

2024 American Cancer Society National Navigation Roundtable
ANNUAL MEETING BIOGRAPHIES**Gladys Arias, MPA**

Gladys Arias, MPA, is a Principal for Health Equity Policy Analysis and Legislative Support at the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN), the American Cancer Society's nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy affiliate. In this role she works to advance public policy that will advance health equity across the cancer care continuum. Ms. Arias serves on the NNRT's Policy task group as a tri-chair

**Anabella Aspiras, MPA, RN, BSN**

Anabella Aspiras, MPA, RN, BSN, serves as the Assistant Director for Engagement on the Biden Cancer Moonshot, which the President and First Lady reignited to mobilize a national effort to end cancer as we know it. As Assistant Director for Engagement, Anabella works with patients, caregivers, healthcare providers, academic institutions, foundations, and industry to advance the ambitious goals of the Cancer Moonshot: (1) to reduce the death rate from cancer by at least 50 percent over the next 25 years, and (2) to improve the experience of people and their families living with and surviving cancer. Anabella was part of the Cancer Moonshot team in 2016 under (then) Vice-President Biden.

Prior to rejoining the Cancer Moonshot, Anabella served as the Chief of Staff at Mendel AI, a health-tech start-up leveraging clinical AI in the service of patients. Before Mendel, Anabella worked at Flatiron Health, where she led clinical abstraction operations to support the development of real-world data to inform oncology practice and policy. Anabella also launched a non-profit, Diversify Health, dedicated to establishing pathways for historically underrepresented groups to join, enrich, and lead the future of healthcare.

A nurse by training, Anabella's work has covered a wide range of settings, from Sierra Leone during the 2015 Ebola outbreak, to working on the frontlines of the COVID response in New York City at the start of the pandemic in 2020.

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Alan J. Balch, PhD

Alan J. Balch, PhD, has over 20 years of executive leadership in the nonprofit sector, focusing on advocacy areas such as access and affordability, health equity, prevention and early detection, and cancer research. Since 2013, he has served as the CEO of both the Patient Advocate Foundation (PAF) and the National Patient Advocate Foundation (NPAF), after being a board member since 2007. From 2006 to 2013, Dr. Balch was Vice President of the Preventive Health Partnership, a national collaboration between the American Cancer Society, American Diabetes Association, and American Heart Association. Prior to that, he was Executive Director of Friends of Cancer Research.

Dr. Balch has held leadership roles on numerous selective boards, steering committees, and councils, including the National Academies of Medicine, National Quality Forum, National Committee for Quality Assurance, and the Institute for Clinical and Economic Review. Recently, he was appointed Chair of the Global Patient Council for the International Society for Health Economics and Outcomes Research (ISPOR).

In addition to his leadership roles, Dr. Balch serves on editorial and advisory boards, including the Journal of Clinical Pathways and the Journal of Oncology Navigation and Survivorship. He is also a frequent peer reviewer for journals such as the Journal of Clinical Oncology and the American Journal of Public Health.



Tracy Battaglia, MD, MPH

Tracy Battaglia, MD, MPH, a renowned physician-scientist, champions health equity through innovative approaches and community engagement. With 23 years at Boston University, she led initiatives at Boston Medical Center, addressing health disparities. As Professor of Medicine and Community Health Sciences, she directed key centers and spearheaded community engagement at BU's Clinical Translational Science Institute. Her research focuses on equitable access to cancer care, notably through Patient Navigation programs. A two-time cancer survivor herself, Dr. Battaglia brings personal insight to her work. Recently, she joined Yale Cancer Center as Associate Director for Cancer Care Equity.

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ANNUAL MEETING BIOGRAPHIES**Jennifer Bires, LCSW, OSW-C, CST**

Jennifer Bires, LCSW, OSW-C, CST, is an innovative leader in the field of psychosocial oncology with over 15 years of experience building patient centered, supportive care programs for patients and families impacted by cancer. In her current role at Inova Schar Cancer Institute, Jennifer leads a team of oncology behavioral health therapists, social workers, nurse navigators and oncology dietitians, ensuring that patients and those who support them have access to psychosocial care and education, at no cost to them, to help cope with cancer and its impact on their well-being. Additionally, she oversees the Arts and Healing program utilizing the arts as a modality of healing. Her clinical specialties include sexual health, young adults with cancer and end of life care. Jennifer is a current PhD candidate in Palliative Care at the University of Maryland, Baltimore exploring the use of psychedelics as a behavioral health treatment modality for people impacted by cancer. She earned her master's degree in social work from Washington University in Saint Louis, and her bachelor's degree at Clemson University. She was awarded the Oncology Social Worker of the year in 2017 from the Association of Oncology Social Workers, sits on the Leadership Council for the Association of Oncology Nurse Navigators +, and Board of Trustees for the Association of Cancer Care Centers, is a member of the American Cancer Society National Navigation Round Table and is a past chair for the Board of Oncology Social Work.

**Danielle Brown, MBA, BSN, RN, OCN, CN-BN**

With more than 16 years of dedicated experience in oncology, **Danielle Brown, MBA, BSN, RN, OCN, CN-BN**, has played a pivotal role in driving the evolution of nurse navigation programs. Her commitment lies in steering and enhancing care coordination strategies, ensuring an improved and personalized cancer journey for each patient, every single time. As the Senior Director of Care Coordination at Florida Cancer Specialists & Research Institute, Danielle oversees a spectrum of crucial elements including navigation, remote triage, supportive services, genetics, behavioral health, and nutrition. Her expertise spans certified proficiency in breast cancer care, complemented by an MBA in healthcare management and Bachelor of Science in Nursing. Danielle's passion and expertise converge to revolutionize care pathways, ensuring that patients receive comprehensive, tailored support throughout their cancer journey.

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Elizabeth Calhoun, PhD, MEd

Elizabeth Calhoun, PhD, MEd, is a professor of Health Policy and Administration and most recently served as the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Population Health at the University of Illinois at Chicago. She is a co-chair of the Evidence-Based Promising Practice Task Group.



Michelle Chappell, MS

Michelle Chappell, MS, is a 19-year ACS employee and her most recent role was that of Senior Manager, State Health Systems Strategic Partnerships for the North Central region in 2020. Michelle has served in various roles throughout her career, focusing on advancing health equity. Her portfolio has included work focused on access to care, cancer screening, HPV vaccination, patient navigation and health policy. She has worked extensively with the implementation of evidence-based interventions to increase health equity and foster high quality cancer care across the cancer continuum. Michelle's work from 2020-2022 was as the Program Manager for the West Virginia Immunization Network. Michelle's current role is the Program Manager for the National Navigation Roundtable.



Heather Ciccarelli, MSW

Heather Ciccarelli, MSW, is the Director of the Patient Navigation Initiative at the American Cancer Society (ACS). With a Master of Social Work degree and a Master of Arts degree in teaching, she brings a unique blend of expertise to her role. Heather spearheads the Capacity-Building Grants and online seminar series at ACS.

Her journey with ACS began in 2008 as a Patient Navigator at Maine Medical Center, where she started making significant impacts in patient care. Heather later managed a sizable team of oncology patient navigators across New England and New York City, further solidifying her commitment to improving healthcare access.

Heather's passion lies in utilizing patient navigation to break down barriers to quality care, diminish disparities, and promote ongoing health equity throughout the cancer continuum.

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Monica Dean, HON-OPN-CG

Monica Dean, HON-OPN-CG, is the Director of Patient Navigation Program Development at AONN+ (Academy of Oncology Navigation), and strengthens relationships with advocacy groups to advance collaborative projects. With a bachelor's in health science and nutrition from Georgia Southern University, she secures funding for patient navigation educational initiatives by liaising with pharmaceutical interests. As a member of the Professional Oncology Navigation Task Force, Monica contributed to the creation of Oncology Navigation Standards of Professional Practice, ensuring navigators deliver quality care. Previously, as Director of the National Navigation Roundtable at the American Cancer Society, she oversaw initiatives and fostered partnerships. With a career spanning since 2007, Monica is dedicated to enhancing patient navigation in oncology.



Andrea "Andi" Dwyer, BS

Andrea (Andi) Dwyer, BS, is the Director of the Colorado Cancer Screening Program (CCSP) at the University of Colorado Cancer Center and The Colorado School of Public Health and serves as a co-investigator on multiple dissemination and implementation science grants, particularly focusing on health equity and sustainability strategies for lung, hereditary and colorectal cancer screening. Ms. Dwyer is on the Executive Committee of the Alliance of Community Health Workers, Patient Navigators and Promotora's de Salud. Andrea is the Chair of the National Navigation Roundtable, supported by the American Cancer Society and is on the Leadership Council of AONN+. Ms. Dwyer also advises Fight Colorectal, a national colorectal survivorship nonprofit, in their health promotion and research aims.

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Linda Fleisher, PhD, MPH

Linda Fleisher, PhD, MPH, is a Research Professor at Fox Chase Cancer Center and Temple University's College of Public Health. With expertise in health communications, disparities, and implementation science, Linda has made significant contributions to cancer prevention and control.

For over 17 years, Linda served as Project Director and Principal Investigator for the NCI's Cancer Information Service, assisting over half a million callers with comprehensive cancer information. She also founded Fox Chase Cancer Center's Patient Resource Education Center, pioneering multimedia patient education programs. Linda's work includes developing patient education interventions, promoting informed decision-making in clinical trials, and creating resources on health literacy and patient navigation. She has built extensive networks with diverse stakeholders to address health disparities and improve cancer outcomes.

As co-founder of the Pennsylvania Navigator Network and a member of the Academy of Oncology Nurse and Patient Navigator's Steering Committee, Linda continues to advance patient navigation efforts. She is leading a digital health initiative at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia to ensure evidence-based practices in mobile health tools. Additionally, Dr. Fleisher is the Vice Chair for the National Navigation Roundtable for the American Cancer Society.

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Elizabeth Franklin, PhD, MSW

Elizabeth Franklin, PhD, MSW, is a passionate advocate for individuals impacted by cancer, dedicated to ensuring that patient voices guide healthcare decisions and policies. Growing up in Kentucky, where cancer and poverty rates are among the highest in the nation, she was inspired by the inequities she witnessed to pursue a career in oncology patient advocacy, public policy, and research. For nearly two decades, Elizabeth has held leadership roles in both corporate and non-profit sectors.

Currently, she serves as Head of U.S. Public Affairs and Patient Advocacy, Oncology at Sanofi, where she collaborates with the advocacy community to advance innovation, ensure access, and improve health outcomes. Her previous positions include President of the Cancer Support Community and roles at the George Washington University Cancer Institute, Prevent Cancer Foundation, and the National Association of Social Workers.

Elizabeth is widely recognized for her leadership, earning the Association of Oncology Social Work's Quality of Life Award in 2022 and being named a 40 Under 40 leader in oncology in 2020. She has authored research articles in various journals and co-authored books on non-profit leadership and social work. She is actively involved in several professional organizations, including the Association of Oncology Social Work and the National Navigation Roundtable.



Katie Garfield, JD

Katie Garfield, JD, serves as a Clinical Instructor at the Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation of Harvard Law School. Since joining the Center in 2014, Katie has dedicated her efforts to advancing the Whole Person Care portfolio.

In her role, Katie collaborates extensively with community-based organizations, state agencies, healthcare providers, and national coalitions to tackle legal and policy barriers hindering U.S. healthcare providers and payers from effectively addressing patient health-related social needs.

Before her tenure at the Center, Katie worked as an associate at Ropes & Gray LLP. She holds a BA from Yale University and a JD from Harvard Law School. As a licensed member of the Massachusetts bar, Katie brings a wealth of legal expertise to her work in promoting comprehensive healthcare solutions.

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Emily Gentry, BSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, OCN

Emily Gentry, BSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, OCN, is the Director of Oncology Navigation for the East Florida Division of the HCA Healthcare Sarah Cannon Cancer Network. She focuses on driving operational excellence in HCA's navigation program by collaborating with cancer teams, providers, and hospital leaders to ensure high-quality, evidence-based care across the network.

With a background as an oncology nurse, Emily has held leadership roles at Baylor Scott & White Health, Medical City Healthcare-HCA North Texas Division, and served as Executive Director at The Academy of Oncology Nurse & Patient Navigators (AONN+), where she led national initiatives to support oncology professionals.

Emily is passionate about patient advocacy, mentorship, and education. She has worked to elevate the role of oncology nurse navigators in community hospitals, focusing on building processes and outcomes that integrate navigators into care teams. Whether developing Navigation Toolkits, authoring best practice papers, or speaking at advocacy forums, Emily is dedicated to advancing the role and value of the oncology navigator.

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ANNUAL MEETING BIOGRAPHIES**Sharon Gentry, MSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG,
AOCN, CBCN**

Sharon Gentry, MSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, AOCN, CBCN, has been professionally dedicated to oncology nursing for over 40 years with the last twenty-four focused on patient navigation. She started the first oncology navigation program in North Carolina where she was a breast cancer interdisciplinary team member connecting three systems of care and community resources in Winston-Salem, NC. She received her bachelor's degree in nursing at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and her master's degree in nursing education at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Sharon has been a member of the Academy of Oncology Nurse and Patient Navigators Leadership Council since its inception in 2009 and served as the Program Director for this organization 2020 – June 2023. Currently, she is the Editor in Chief of the Journal of Navigation and Survivorship (JONS) and CONQUER. She has co-chaired the annual/Midyear AONN+ conferences, managed the local navigation networks and served on the teams for certification, metrics, and acuity. She has also authored multiple articles in peer reviewed publications as well as authored chapters in books related to oncology navigation. She is an active member of the National Navigation Round Table Workforce Development working group. She is actively serving on the Commission on Cancer Accreditation Committee and the Quality Improvement Committee.

**Molly Harden, MSW**

Molly Harden, MSW, is an Oncology Clinical Therapist with Inova Peterson Life with Cancer providing counseling, psychoeducation, and resources to meet the unique needs of patients in survivorship. She received her master's degree in Social Work from Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). Molly's previous clinical experience includes working across Inova's Inpatient Behavioral Health Services supporting adults and adolescents seeking comprehensive mental health treatment. She has facilitated groups based on cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) and dialectical behavioral therapy (DBT) skill development, in addition to talk therapy to support patients in their emotional processing. Molly brings a passion for mental health and wellbeing in the context of cancer prevention and survivorship. She enjoys spending time with her husband and two young children, reading, and running.

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ANNUAL MEETING BIOGRAPHIES**Danelle Johnston, MSN, RN, HON ONN-CG, OCN**

Danelle Johnston, MSN, RN, HON-ONN-CG, OCN, is a leader in Clinical & Navigation Services at Genomic Life. She integrates workflows with commercial and clinical partners, ensuring seamless services for members. As a nationally recognized expert in oncology navigation, Danelle facilitates timely access to genomic-based solutions for actionable insights.

Before joining Genomic Life, Danelle was Senior Vice President of Mission Delivery at Cancer Support Community, where she led service delivery and patient education, improving the patient experience through award-winning oncology navigation initiatives.

At The Lynx Group, Danelle served as Chief Nursing Officer and Senior Director of Planning and Initiatives. She was pivotal in expanding the Academy of Oncology Nurse & Patient Navigators (AONN+), leading the development of the only nationally accredited certifications for Oncology Nurse Navigators and Oncology Patient Navigators.

Danelle currently serves on the Professional Oncology Navigation Task Force and previously served on the Biden Cancer Initiative Advisory Committee. With over 28 years of progressive leadership in oncology nursing, she holds a Master of Science in Nursing with a focus on leadership and management from Western Governors University and a bachelor's degree in nursing from Azusa Pacific University. She is certified as an Oncology Certified Nurse (OCN) and Oncology Nurse Navigator, Certified Generalist (ONN-CG).

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Rebecca Kirch, JD

Rebecca Kirch, JD, is Executive Vice President of Policy and Programs for the National Patient Advocate Foundation (NPAF). As a leading health policy expert and advocate in her field, Rebecca is dedicated to advancing person-centered policies and practices that promote equitable patient access to affordable quality care across the lifespan. Prior to joining NPAF in 2016, she served for 15 years with the American Cancer Society and its advocacy affiliate, the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, directing quality of life and survivorship initiatives to integrate palliative care, psychosocial support and rehabilitation services with disease-directed treatment.

A frequently invited speaker on patient and care partner experience and engagement, Rebecca has authored numerous articles and book chapters, including publications in the New England Journal of Medicine, Archives of Internal Medicine, JAMA Oncology, Health Affairs, Circulation and other professional journals. She is the recipient of numerous national awards, has been featured in multiple media outlets and also serves in leadership roles on several stakeholder advisory committees and advocacy coalitions. She is a co-founder and policy adviser for Patient Advocate Foundation's Patient Insight Institute and is also dedicated to volunteer service as a board member for Care Camps Foundation that supports pediatric oncology camps for children and families.

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Jennifer Elston Lafata, PhD, is Professor with tenure in the Division of Pharmaceutical Outcomes and Policy and co-lead for the UNC Cancer Care Quality Initiative. She holds an adjunct appointment with the Department of Health Policy and Management at UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health and serves as an Improvement Advisor with UNC Health's Office of Quality Excellence/Basnigh Cancer Hospital and Cancer Services. As a health services researcher with a commitment to patient-centered care, her research is at the forefront of improving cancer care quality by identifying and addressing gaps in care delivery within healthcare organizations. She uses diverse methodologies, including quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods, to assess patient-reported needs, especially following provider recommendations, and the impacts of these needs on patient adherence and health outcomes.

Her work has been instrumental in developing and implementing population-based interventions aimed at enhancing care quality. As a practice-embedded health services researcher, she leverages health system data, including electronic health records, patient surveys, and office visit audio recordings, to identify and address multi-level factors affecting care quality. This work has resulted in the creation of decision support tools for both patients and providers, aiming to improve patient adherence to recommended care and to enhance overall care delivery.

Key areas of her current research include evaluating interventions to prevent acute care events among oncology patients, assessing the accessibility, equity and effectiveness of oncology integrated telehealth visits, and understanding shared decision-making processes in the context of lung cancer screening and other cancer care delivery. She is currently leading a project funded by AHRQ to develop a patient-reported measure of shared decision-making.

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Tracie Lewis, MS

Tracie Lewis, MS, is the Operations Director for the Colorectal Cancer Prevention Network at the University of South Carolina. Ms. Lewis joined the Network in 2017 and currently oversees their statewide patient navigation program and other grant initiatives to increase colorectal cancer awareness and access to timely screening. Prior to joining the Colorectal Cancer Prevention Network, she spent 21 years fostering relationships with hospitals, state agencies, health insurers, and community organizations to increase awareness, education, and access to care throughout the healthcare system specifically focused on cancer.



Raymond Liu, MD

Raymond Liu, MD, is a practicing medical oncologist, clinical researcher, and operational leader at Kaiser Permanente Northern California (KPNC), where he oversees the San Francisco Cancer Center. KPNC, a network of 21 community cancer centers, serves 4.5 million patients across Northern California. Dr. Liu is a recognized breast cancer expert within the Kaiser Permanente Cancer Excellence Program and is deeply involved in health services and quality improvement research, focusing on care coordination, telehealth, and team-based care.

In addition to his clinical and research roles, Dr. Liu holds academic appointments at the Bernard J. Tyson School of Medicine and UCSF. He plays a vital role in shaping cancer care nationally through his involvement with the Commission on Cancer and the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO). Dr. Liu has led initiatives to implement RN navigation programs across cancer centers and is currently spearheading efforts to integrate community health workers into care teams. His commitment to advancing high-quality healthcare extends to his service on various national committees, including ASCO's Survivorship Task Force and the American Cancer Society's Evidence-Based Promising Practice Task Force.

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Julie McMahon, MPH

Julie McMahon, MPH, is Director, Patient Navigation, at Susan G. Komen, responsible for the strategic direction and operational leadership of Komen's patient navigation programming, including Komen's nationwide navigation training program and Komen's telehealth navigation service delivery model within the Patient Care Center. She earned her B.A. in political science from Denison University, Master of Public Health in Epidemiology, from the Ohio State University.



Zarek Mena, OPN-CG

Zarek Mena, OPN-CG, has extensive experience in the field of patient navigation. She was instrumental in the creation, program implementation and accreditation of the breast center at Norwalk Hospital Nuvance Health, including its numerous support programs. She is now the Financial Patient Navigator at SHARE | Support for Women's Cancers (sharecancersupport.org), a national organization that offers free online and in-person programs, helplines and support groups for women and families affected by women's cancers.

She is on the Leadership Committee of The Academy of Oncology Nurse & Patient Navigators (AONN+). Zarek facilitates AONN+ Connecticut Patient Navigation Network (CTPNN), and the Oncology Patient Navigator-Virtual Network (OPN-VN). She contributes to LNN Development and Conference Planning. Zarek values the importance of mentorship and networking to propel the field of patient navigation forward. She has led local and national speaking engagements bringing her shared life and career experience to improve programs and address health equity for the cancer community. Zarek's passion in serving the under-represented and historically excluded communities has led to addressing various needs such as food insecurity, cold capping, grant funding, screening and prevention, integrative medicine, as well as financial toxicity. Her experience as a stage 4 colon cancer survivor, caregiver and knowledgeable professional provides much-needed first hand representation in the field of patient navigation.

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Angelo Moore, PhD, RN, NE-BC, FAAN

Angelo Moore, PhD, RN, NE-BC, FAAN, is the Founding Executive Director of the Center of Excellence for Integrative Health Disparities and Equity Research (CIHDER) North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University, where he is responsible for designing research projects and attracting federal and other research funding, assuring operational efficiency, implementation of research and outreach programs and services, the dissemination of research findings, developing professional partnerships to expand networks for outreach and educational awareness in targeted health areas, providing leadership to ensure achievement of major goals, strategies and performance targets, overseeing the management of CIHDER's budget, building partnerships with potential donors to create new revenue streams to ensure the financial sustainability of CIHDER. He also is Associate Professor in the School of Nursing.

He previously served as the Director, Office of Health Equity, Duke Cancer Institute (DCI), where he provided overall direction, coordination, and implementation DCI's community impact-designed projects to reduce cancer outcomes disparities in the DCI community and across its Catchment Area. He was responsible for: (1) Engaging meaningfully, respectfully, and collaboratively with community partners, (2) Building strong, bi-directional partnerships between our community and DCI cancer researchers, and (3) Developing a multi-level, prospective data infrastructure to guide community-DCI partnerships. He worked to achieve DCI's mission to reduce cancer disparities and improve population health in DCI catchment area for historically marginalized and medically underserved populations such as the African American, LatinX, Asian American, Native American, Jewish, Muslim, LGBTQ+, refugee, and rural communities. Dr. Moore led the Community-Facing Navigation program at Duke Cancer Institute who operated in the community by providing cancer education on prevention, early detection screening, navigating individuals needing cancer screenings, following up for abnormal screenings to diagnostic testing, and navigating patients into treatment if diagnosed with cancer. He is a member of the National Navigation Roundtable Steering Committee, and also serves on the Evidence Based Promising Practices Task Group and the Membership Committee.

Dr. Moore is also an Adjunct Associate Professor at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Nursing and serves on the America250 Health & Wellness Advisory Council, National Black Nurses Association Board of Directors, NC Advisory Council Cancer Coordination Control Early Detection Subcommittee, and numerous other committees.

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Bonny Morris, PhD, MSPH, RN

Bonny Morris, PhD, MSPH, RN, is a behavioral scientist and Vice President of Navigation at the American Cancer Society, where she leads the strategy, development, and implementation of navigation programs, including ACS CARES (Community Access to Resources, Education, and Support), ACS LION (Leadership in Oncology Navigation) and the Patient Navigation Initiative capacity-building grants. Her program development and research focus on multi-level strategies integrating digital health and patient navigation to optimize cancer care delivery. The collective goal of this work is to increase equitable access to high quality cancer care by providing strategic patient navigation funding and ACS program support to overcome patient, provider, and system barriers.



Timothy Wm. Mullett, MD, MBA, FACS

Timothy Wm. Mullett, MD, MBA, FACS, is a professor of surgery in the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery at the University of Kentucky (UK). With over 25 years of experience on the UK faculty, Dr. Mullett focuses his clinical practice and research on addressing the significant burden of lung cancer in Kentucky. He is a member of the UK Markey Cancer Center, the state's only National Cancer Institute-designated cancer center, where he also chairs the cancer committee. Under his leadership, the Commission on Cancer program at UK received the Outstanding Achievement Award in 2017.

In addition to his role at UK, Dr. Mullett served as CoC state chair for six years, earning the Outstanding State Chair award in 2019, and was installed as Chair of the Commission on Cancer in October 2020. Currently, he serves as the medical director of the Markey Cancer Center Affiliate Network, which provides high-quality cancer care at community centers across Kentucky. He is also the medical director of the Markey Cancer Center Research Network, overseeing a collaborative network that conducts high-priority oncology trials and studies, enhancing cancer care throughout the region.

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Julie Nickson

Julie Nickson is a Director of Federal Relations at the American Cancer Society, Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) where she leads ACS CAN's federal advocacy on cancer research and prevention with a focus on budget and appropriations. She also serves as the Chair of the One Voice Against Cancer Coalition (OVAC), a coalition founded by ACS CAN that includes over 50 national non-profit organizations representing millions of Americans unified in their message to Congress and the White House on the need for increased cancer-related appropriations.

Julie joined ACS CAN in August 2023 after serving over two decades on Capitol Hill as a Chief of Staff for a senior member of the House Appropriations Committee and member of the House Leadership. Julie brings deep expertise in federal budget and appropriations along with domestic and global health care policy and an extensive background in designing and executing strategic and impactful campaigns. Julie is also a cancer-survivor who brings her personal passion and commitment to the mission of ending cancer as we know it, for everyone.



Eva Ruiz Olivares, BSN, RN

Eva Ruiz Olivares, RN, joined Inova in May 2023 as a Life with Cancer Oncology Nurse Navigator to provide support, education, and guidance to patients in cancer survivorship. She currently works with the Inova Stem Cell transplant and Cellular therapy program. Prior to earning her Bachelor of Science in Nursing in 2020 from George Washington University, Eva worked as a patient navigator in oncology for 10 years. After completing her BSN degree, Eva worked as an inpatient nurse at George Washington University Hospital on a medical oncology floor and critical care unit. She enjoys reading, spoiling her dog Kobe, and spending time with friends and family.

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Cheryl Perry

Cheryl Perry was born and raised in Waynesboro, Virginia to two amazing and loving parents, Eugene and Elizabeth Perry. She also has two older brothers, Eugene Jr. and Anthony.

Cheryl graduated with a BS degree in Elementary Education at Vanderbilt University's Peabody College in 1978. In that same year, she started her teaching career in Nelson County Public Schools. While at Nelson, she completed her Masters degree in Curriculum and Instruction from Tennessee State University. In 1985, Cheryl traveled north to Fairfax County Public Schools and taught elementary students for the remaining of her teaching career. She retired in January of 2012.

Cheryl is a avid sports fan. She loves attending quite a few college and professional games. She is a huge Washington Commanders fan and has had season tickets for over twenty years. Her other interests are church, shopping, exercising, traveling, being with friends, and playing with her German Shepherd therapy dog, Cosmo.

Cheryl enjoys meeting people and is always willing to lend a helping hand whenever a need arises.



Joan Scales, MSSW, LCSW, OSW-C

Joan Scales, MSSW, LCSW, OSW-C, is currently the Psych-Oncology Program Director at Markey Cancer Center at the University of Kentucky. She has overseen the exponential growth psychosocial support services to Markey patients including distress management, patient navigation, expansion of counseling services as well as development for social work, nutrition, and navigation staff. Joan and her team also work on national and local research opportunities including the implementation of evidence-based tobacco cessation programs in Markey clinics. Employed by UK HealthCare for 15 years, Joan has worked with both pediatric and adult oncology populations. She has previous experience with The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society as well as Hospice of the Bluegrass. Joan earned her Master of Science in Social Work from the University of Louisville, Kent School of Social Work and lives in Lexington, KY with her family.

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Sarah Shafir, MPH

Sarah Shafir, MPH, serves as the Vice President of National Roundtables & Coalitions at the American Cancer Society. In her role, she leads a national convening strategy aimed at engaging diverse stakeholders to address critical challenges in cancer outcomes. With over 30 years of experience in public health and coalition development, Sarah provides strategic direction, execution, and evaluation for six mission-critical national roundtables focusing on various cancer types and patient navigation.

As co-Principal Investigator of the organization's technical assistance and training program for CDC-funded cancer control programs, Sarah ensures effective support for comprehensive cancer control initiatives nationwide. She is adept at developing outcomes-based strategies and fostering strategic partnerships to drive impactful change. Sarah holds a Bachelor of Science from the University of Maine at Farmington and a Master of Public Health from Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine.

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Jeanne Silva, MSN, RN-BC, serves as the Assistant Vice President of Nurse Navigation and Oncology Access at RWJBarnabas Health and Rutgers Cancer Institute. In this role, she oversees navigation and access decisions that influence healthcare outcomes, resource allocation, and the overall patient experience across a twelve-hospital system. Ms. Silva collaborates with multidisciplinary teams to create navigation programs that ensure equitable, timely, and patient-centered care.

With a Master of Science in Nursing from Walden University, Ms. Silva has an 18-year career that includes roles as a Nurse Educator, where she emphasized health literacy and standardized patient education. Her passion for oncology navigation led her to develop collaborative processes as a breast nurse navigator, promoting equity, quality, and cost-effective care throughout the patient journey.

Ms. Silva is dedicated to enhancing the effectiveness of navigation programs by implementing standardized metrics that improve communication, address patient barriers, and optimize both outcomes and cost of care across a large healthcare system.

**Shanthi Sivendran, MD, MSCR, MBA**

Shanthi Sivendran, MD, MSCR, MBA, is the Senior Vice President for Cancer Care Support at the American Cancer Society (ACS), and spearheads global initiatives enhancing patient and caregiver support. With expertise spanning strategic direction, thought leadership, and patient-centered communication, she pioneers innovative approaches in cancer care delivery.

Previously serving at the Ann B. Barshinger Cancer Institute, Dr. Sivendran brings over 12 years of experience in clinical practice, specializing in skin, breast, and sarcoma cancers. Notably, she led the development of a comprehensive skin cancer program and expanded palliative care services regionally.

Dr. Sivendran holds an undergraduate degree from Pennsylvania State University and a medical degree from University College Dublin School of Medicine. She completed her residency at Pennsylvania State University Hershey Medical Center and fellowship at Mount Sinai School of Medicine. Complementing her medical expertise, she holds a Master of Science in Clinical Research and an MBA from Isenberg School of Management.

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ANNUAL MEETING BIOGRAPHIES**Elsa Staples, MPH**

Elsa Staples, MPH, is the Senior Program Manager for the Colorado Cancer Screening Program (CCSP), joining the team in 2018 to support safety net clinic systems across the state with implementing evidence-based strategies to reduce disparities in colorectal cancer screening, lung cancer screening, and hereditary cancer risk assessment. Elsa also provides support and advisement for several state and national initiatives within the cancer continuum and patient navigation/community health work spheres, including serving on the Leadership Committee for the Colorado Alliance for Community Health Workers, Patient Navigators, and Promotores de Salud. Elsa has a Master of Public Health in Health Education and Communication and a Bachelor of Science in Public Health from Tulane University. She is passionate about working with communities across Colorado and nationwide to increase equitable access to and reduce barriers for cancer and healthcare services.

**Carter Steger, BA**

Carter Steger, BA, serves as the Vice President of State and Local Campaigns for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN). With over three decades of experience in public affairs and strategic leadership within state and local governmental health policy, Carter brings a wealth of expertise to her role.

In her capacity, she spearheads the development and implementation of ACS CAN's nationwide campaign strategy, focusing on advancing cancer and health equity policy priorities at the state and community level. Carter is instrumental in providing campaign support and resources to drive forward the organization's mission.

Furthermore, Carter plays a pivotal role in cultivating external partnerships and supporting funding initiatives to advance ACS CAN's policy objectives. Residing in New Hampshire, she holds a B.A. from Virginia Commonwealth University and has been actively engaged in issues and political campaigns from an early age.

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ANNUAL MEETING BIOGRAPHIES**Katrina (Katie) Steiling, MD, MSc**

Katrina (Katie) Steiling, MD, MSc, is an Associate Professor of Medicine at the Boston University Chobanian & Avedisian School of Medicine. As a pulmonologist at Boston Medical Center (BMC), New England's largest safety-net hospital, she has developed and integrated patient navigation into two major lung health programs.

Dr. Steiling implemented and directs the Lung Cancer Screening Program, which provides evidence-based low-dose CT screening to high-risk, low-income patients. To reduce delays in diagnostic evaluation and address lung cancer health disparities, she also founded and directs the BMC Lung Nodule Clinic, which offers patient-centered care for incidental pulmonary nodules.

Her research focuses on identifying and addressing racial, socioeconomic, and intersectional disparities in lung cancer screening and management through evidence-based interventions. Dr. Steiling currently leads the Oncology Equity Alliance, dedicated to overcoming barriers to patient navigation and improving patient-centered cancer care.

**Carmen Stokes, PhD, FNP-BC, RN, CNE**

Carmen Stokes, PhD, FNP-BC, RN, CNE, has been a Registered Nurse for almost 30 years, and a certified Family Nurse Practitioner for 24 years. She worked full time as an Associate Professor of Nursing for 20 years, educating and empowering students to become excellent caring professionals. She is an expert educator and is a nationally certified nurse educator (through the National League for Nursing). She taught and supported students in the undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral nursing programs.

Dr. Stokes currently works as a Navigator for the Gavini Center for Cancer Prevention, with an emphasis on cancer prevention and the prevention of cancer recurrence. Her personal experience with cancer: close family & friends, developed her awareness of both the fear that can arise with a cancer diagnosis, but also the POWER that comes from developing community and understanding that can be achieved through navigation and support. She has seen tremendous improvements in health outcomes directly related to patient navigation, partnership and support.

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Kristina Thomson, LCSW

Kristina Thomson, LCSW, serves as the Director of the American Cancer Society National Navigation Roundtable. In this capacity, she offers strategic guidance to establish a sustainable model for oncology patient navigation, aiming to foster health equity across all facets of cancer care. Kristina is deeply dedicated to supporting patients and caregivers while advocating for expanded equity in cancer prevention and treatment.

Before her tenure at ACS, Kristina's career spanned various roles as a licensed clinical social worker in both behavioral health and medicine within healthcare and business sectors. Her journey with ACS began as a project manager for a grant-funded palliative care initiative in New Jersey. Kristina has played a pivotal role in the revitalization of ACS' patient navigation strategy. Kristina holds a master's degree in social work from Rutgers University and a certificate in clinical social work from NYU, underscoring her commitment to professional excellence in supporting individuals and families facing cancer.



Arti Patel Varanasi, PhD, MPH, CPH

Arti Patel Varanasi, PhD, MPH, CPH, is a passionate leader focused on creating equitable solutions that promote healthier lives and inspire future innovators. With over 25 years of experience in cancer research, public health, and advocacy, she leverages technology to address chronic disease and advance health equity.

As President and CEO of Advancing Synergy, LLC, Arti led a project providing virtual support for breast cancer patients, partnering with Mercy Medical Center and Susan G. Komen for the Cure®. She was named a 2022-2023 Elevate Ambassador by the National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship. Arti is also active in the health, entrepreneurial, and technology communities and serves as Co-Chair for both the CORE Group's NCD Interest Group and the ACS National Navigation Roundtable Workforce Development Task Group.

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Sally Werner, RN, BSN, MSHA

Sally Werner, RN, BSN, MSHA, is a seasoned oncology nurse and health administrator with over 20 years of experience in both non-profit and for-profit healthcare systems. She has provided executive oversight for comprehensive cancer services, including research, registries, radiation oncology, infusion centers, and inpatient units, as well as home care, hospice, and palliative care.

For the past 7 years, Sally has led the Cancer Support Community (CSC), first as Chief Experience Officer, overseeing a network of 190 locations, and now as Chief Executive Officer. In her current role, she drives strategic objectives focused on growth, innovation, health equity, and fundraising while ensuring the mission of CSC is fulfilled globally.

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ANNUAL MEETING BIOGRAPHIES**Donna Moore Wilson, MSN, RN, CBCN**

Donna Moore Wilson, MSN, RN, CBCN, is a dedicated RN Care Coordinator at the UVA Health Breast Care Center, an NCI-designated comprehensive cancer center. With extensive experience in oncology, Donna has cared for patients in both inpatient and outpatient settings and has been a nurse navigator since 2007, playing a key role in developing and formalizing navigation programs.

Donna is the co-founder and current chair of the Virginia Cancer Patient Navigator Network (VaCPNN), which has provided education, best practices, and networking opportunities for oncology navigators across Virginia since 2007. Under her leadership, VaCPNN has aligned with the Academy of Oncology Nurse and Patient Navigators and the Cancer Action Coalition of Virginia. In 2018, VaCPNN received the Academy of Oncology Nurse & Patient Navigators Outstanding Local Navigator Award.

Donna earned her nursing degree from John Tyler Community College and later completed a Master of Science in Nursing from the University of Phoenix. She is a Certified Breast Care Nurse through the Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation. Throughout her career, Donna has served as an expert reviewer, mentor, and consultant in patient navigation. Her accolades include the Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation 2022 Sherry Kohlenberg Achievement in Healthcare Award, Bon Secours Sister Elizabeth Durney Award, Virginia March of Dimes Oncology Nurse of the Year Award, and several others.

Donna's passion for navigation is deeply personal, inspired by her experience supporting her late husband through his cancer journey, where she unknowingly served as his oncology nurse navigator. This experience solidified her commitment to the navigator's role as an advocate, educator, and facilitator, ensuring positive outcomes for patients and their families.