurricane Katrina, as medical director for the MedPeds residency clinic, and as an assistant professor of medicine in the outpatient and hospital facilities. Dr. Wallis helped JenCare Neighborhood Medical Centers in their expansion to New Orleans before joining Medical Affairs at Peoples Health, an MA organization in Louisiana. He current serves as the CMO for Peoples Health and UnitedHealthcare Medicare and Retirement as well as Capital City Medical Group, a care delivery organization with locations throughout Louisiana. He is medical director for a non-profit free clinic and serves on the Board for Taking Aim at Cancer in Louisiana (TAACL) leading the Payer Council.



Christina Wang, MD

Christina Wang, MD, is an Assistant Professor of Medicine in the Division of Gastroenterology at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. Dr. Wang received her medical degree from New York Medical College and completed her internal medicine training at the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center/Harvard Medical School. She went on to complete fellowship training in gastroenterology at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and served as chief gastroenterology fellow. Dr. Wang completed additional training as a T32 Research Fellow in Cancer Prevention and Control in Priority Populations at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai.

Dr. Wang has published in gastrointestinal cancer epidemiology and health services inequities. Her research investigates racial and ethnic disparities in cancer screening, with a focus on Asian Americans, and the design of community-based, culturally tailored programs to address low screening participation. Her research has been supported by a NIH K08 Career Development Award and an American Cancer Society Clinician Scientist Development Grant.

At Mount Sinai, Dr. Wang serves as Co-Chair of the Education and Research Committee at the Center for Asian Equity and Professional Development. She is involved in committees with the American College of Gastroenterology. She has received various recognitions including the American College of Gastroenterology Service Award for Colorectal Cancer Outreach, Prevention, & Year-Round Excellence Honorable Mention, the Eric R. Lemmer Memorial Award, and the American Cancer Society ResearchHERS Scholar to fuel the future of women-led cancer research.



Richard Wender, MD

Richard Wender, MD, has dedicated his career to leading medical and public health efforts that strive to improve the quality of primary care, implement population health, and address social determinants of health in the continuous pursuit of equity for all people. He was recently appointed as the Chair of the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health, in the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Wender spent the first 33 years of his career in the Department of Family and Community Medicine at Thomas Jefferson University, including 12 years as the Alumni Professor and Chair of the Department. At Jefferson, Dr. Wender and his team spearheaded innovative programs in geriatric medicine, palliative care, the patient-centered medical home, quality-based payment, refugee health, and community partnership. From 2013 to 2020, Dr. Wender served as the first Chief Cancer Control Officer of the American Cancer Society. He helped to build a cancer control team that launched a transformative national initiative to achieve 80% colorectal cancer screening rates in every community, a national and global campaign to increase HPV vaccination rates, and an enterprise-wide effort to help build healthier communities.

Dr. Wender has continuously advocated for the importance of preventive care and for the creation of an effective bridge between primary care and public health. This includes providing 100s of keynote addresses, at least one in all 50 states, and authoring numerous publications. As Chair of the National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable and a member of the steering committee for the President's Cancer Panel cancer screening initiative, Dr. Wender is helping to lead efforts to promote the safe provision of cancer screening services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Pascale M. White, MD, MBA, MS, FACG

Pascale M. White, MD, MBA, MS, FACG, is an Associate Professor of Medicine in the Gastroenterology division at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. From 2017 to 2024, she directed the Gastroenterology Clinic at Mount Sinai Hospital. Currently, as the inaugural Director of Health Equity in Action for Liver and Digestive Diseases (H.E.A.L.D.), Dr. White spearheads initiatives to enhance equitable access to care within the GI and Liver divisions.

Dr. White earned her undergraduate degree in Biology from Barnard College of Columbia University and obtained her medical degree from The George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences. She completed her Internal Medicine residency at NYU School of Medicine, where she was appointed Chief Resident, followed by a Gastroenterology fellowship at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. Additionally, she holds an MBA and a Master of Science in Healthcare Policy and Research with a focus on Healthcare Leadership from Cornell University.

Her clinical work and research emphasize colorectal cancer screening in underserved communities. She has published on screening barriers and co-authored guidelines for colorectal cancer screening in African Americans for the American College of Gastroenterology. Dr. White actively participates in multiple committees, including New York City's Citywide Colorectal Cancer Control Coalition (C5) and the American Cancer Society National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable. She is a Co-Founder of the Association of Black Gastroenterologists and Hepatologists (ABGH).



Keith Winfrey, MD, MPH, FACP

Keith Winfrey, MD, MPH, FACP is the Chief Medical Officer for the New Orleans East Louisiana Community Health Center (NOELA CHC). He is an Assistant Professor of Medicine at the Tulane University School of Medicine. He completed his residency in Internal Medicine and a fellowship in Preventive Medicine at the Tulane University School of Medicine. He also holds a Masters' Degree in Health System Management from the Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. Dr. Winfrey has been with NOELA since 2009 and has served as the Chief Medical Officer since 2011. He has guided NOELA Community Health Center through the practice transformation process to become a Level III "Patient-Centered Medical Home" and to improve the health center's efficiency and effectiveness in chronic disease management and disease prevention. Dr. Winfrey serves on the steering committee for the Louisiana Colorectal Roundtable, the clinical committee for the Taking Aim at Cancer Louisiana initiative and is the current Clinical Branch Chairman for the Louisiana Primary Care Association.



Yi-Quan Nancy You, MD, MDSc, FACS

Yi-Qian Nancy You, MD, MHSc, FACS, is a Professor in the Department of Colon and Rectal Surgery and the Clinical Medical Director of the Colorectal Cancer Service Line at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. She has a special interest in patients with hereditary cancer syndromes and young-onset colorectal cancer and had created the Familial High risk GI Cancer Clinic and the Young-onset Colorectal Cancer Program.