

Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center Training Navigator Newsletter

September 2024 UNMC
Newsletter Volume 8

Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer
Center National Cancer Institute
(NCI) Training Navigator Program
Administrative Supplement

Have a question about a
cancer education or career
opportunity at UNMC?
Email Misty Pocwierz-Gaines
at misty.pocwierz@unmc.edu



Misty Pocwierz-Gaines, MA,
Lead Training Navigator,
UNMC



Erin Higgins
Assistant Training Navigator

NCI Program Directors



[Dr. Maria Jamela \(Jay\)
R. Revilleza](#) & Misty
Pocwierz-Gaines



[Dr. Anil Wali](#) & Misty
Pocwierz-Gaines

Misty Pocwierz-Gaines attended the 17th AACR Conference on The Science of Cancer Health Disparities in Racial/Ethnic Minorities and the Medically Underserved in Los Angeles, CA where she met with several of the Program Directors from the NCI. Drs. Jay Revilleza and Anil Wali were glad to meet with Misty and strongly encouraged all scholars to contact them with any questions about the iCURE Program at NCI or readiness to apply for any NIH external grant mechanisms. Dr. Revilleza stressed that it is very important that each scholar has an up-to-date NIH biosketch. If you have not sent a biosketch to Dr. Solheim, or sent one several months ago, please send her your updated biosketch. If you would like assistance in creating one, please email Misty at misty.pocwierz@unmc.edu.

Student Spotlight



Marcela Carvajal-Suarez works in the College of Public Health as an Outreach Project Specialist for the Center for Reducing Health Disparities and is currently working on her Doctorate degree in Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Research.

This summer, Marcela was awarded the Suzanne and Ward Chambers Student Award to conduct a project with researchers from the University of Udine in Italy. She spent this summer collecting data for the “exploratory study of health and well-being among livestock workers in the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region of Italy.” This data is being compared with outgoing data collection efforts in the Central States Region of the U.S. Marcela is grateful to be able to contribute to binational, cross-cultural, and comparative research to improve the lives of agricultural workers and producers in both the US and the northeastern region of Italy. Marcela is currently looking at opportunities to present the results of this research at conferences, which will allow her to share her novel findings with other scientists.

Dean’s Forum: AI in Public Health

Join the COPH’s Student Association for a talk with guest speakers Rachel Lookadoo, JD, & Emily Glenn, MSLS on the topic of Artificial Intelligence in Public Health.

Location: MCPH 3013
Monday, September 30
12:00 – 1:00 PM



Virtual option also available via Zoom. Find more information and register here: <https://unmc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/10450564>

Faculty Spotlight



Dr. Juan Santamaria is an Associate Professor in the Division of Surgical Oncology. In his own words, he fell in love with surgical oncology because of his “father, who is a medical oncologist in Panama [where I grew up]. As a teenager, I was able to go to his clinic and...observed cancer surgeries.” Being a surgical oncologist allows Dr. Santamaria to utilize a multi-disciplinary team approach that he finds exciting as it has “immediate ability to render a patient cancer-free.”

Dr. Santamaria’s work allows him to advance as a scientist as well as a surgeon. One of his academic aims is to prioritize “enhancing breast cancer care for minorities and increasing clinical trial participation among underserved populations.” To this aim, he founded The Nebraska Breast Health Navigation Program, which utilizes volunteers “who provide peer-to-peer support to patients and families. Lay Patient Navigators help identify and resolve barriers to health care and enable patients to understand treatment recommendations that reflect best care practices” and “facilitate communication and trust between patients and providers.”

Dr. Santamaria was recently appointed as the Assistant Director (AD) of Clinical Integration for Community Outreach and Engagement (COE) at the FPBCC, where he “will play a crucial role in working with the clinical trial program to increase the overall accrual and diversity of” patients. This year he also accepted The National Hispanic Medical Association’s Outstanding Chapter of the Year Award on behalf of the Nebraska Chapter. This award “honors vigorous leadership and...impact in improving health within the Hispanic community.” In accepting the award, Dr. Santamaria acknowledged the vision and hard work of Dr. Armando De Alba and Dr. Sara Bares, who founded the Nebraska Chapter, as well as the dedication and accomplishments of all Hispanic physicians at UNMC and in Omaha which demonstrate a “commitment to promoting and advancing Hispanic health in our community.”

Read more about the Nebraska Breast Health Navigation Program here:

<https://www.unmc.edu/cancercenter/outreach/nbhnp.html>

Read more about Dr. Santamaria and the other newly appointed ADs of COE here:

<https://www.unmc.edu/newsroom/2024/05/15/cancer-center-announces-new-community-outreach-leaders/>

Read more about the award from the National Hispanic Medical Association here:

<https://www.unmc.edu/newsroom/2024/04/18/nebraska-nhma-chapter-named-national-outstanding-chapter-of-the-year/>

[Information about Dr. Santamaria reported here was also included in the UNMC web site.]

iCURE Pre-Application Webinar



Wednesday, October 2
2 PM CST

Follow this link or QR code to
register:

<https://bit.ly/iCUREwebinar2October>



Are you interested in learning more about the NIH's Intramural Continuing Umbrella of Research Experiences (iCURE)? There's an upcoming information webinar for those interested in learning more and/or applying. They have programs for post-masters, graduate students, and postdoctoral fellows.

Learn more about the iCURE program including eligibility requirements and the application process here:

<https://www.cancer.gov/about-nci/organization/cche/innovative-programs/icure>



Katie Muilenburg completed her PhD at UNMC and joined the iCURE Program as a postdoctoral fellow at NCI in Fall 2024.

Application Timeline



LEVERAGING AI AND INNOVATIVE STUDY DESIGNS TO TRANSFORM HEALTHCARE AND IMPROVE PATIENT OUTCOMES

The Details



21ST OCTOBER 2024



08:30 AM - 04:30 PM



SCOTT CONFERENCE CENTER
6450 Pine St. Omaha, NE 68106
or Livestream via Zoom

Keynote Presentations by:



SUSAN GREGURICK, PHD

High-impact Data-centric Programs and NIH Funding Opportunities

Associate Director for Data Science, Director of the Office of Data Science Strategy (ODSS)
National Institutes of Health



Automation and Efficiencies in Systematic Reviews and Guidelines

Associate Professor, Cumming School of Medicine
Department of Medicine, University of Calgary



GLEN HAZLEWOOD,
MD, PHD, FRCPC



ERIN ITURRIAGA, DNP,
MSN, RN

From Fundamentals to Frontiers: The Journey of Basic Science into Transformative Technology

Chief, Health Research and Development Branch, Division for Research Capacity Building, National Institute of General Medicine Science (NIGMS)
National Institutes of Health



Contemporary Clinical Trials: Current Advances and the Role of AI

Professor of Biostatistics & Bioinformatics; Director, DCRI Biostatistics;
Co-Chief, Division of Biostatistics & Bioinformatics
Duke University



CHRIS LINSELL, PHD



View the full agenda and register here.

Accredited Continuing Education:



JOINTLY ACCREDITED PROVIDER™
INTERPROFESSIONAL CONTINUING EDUCATION

In support of improving patient care, University of Nebraska Medical Center is jointly accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), and the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), to provide continuing education for the healthcare team.

PHYSICIANS/PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS

The University of Nebraska Medical Center designates this live activity for a maximum of 5.0 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

NURSES/NURSE PRACTITIONERS

The University of Nebraska Medical Center designates this activity for 5.0 ANCC contact hours. Nurses should only claim credit for the actual time spent participating in the activity.

Student Spotlight

Fred and Pamela Buffett Cancer Center



Contact Information:

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Milton Busquets recently joined the lab of Dr. Jingwei Xie in the UNMC Department of Surgery as a Ph.D. student and is focusing his research on “applying tissue engineering concepts to cancer research.” More specifically, Milton’s research focuses on



“improving and innovating the pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma (PDAC) patient derived xenograft (PDX) liver metastasis mouse model.” His research is focused on “understanding cell-biomaterial interactions” to “design the most suitable synthetic extracellular matrix that will serve as a transplantable patch to facilitate the migration and invasion of a PDAC PDX onto the liver of a mouse.”

Milton views the Training Navigator program as a great platform for staying up to date with important events and resources. He also appreciates how the program highlights the achievements of students doing cancer research. It helps him to “stay focused and motivated to continue pushing boundaries in science.” In the future, he plans to apply for funding opportunities and utilize other resources promoted and provided through the program. He plans on medical school after finishing his PhD with the hopes of becoming a physician-scientist.



Intramural Continuing Umbrella of Research Experiences (iCURE)



Updated August 2024



AT A GLANCE

Submission Period

September 23–
November 25, 2024

Expectation

Conduct research at the
National Cancer Institute

Eligibility

Postbaccalaureate (including
post-master's) individuals,
graduate students, and
postdoctoral fellows

Diversity

iCURE encourages
applications from individuals
from diverse backgrounds.

WHAT IS THE ICURE PROGRAM?

iCURE recruits cohorts of students and scientists from diverse backgrounds into the multidisciplinary environment of NCI and supports their mentored research experiences.

NCI values diversity and particularly encourages applications from individuals from diverse backgrounds, including those from groups underrepresented in the cancer research workforce, for example, those from the groups noted in the Notice of NIH's Interest in Diversity ([NOT-OD-20-031](#)), such as Blacks or African Americans, Hispanics or Latinos, American Indians or Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, as well as individuals with disabilities and individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds.

iCURE is an extension of the NCI Center for Cancer Health Equity's (CCHÉ's) highly successful extramural Continuing Umbrella of Research Experiences (CURE) training program. CURE supports the career progress of its scholars toward research independence and fosters diversity in the biomedical research pipeline.

WHAT DOES ICURE OFFER?

The iCURE program provides up to:

- » **Two-year awards** for postbaccalaureate (including post-master's) individuals
- » **Two-year awards** for graduate students
- » **Three-year awards** for postdoctoral fellows

iCURE scholars will also enjoy professional and career support, such as:

- » Opportunities to work closely with world-class researchers at NCI
- » Support from NCI program staff as well as resources on intramural and extramural funding opportunities
- » Professional and career development activities
- » Connections to an extensive mentoring network



WHERE DO I LEARN MORE?

For more information about
iCURE, eligibility, and how to
apply, please visit

[https://www.cancer.gov/
about-nci/organization/cche/
innovative-programs/icure](https://www.cancer.gov/about-nci/organization/cche/innovative-programs/icure)



CONTACT

If you are interested in applying, please contact:

Jessica Calzola, Ph.D., P.M.P.
Gregory Adams, Jr., Ph.D., M.S.
iCURE@nih.gov

APPLICATION TIMELINE

The application timeline for the current cycle is as follows:

**September 23–
November 25, 2024**
Application Accepted

January
Application Review

February
First-Round Decisions

February-May
Interviews

June
Final Award Decisions

September 1
iCURE Start Date

For more detailed information about the application process and program requirements, please visit the iCURE webpage or email iCURE@nih.gov.

AM I ELIGIBLE?

Eligible candidates include:

- » Postbaccalaureate (including post-master's) individuals, graduate students, and postdoctoral fellows
- » Citizens, non-citizen nationals, and individuals who have been lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the United States

NCI values diversity and particularly encourages applications from individuals from diverse backgrounds, including those from groups underrepresented in the cancer research workforce, for example those from the groups noted in the Notice of NIH's Interest in Diversity ([NOT-OD-20-031](#)).

WHAT TYPES OF RESEARCH EXPERIENCES DOES ICURE OFFER?

iCURE scholars will enjoy research opportunities in the [Center for Cancer Research \(CCR\)](#), the [Center for Global Health \(CGH\)](#), the [Division of Cancer Epidemiology and Genetics \(DCEG\)](#), and the [Division of Cancer Control and Population Sciences \(DCCPS\)](#).

BECOMING AN ICURE SCHOLAR

You must submit an application to be considered for an iCURE research experience. Once your application has been submitted, it will be reviewed by iCURE program staff and NCI principal investigators (PIs) who are interested in being research mentors. You will complete several interviews during the matching process, both with iCURE staff and with PIs. More than one PI may offer to interview you. This comprehensive process ensures a thoughtful and thorough mutual matching of scholars with research mentors, setting the stage for a productive and successful research experience.

