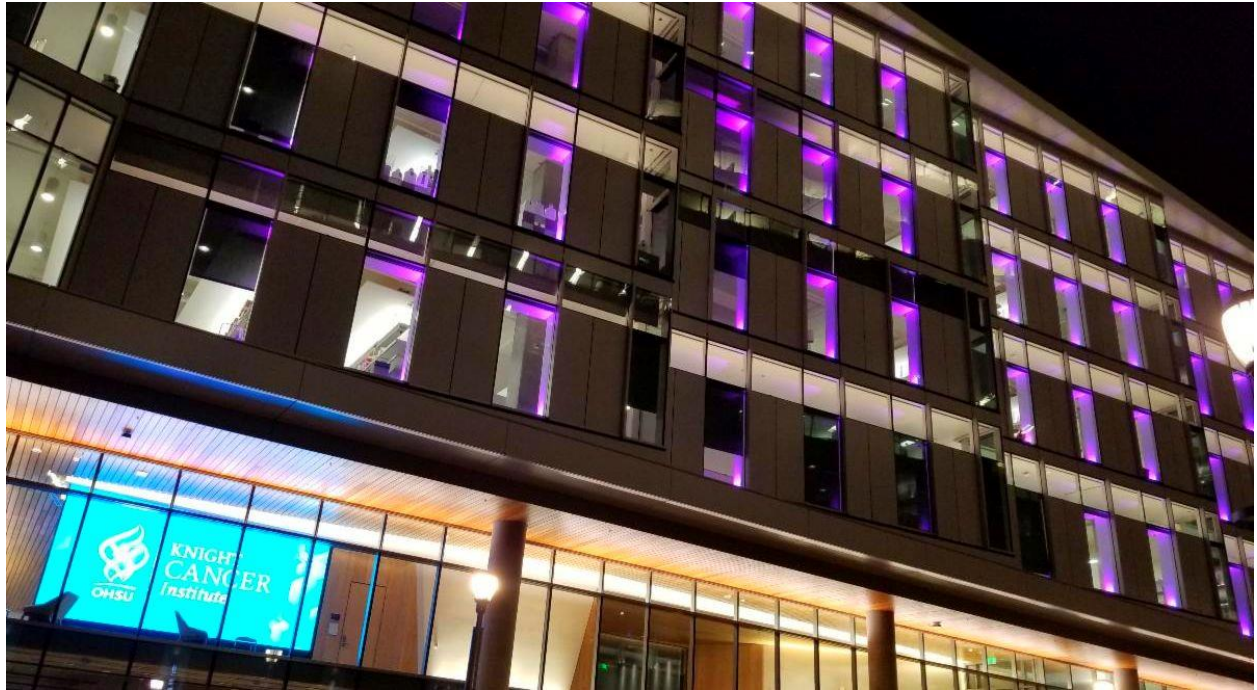


BRENDEN-COLSON CENTER FOR PANCREATIC CARE



The Brenden-Colson Center for Pancreatic Care is a patient-centric research hub for programs that focus on three main areas essential for alleviating suffering from pancreatic diseases: Earlier Detection, Advanced Therapy, and Patient Resiliency

Our Newsletter serves as a way for us to stay connected, share pancreas-related funding opportunities and community events, and provide updates on the successes and progress the Center is making.

In the news this month:

- Meet Katherine Pelz
- Congratulations Zinab on a Successful Thesis Defense!
- Jonathan Brody Joins PanCAN's Scientific & Medical Advisory Board
- Aaron Grossberg Promoted to Associate Professor
- Apply for a BCCPC Travel Award
- Apply for PanCAN Underrepresented Minority Travel Award
- Farewell Grace McCarthy, BCCPC Outreach Coordinator
- Upcoming Events
 - Pancreas Research Monthly— August 11
 - BCCPC Happy Hour— August 17

- PDCM and TEC Joint Annual Investigators Meeting— August 30-September 1
- Recent BCCPC Publications
 - Sendai Virus Is Robust and Consistent in Delivering Genes Into Human Pancreatic Cancer Cells
 - Population screening shows risk of inherited cancer and familial hypercholesterolemia in Oregon
- Conferences for Your Calendar

Meet Katherine Pelz



Katherine Pelz, a 3rd year M.D./Ph.D. student at OHSU, just joined Teresa Zimmers' lab for the PhD portion of her training!

Completing her first 2 years of medical school put into perspective for her the ways in which clinical practice can drive basic research and vice versa. Connecting clinical practice, clinical research, and basic science is what brought her to OHSU, because OHSU promotes collaboration and provides infrastructure to support translational research.

In the Zimmers lab, Katherine will be studying cancer cachexia. This builds off the research she worked on prior to medical school in labs of Drs. Daniel Marks and Aaron Grossberg, where she first became interested in how cancer can drive cachexia and, in

turn, cachexia can worsen cancer outcomes. Excitingly, she will be joining the Zimmers lab this fall at the 7th Cancer Cachexia Conference in Scotland!

For her research, Katherine will be working towards two projects: 1) analyzing CT images from patients enrolled in the PACTO trial (A Multinational, Randomized, Phase II Study of the Combination of Nab-Paclitaxel and Gemcitabine With or Without Tocilizumab, an IL-6R Inhibitor, as First-line Treatment in Patients With Locally Advanced or Metastatic Pancreatic Cancer), in order to understand the effect of tocilizumab on cachexia, and 2) investigate whether cachexia can drive pancreatic

cancer metastasis. Katherine is still creating her experimental design and questions for the second project, so she welcomes any feedback and suggestions!

Because she is early in her medical training, Katherine is still deciding on what to specialize in as a physician. So far, she really enjoyed her medical oncology rotation with Dr. Charles Lopez. In terms of research, Katherine is hoping to continue investigating pancreatic cancer. Her overarching career goal is to be able to work with and treat patients, while pursuing research that provides insight into their diseases and ultimately can translate into better treatment for them.

Fun Fact: Katherine learned how to cross-country ski this past winter and is in search of good trail recommendations! They just have to be dog-friendly as her pup, Kona (pictured), wouldn't forgive her if she went without him.

Congratulations Zinab on a Successful Thesis Defense!

Sending a big congratulations to Dr. Zinab Doha, who successfully defended her thesis entitled “**Modeling the Heterogeneity and Targeting the Resistant Mechanism of Triple-Negative Breast Cancer**”.

Dr. Doha completed her thesis under the mentorship of Dr. Rosalie Sears, where she will continue on as a postdoctoral scholar.



Jonathan Brody Joins PanCAN's Scientific & Medical Advisory Board

Congratulations to Jonathan Brody, Ph.D. for being selected to join the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network's Scientific & Medical Advisory Board (SMAB)!

PanCAN's SMAB, comprised of leading scientists, clinicians and healthcare professionals from institutions across the US, provides expertise to guide PanCAN's research initiatives, in addition to resources and services for patients, caregivers, and healthcare professionals.

Aaron Grossberg Promoted to Associate Professor

Aaron Grossberg, M.D., Ph.D., previously an Assistant Professor of Radiation Medicine in the School of Medicine, has recently been promoted to Associate Professor. Big congratulations!

Apply for a BCCPC Travel Award

The Brenden-Colson Center for Pancreatic Care will be offering up to \$1200 for 3 trainees each to present their pancreas-related work at one of this fall's pancreas meetings (i.e., [AACR Pancreatic Cancer](#), [7th Cancer Cachexia Conference](#), or [APA Annual Meeting](#))

If you are attending one of these conferences and want to apply for the BCCPC Travel Award, please send a brief email describing your goals or expectations for participation in this conference and attach your submitted abstract with submission confirmation notice to [Loa Nowina-Sapinski](#) by **August 11, 2023**.

Apply for PanCAN Underrepresented Minority Travel Award

To support its commitment to increasing diversity at pancreatic cancer research conferences, PanCAN is offering a travel scholarship to provide an opportunity for Underrepresented Minority (URM) graduate students and early postdocs to attend the [2023 AACR Special Conference: Pancreatic Cancer](#) (co-chaired by our own Rosie Sears) as well as the [2023 PanCAN Scientific Summit](#).

To be eligible, applicants must meet all the following eligibility criteria:

- Graduate student or early postdoc (within 3 years of obtaining degree)
- Hispanic or Latino, American Indian or Alaska Native, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- Currently working at a U.S. institution

To apply, email [Loa Nowina-Sapinski](mailto:Loa.Nowina-Sapinski) for an application form.

Completed forms must be returned to grants@pancan.org by August 15, 2023.

Support is limited to two scholarships this year and available on a first-come first-served basis. Final approval for scholarship is contingent upon completed registration to attend the conferences.

Farewell Grace McCarthy, BCCPC Outreach Coordinator



This month marks a farewell to Grace McCarthy, Ph.D., as she departs OHSU to take on a prestigious fellowship in the Immediate Office of the Director at the NIH in Washington DC. Grace began her work with the BCCPC by helping to successfully move the Brody lab across country during the pandemic (Summer 2020), while completing an outstanding thesis focused on pancreatic cancer. She then did a brief post-doc in the Brody lab before joining the BCCPC staff as the inaugural Outreach Coordinator in January, and in this short time continued to make her mark on our Center, working with PIs, Knight outreach teams, and BCCPC admin staff. She has revised all the content on our website, revved up our Twitter account, expanded our presence at the annual Purple Stride event and pretty much single-handedly produced this monthly newsletter. Best wishes Grace, we will miss you, but you will always be part of the BCCPC family!

Upcoming Events

Pancreas Research Monthly

Chris Joseph was diagnosed with stage three pancreatic cancer in October 2016, and considers himself not just a survivor but a thriver. His first book, “Life is a Ride: My Unconventional Journey of Cancer Recovery,” was published in 2020.

Join us for this month’s BCCPC Pancreas Research Monthly on “**Thriving with Pancreatic Cancer: A Seven Year (and Counting) Journey**”. Chris will give his perspective on his diagnosis and on standard-of-care vs alternative treatment options for pancreatic cancer.



Light breakfast and beverages will be provided!

Date: Friday, August 11, 2023

Time: 9:00AM-10:00AM

Location: KCRB Auditorium & [WEBEX](#)



BCCPC Happy Hour

Come join us for your favorite beverage and a chance to catch up outside of work!

Date: Thursday, August 17, 2023

Time: 4:00PM-5:00PM

Location: Elephants

PDCM and TEC Joint Annual Investigators Meeting

Drs. Rosie Sears and Jonathan Brody are hosting a joint meeting of two of the NCI’s big consortiums: Patient-Derived Models of Cancer (PDMC) and Cancer Tissue

Engineering Collective (TEC). Owen McCarty is the Keynote speaker.

Register and submit a poster abstract [HERE](#) by July 27th!

Date: August 30-September 1, 2023

Location: OHSU Knight Cancer Center

Questions? Contact mc2center@sagebase.org



Recent BCCPC Publications

Gene delivery, to modulate gene expression and identify potential gene-based therapeutic targets, has mostly been optimized for islet and acinar pancreatic cells. For PDAC, lentiviruses are the main delivery system, but their transduction efficiencies vary depending on the subtype of PDAC tumor. Dr. Dmytro Grygoryev, and many current and previous researchers in the BCCPC (Drs. Jason Link, Dove Keith, Brittany Allen-Petersen, Brett Sheppard, Terry Morgan, Rosalie Sears, and Jungsun Kim) systemically compared transduction efficiencies of lentiviral and Sendai viral vectors for normal pancreatic ductal and PDAC cells in their recent submission to CellPress: “[Sendai Virus Is Robust and Consistent in Delivering Genes Into Human Pancreatic Cancer Cells](#)”. Ultimately, they determined that the Sendai viral vector provides the most robust gene delivery efficiency, regardless of PDAC cell types. This publication is available for *Sneak Peek, a preview of papers under review*.

The [Healthy Oregon Project](#) (HOP) is an app-based platform focused on providing no-cost hereditary cancer screening for communities throughout Oregon. Ran by Dr. Jackilen Shannon and CEDAR, with the support of geneticists, community outreach specialists, scientists and genetic counselors, the team found that after screening over 13,000 Oregonians, the overall rate for genetic variants associated with inherited cancer in HOP participants was 5.0% — higher than expected based upon previously reported findings. You can read more on their methods, findings and lessons learned in their recent publication, “[Population screening shows risk of inherited cancer and familial hypercholesterolemia in Oregon](#)”.

Conferences for Your Calendar

[PDCM and TEC Joint Annual Investigators Meeting](#): August 30-September 1, 2023

[AACR Special Conference: Pancreatic Cancer](#): September 27-30, 2023

[Cancer Cachexia Conference](#): September 28-30, 2023

[Cancer Biology Training Consortium \(CABTRAC\) Annual Retreat](#): October 22-24, 2023

[PITA-IXA-CTRMS 2023 Joint Congress](#): October 26-29, 2023

[American Pancreatic Association Annual Meeting](#): November 15-18, 2023



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