

Gender in Academia and Science Inaugural Symposium

*Hosted by the UPMC Hillman Cancer Center Women's Initiatives Task Force
Sponsored by UPMC Hillman Cancer Center*

**The Assembly Building • Main Auditorium and Atrium
5051 Centre Avenue • Pittsburgh, PA 15213**

Wednesday, January 18, 2023

Agenda

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| 8:00 AM | Continental Breakfast |
| 8:45 AM | Welcome and Opening Remarks
<i>Robert Ferris, MD, PhD, Director, UPMC Hillman Cancer Center</i> |
| 8:55 AM | Introduction of UPMC Hillman Women's Initiatives Task Force
<i>Tullia C. Bruno, PhD (Chair) and Annie Im, MD (Co-Chair)</i> |
| 9:00 AM | Building and Sustaining Careers in Academic Medicine: A Gender Equity Lens
<i>Jennifer Grandis, MD, UCSF</i> |
| 10:00 AM | Session 1: Sex differences in tumor and immune response of cancer

Sex differences in cancer immunoediting, <i>Elise Alspach, PhD, St. Louis University School of Medicine</i>

Sex differences in the glioblastoma immune response – opportunities for next-generation precision medicine therapies, <i>Justin Lathia, PhD, Case Comprehensive Cancer Center</i> |
| 11:00 AM | Coffee and networking |
| 11:30 AM | Session 2: ECR science talks

Respiratory toxin exposure induces differential sex-based pathways of lung disease through epigenetic dysregulation, <i>Amy Powers, University of Pittsburgh</i>

Sex-specific impact of the tumor microenvironment in head and neck cancer pain, <i>Lisa A. McIlvried, PhD, University of Pittsburgh</i>

Ferroptosis: a metabolic vulnerability of cyclin E-high ovarian cancer, <i>Naveen Kumar Tangudu, PhD, University of Pittsburgh</i>

Investigation of the aged breast tumor microenvironment reveals changes to inflammatory and estrogen biology in older women (≥ 70 yo) with ER+ breast cancer, <i>Neil Carleton, University of Pittsburgh</i> |

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Agenda Continued

- 12:30 PM Networking lunch
- 1:30 PM From surviving to thriving in academic medicine
Monica Baskin, PhD, UPMC Hillman Cancer Center
- 2:30 PM Session 3: Advances in breast and ovarian cancer
- Male breast cancer and breast cancer in transgender patients, *Rohit Bhargava, MD, University of Pittsburgh*
- Stromal mediators of ovarian cancer, *Lan G. Coffman, MD, PhD, University of Pittsburgh*
- 3:30 PM Coffee and networking
- 4:00 PM Book reading: *Silence and Silences Finding a Place to Stand*
Wallis Wilde-Menozzi, Essayist and Poet, Author of "Mother Tongue, An American Life in Italy."
- 5-7:00 PM Dinner Reception

Speaker and organizers' bios available on the website: bit.ly/hccwitsymposium

About UPMC Hillman Cancer Center

UPMC Hillman Cancer Center consistently ranks in the top 20 of cancer centers by *U.S. News and World Report* and is the only cancer center in Western PA designated as a Comprehensive Cancer Center by the National Cancer Institute. UPMC Hillman has over 70 locations extending across Pennsylvania, Ohio, Maryland, New York, Italy, and Ireland. Learn more at: <https://hillman.upmc.com/> and <https://hillmanresearch.upmc.edu/>.

About the UPMC Hillman Cancer Center Women's Initiatives Task Force

The mission of the Women's Initiatives Task Force at the UPMC Hillman Cancer Center is to support and foster the recruitment, retention, and promotion of female faculty at the UPMC Hillman Cancer Center and to raise constant awareness of issues for women in science. Learn more at: <https://hillmanresearch.upmc.edu/training/womens-task-force/>.



SPEAKER AND ORGANIZING COMMITTEE BIOS



Katherine Aird, PhD, is an Associate Professor in the Department of Pharmacology & Chemical Biology and a member of the NCI-designated UPMC Hillman Cancer Center at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. She received her BA in Biology from Johns Hopkins University and her PhD from Duke University where she worked on anti-apoptotic proteins in inflammatory breast cancer. She did her postdoctoral training at The

Wistar Institute in Philadelphia, where she made foundational discoveries in senescence and was awarded a K99/R00 Pathway to Independence Award from the NCI. Dr. Aird's research program is focused on understanding how cellular metabolism alters cell fate decisions in cancer.



Elise Alspach, PhD, grew up in DeKalb, Illinois, and completed her undergraduate education at Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois. She did her graduate training at Washington University in St. Louis in the lab of Dr. Sheila Stewart. Her graduate work focused on the interaction between tumor cells and senescent (aged) fibroblasts within the tumor microenvironment.

During this time, the results of the first immune checkpoint therapy clinical trials were published, which ignited her interest in tumor immunology. She did her postdoctoral training with Dr. Robert Schreiber, also at Washington University. Her postdoctoral work focused on MHC-II restricted neoantigens and the role of CD4⁺ T cells in orchestrating tumor rejection following checkpoint therapy. She started her lab at Saint Louis University in May 2020 and is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Molecular Microbiology and Immunology. While not the original plan for what her independent research program would focus on, her interest in sex disparities in anti-tumor immune responses was piqued after reading *The Better Half: On the Genetic Superiority of Women* by Dr. Sharon Moalem during the COVID shutdown. In her free time, she enjoys baking with her daughter and playing tennis.



Monica L. Baskin, PhD is a Professor of Medicine and Assistant Vice Chancellor for Community Health Equity at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine and Associate Director for Community Outreach and Engagement and Health Equity at the UPMC Hillman Cancer Center. She received her Bachelor of Arts in psychology and sociology from Emory University, and a Master of Science in community counseling and Ph.D. in

counseling psychology from Georgia State University. She is a licensed psychologist whose research focuses on minority health and health disparities. Her research utilizes community-based participatory methods to better understand and address individual, family, and environmental factors associated with the prevention and control of chronic diseases such as cancer, diabetes and heart disease. Over nearly two decades, her research program has been funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), and other regional and local foundations. Dr. Baskin is a past president of the Society of Behavioral Medicine (SBM) and currently serves as Chair of the World Cancer Research Fund/American Institute for Cancer Continuous Update Project Global Expert Committee on Cancer Incidence.

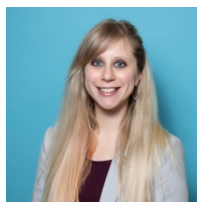
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Ellen Beckjord, PhD, MPH is Vice President of Population Health and Clinical Optimization at UPMC Health Plan. She is a behavioral scientist, epidemiologist, and licensed clinical psychologist in disciplined pursuit of harnessing the power of connectivity to promote authentic connection to place health, peace, and abundance within equal reach of all. She did her doctoral training in clinical psychology at the University of Vermont and the Vanderbilt-VA internship consortium and her post-doctoral fellowship in the National Cancer Institute's (NCI) Cancer Prevention Fellowship Program. At NCI, Dr. Beckjord worked in the Health Communication and Informatics Research Branch and received a Masters in Public Health focused on Epidemiology and Biostatistics from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. From NCI, Dr. Beckjord spent three years in research consulting (RAND Corporation) and five years in academic medicine at the University of Pittsburgh and Hillman Cancer Center. In February 2015, she joined UPMC Health Plan where she serves as the Vice President of Population Health and Clinical Optimization and hosts the Health Plan's podcast, *Good Health, Better World*, which will focus on behavioral health in 2022. In 2021, Dr. Beckjord was named one of 13 "Emerging Health Leaders" by *Managed Healthcare Executive* and a Ragan Top Women in Wellness and HR Awardee for Behavioral Health. Her current work is focused on population health, behavioral science, and the use of digital tools in clinical operations to promote health, wellness, and health behavior change.



Rohit Bhargava received his Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) degree from the SMS Medical College of Rajasthan University (Jaipur, India). Upon arrival in the United States in 1998, he underwent residency training in Anatomic and Clinical Pathology at Baystate Medical Center in Springfield, Massachusetts followed by fellowship training in Oncologic Surgical Pathology and Diagnostic Molecular Pathology at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York, NY. He has been a faculty member at UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital since September 2004. During his career at Magee-Womens Hospital, Dr. Bhargava has published extensively with over 150 peer-reviewed articles. He soon rose from the ranks of Assistant Professor in 2004 to full Professor of Pathology in 2014 at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. Currently, he is the Chief of Pathology at UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital. Dr. Bhargava is an experienced breast pathologist and creator of the "Magee equations", a multivariable prognostic and predictive model for use in ER+ breast cancers. He is a past recipient of the prestigious F. Stephen Vogel award from the United States and Canadian Academy of Pathology in 2006. He is the sole author of the book titled "Simplified and Illustrated Breast Pathology: A Book for All Breast Care Providers" published in 2015. He has also written numerous book chapters in other books and is frequently invited for lectures nationally and internationally.



Tullia C. Bruno, PhD, is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Immunology at the University of Pittsburgh and a faculty member in the Tumor Microenvironment Center and the Cancer Immunology and Immunotherapy Program at the UPMC Hillman Cancer Center. She obtained her Ph.D. in Immunology from Johns Hopkins in 2010 and completed her postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Colorado in 2015—both with a focus in tumor immunology. While Dr. Bruno's PhD training focused on inhibitory receptors on intratumoral T cells, she became interested in the role of B cells and tertiary lymphoid structures (TLS) in the tumor microenvironment (TME) during her postdoctoral fellowship and has built her independent research program around understanding intratumoral B cell and TLS function in multiple human cancers. Dr. Bruno's research lab has an overt focus on studying immunity within cancer patients, which makes her research highly translational with the potential for future clinical trials targeting B cells. Thus, Dr. Bruno's overall research objective is to develop a B cell-specific immunotherapy in the next five to ten years. Dr. Bruno is actively involved in the UPMC Hillman community, and is an advocate for women in science, as is evidenced by her current role as chair of the UPMC Hillman Women's Initiatives Taskforce and her contributions to the Society of Immunotherapy's Women in Immunotherapy group.



Neil Carleton is currently in his fifth year in the MD/PhD program at the University of Pittsburgh. He is completing his PhD in Integrative Systems Biology with Adrian Lee and Steffi Oesterreich with a focus on breast cancer in older women. He also has a strong interest in gender equity and challenges in the physician scientist pipeline and has studied disparities in funding trajectories for physician scientists.



Lan Coffman, MD, PhD, is a physician scientist focused on improving outcomes in ovarian cancer through studying and targeting the ovarian stromal tumor microenvironment. She is an Assistant Professor at the University of Pittsburgh with an independent laboratory and active clinical practice. Dr. Coffman received her BS in biology from Loyola University and obtained her MD/PhD at Wake Forest University. She performed her internal medicine residency, hem/onc fellowship and post-doctoral training at the University of Michigan where her clinical focus was on the treatment of gynecologic cancers and her research focused on the ovarian cancer stromal microenvironment. She joined UPMC/Pitt in 2017. Her lab focuses on the influence of the microenvironment on ovarian cancer initiation, propagation, and metastasis and she maintains an active clinical practice treating women with gynecologic cancers. Her overall goal is to understand the critical role of the stromal microenvironment in ovarian cancer in order to create meaningful therapeutic interventions to improve the lives of all women living with or at risk for ovarian cancer.

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Olivera (Olja) J. Finn, PhD, is University of Pittsburgh Distinguished Professor of Immunology and Surgery. She was UPCI Immunology Program Leader from 1991 to 2014 and Chair of the Department of Immunology from 2002 to 2013. She gained prominence through her basic and applied research on tumor antigens and cancer vaccines. She has trained 25 PhD and MD/PhD students and over 70 postdoctoral and clinical fellows. Dr. Finn was Councilor of the International Union of Immunology Societies (IUIS) and served for 10 years Chair of the IUIS Committee on Gender Equality. She is a member of the American Association of Immunologists (AAI), American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) and the Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC). She received numerous awards including the AAI Life Time Achievement Award (2016), the NCI Outstanding Investigator Award (2016), the AACR CIR Lloyd Old Cancer Immunology Prize (2017) and SITC Richard Smalley Award (2019). In 2019 she was inducted into the inaugural class of AAI Distinguished Fellows and this year into the 2022 class of Fellows of the SITC Immunology Academy.



Jennifer R Grandis, MD, is a physician scientist whose research is focused on elucidating and targeting key signaling pathways and genomic alterations in head and neck cancer with the goals of enabling precision medicine studies. She has leveraged her access to head and neck cancer patients and their biospecimens to optimize translational research studies that include developing novel therapies in the laboratory for clinical application as well as generating and interrogating relevant preclinical models to determine the underlying mechanism of clinical findings. In addition to cancer research, she has employed qualitative methods to investigate the underlying causes of gender inequities in science and medicine. In her institutional roles at the University of Pittsburgh and since 2015, at UCSF, she has facilitated collaborations between clinicians and investigators with an emphasis of developing a robust research infrastructure to support clinical and translational cancer studies. She has published over 390 papers in the peer-reviewed literature, and she has been continuously funded by the NIH since joining the faculty in 1993. Dr. Grandis is an elected member of the American Society for Clinical Investigation the Association of American Physicians and the National Academy of Medicine. She is an American Cancer Society Clinical Research Professor.



Annie Im, MD, is an Associate Professor of Medicine in the Division of Hematology/Oncology at the University of Pittsburgh/UPMC Hillman CancerCenter. Dr. Im completed her undergraduate degree at Williams College and earned her medical degree at Stony Brook School of Medicine. She then came to the University of Pittsburgh for her Internal Medicine residency training, where she also served as Chief Medical Resident. She stayed in Pittsburgh to pursue Hematology/Oncology Fellowship and Blood and Marrow Transplant training at UPMC, where she served as Chief Fellow. She has been on faculty at UPMC since 2013, focusing on hematologic malignancies and stem cell transplantation. She currently serves as Director of Education for the Division of Hematology/Oncology, Program Director for the Hematology/Oncology Fellowship, and Subspecialty Education Coordinator for the Internal Medicine Residency. She has been involved in education nationally, through ASCO, ASH, and ASTCT. Her research and clinical interests focus on chronic graft-versus-host disease (GVHD), survivorship and late effects after stem cell transplant, and acute myeloid leukemia in older patients.



Dorota Jazwinska is a 4th year PhD student at the University of Pittsburgh in Dr. Ioannis Zervantonakis' lab studying ovarian cancer metastasis. She has previously obtained a bachelor's degree in Biomedical Engineering from Rutgers University-New Brunswick. Currently she is a part of the UPMC Hillman Women's Initiatives Taskforce and a mentor for STEM for Her.

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Justin Durla Lathia, PhD, leads a translational cancer stem cell research laboratory and is Vice Chair and Professor in the Department of Cardiovascular & Metabolic Sciences at the Lerner Research Institute (LRI), part of the Cleveland Clinic and also serves as the Director of Faculty Development for the LRI. Dr. Lathia is also the Scientific Director of the Rose Ella Burkhardt Brain Tumor & Neuro-Oncology Center at the Cleveland Clinic and the Melvin Burkhardt Endowed Chair in Neuro-Oncology Research. He is also the Reza Khatib MD Professor, Leader of the Brain Tumor Initiative, and Co-Leader of the Molecular Oncology Program at the Case Comprehensive Cancer Center. Dr. Lathia is a native of central Pennsylvania and received a B.S. and M.S. from Drexel University in Philadelphia, PA in 2003. While at Drexel, he developed targeted ultrasound contrast agents which preferentially bound to newly formed vessel in breast cancer models. After graduation from Drexel, Dr. Lathia completed his Ph.D. as part of the NIH-Cambridge Graduate Partnership Program. His work focused on the role of cell adhesion molecules during the development of the nervous system. After completing his Ph.D. in 2008 he completed post-doctoral fellowships at Duke and the Cleveland Clinic where he focused on the role of cell adhesion in regulating cancer stem cells in brain tumors. In 2012, Dr. Lathia moved to the Department of Cardiovascular & Metabolic Sciences as an independent investigator and the work in his lab focuses on how the stem cell state is regulated in advanced cancers. Projects in the Lathia laboratory involve understanding how cancer stem cells interact with their surrounding microenvironment as well as one another with the goal of identifying unique pathways for therapeutic development and a recent focuses on sex differences in glioblastoma. Work in the Lathia laboratory has resulted in a Phase 1 clinical trial aimed at targeting myeloid-derived suppressor cells that interact with cancer stem cells to suppress the immune system in glioblastoma. Dr. Lathia has co-authored over 225 publications and work in his lab is currently supported by multiple National Institutes of Health grants and foundation grants. Dr. Lathia also contributes as a peer reviewer to over 150 journals, serves on the editorial board for Cell Reports, Cancer Research, and Neuro-Oncology, has served on multiple grant review panels for the National Institutes of Health and private foundations. He recently served as a co-editor for a cancer stem cell textbook. Dr. Lathia also serves as a co-organizer for the cancer stem cell meeting held in Cleveland in 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2022. At each meeting, the 3 day event drew over 300 attendees from over 25 states and 15 countries.



Lisa A. McIlvried, PhD received her BS from Allegheny College, PhD in Neurobiology from the University of Pittsburgh, and did her postdoctoral work at Washington University St. Louis. She served as teaching faculty in the Neuroscience Dept at Pitt for 3 years and transitioned last year to be a research assistant professor in Neurobiology, working in the Scheff Lab at Hillman Cancer Center. Dr. McIlvried has specialized in pain research and is now learning to apply her neurobiology background to the cancer field. The goal of her research in the Scheff Lab is to study the reciprocal interactions between cancer and neurons in the tumor microenvironment, and investigate whether therapies targeted to the nervous system can alleviate pain and slow carcinogenesis.



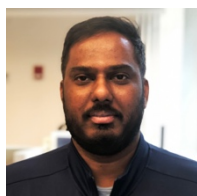
Steffi Oesterreich, PhD, is Professor of Pharmacology and Chemical Biology, Co- Leader of the Cancer Biology Program at UPMC Hillman Cancer Center (HCC), and Co-Director of the Women's Cancer Research Center at Magee Women's Research Institute and HCC.

Dr. Oesterreich's research focuses on progression of estrogen receptor positive breast cancer. Specific areas of interest include endocrine resistance, metastases, and invasive lobular carcinoma (ILC), a histological subtype of breast cancer that accounts for 10-15% of all breast cancers. She enjoys working in multi-disciplinary teams, is interested in involvement of advocates in research, and finally she is committed to the training and mentoring the next generation of breast cancer researchers.



Amy A. Powers, MS, graduated from Carnegie Mellon in 2019 where she completed her master's degree in biomedical engineering in the lab of Dr. Adam Feinberg. Here her work focused on engineering 3D fibroblast tissue in an extracellular matrix-based gel, treated with TGF- β to study the mechanism of cardiac fibrosis. Prior to her graduate studies, she earned her BS in biochemistry from Coastal Carolina University in 2017, where she

conducted teaching grant funded research for Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) treatment. Currently, Ms. Powers is a research specialist in the Soloff/Dhupar Lab at the Hillman Cancer Center in the department of Cardiothoracic Surgery. Here she has worked on several research projects examining tumor-associated macrophages and antitumor immunity. Her most recent project explores sex-based differences in the pulmonary immune response to respiratory toxins and their association with lung cancer.



Naveen Kumar Tangudu, PhD completed his bachelor's and master's degree in India. Later, he obtained cancer research experience from an esteemed institute CCMB, India in breast and colon cancer therapeutics. In 2013, he joined University of Ulm, Germany to obtain his PhD in Iron Biology under guidance of Dr. Maja Vujic Spasic. During his PhD, he studied the role of "macrophage ferroportin in the maintenance iron homeostasis and

disorders" and published several articles in peer reviewed journals. In 2019, he joined Dr. Katherine Aird's lab for postdoctoral training. During these 3 years, he has been involved in several projects in lab. One is "investigating the role of p16 in nucleotide metabolism and senescence" and a second is "exploring the metabolic vulnerabilities of cyclin E1 high ovarian cancers". As a postdoctoral fellow, he was awarded the "outside the box grant" to do ovarian cancer research, has published three co-author papers, one commentary, and a first author review.

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Beth Wild is the President of UPMC Hillman Cancer Center. Prior to being named President in July 2021, Ms. Wild had served as the Senior Vice President for UPMC Hillman Cancer Center since 2015. She also was the Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for UPMC Hillman from 2004 to 2008. Prior to rejoining UPMC in 2015, Ms. Wild spent nearly eight years leading the strategy and operations of a healthcare start-up company, Cancer Treatment Services International (CTSI), which focused on delivering healthcare solutions in emerging markets. As Executive Vice President for Operations, Strategy and Development, she led the planning and implementation of a state-of-the-art cancer hospital and satellite network in India leading up to CTSI receiving Series A financing from private equity firm Texas Pacific Group (TPG) Growth. Prior to her time at UPMC and CTSI, Ms. Wild worked as a business analyst with McKinsey & Company, where she concentrated in healthcare strategy, financial services and not-for-profit management. Ms. Wild graduated summa cum laude as class valedictorian from the University of Notre Dame in the honors program with a bachelor's degree in history and computer applications. She also graduated with academic distinction from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University with a master's degree in business administration. She serves on the Board of Directors for Pittsburgh Human Animal Rescue, First Tee Pittsburgh and Lending Hearts. Ms. Wild is a native of Western Pennsylvania having grown up in the Altoona-Johnstown area and then Washington, PA. Ms. Wild makes her home in the Lawrenceville neighborhood of Pittsburgh with her two corgis, Naela and Annie.



Wallis Wilde-Menozzi is an essayist, poet, and author of *Mother Tongue, An American Life in Italy*. She says, "Using words to write a book on silence often felt like a contradiction to me. I sometimes longed for a solution like John Cage's, when musicians performed his composition of silence for four minutes and thirty-three silent seconds. Or like Tilley Olsen's, defining it from a single angle: the suffocating realities of women who were without means and fair chances. Instead, my experience of a cross-cultural existence made my translation of silence inevitably one of continuous openings: flows and breaks suggesting horizons beyond the narrow definitions we assume in identity, our histories, our language. I composed the final chapters of *Silence and Silences* in Italy during a lockdown period in the pandemic. Covid 19 penetrated--but by no means dictated--the book's flow. My writing assumes that the unknown is always right before our eyes. In the world ahead, to live fully we will need more courage, imagination and equality. Giving space to silence and unknowing will help us perceive our interconnectedness."