RESEARCH EDUCATION CORE

NEWSLETTER

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REC Co-Leaders, **Carolyn Fang, PhD** and **Frida Kleiman, PhD** with trainee, **Dieuseul Joseph** at the 2025 Mini-Symposium.

Summary

The TUFCCC/HC U54 Partnership continues to provide meaningful opportunities for research, mentorship, and training. This summer, we celebrated the contributions of our mentors, recognized the academic and career progress of our trainees, and shared our work through conferences and educational events. With SCRI 2026 ahead, we're excited to continue this progress together!

Scientific Conferences: At the 7th Annual SPEECH Conference, U54 members and trainees came together to share research, exchange ideas, and strengthen collaboration.

Summer Cancer Research Institute 2025: The Summer Cancer Research Institute (SCRI) 2025 successfully concluded with 13 trainees completing the 8-week program, which ran from June 9th through August 1st. Trainees gained valuable experiences - from learning laboratory techniques, to shadowing oncologists, to participating in community events. They showcased their hard work and growth at the SCRI Mini-Symposium. Congratulations on a job well done!

SPEECH Synergistic Partnership for Enhancing Excellence in Cancer Health | Temple University Lewis Katz School of Medicine | Fox Chase Cancer Center Temple Health | HUNTER The City University of New York

CONFERENCES

Seventh Annual SPEECH Conference

On Thursday, May 15th, the **Seventh Annual Regional Cancer Health Disparity Conference** was held virtually. The conference featured an exciting community-based presentation delivered by **Marilyn Fraser, MD,** CEO of the Arthur Ashe Institute for Urban Health and a powerful keynote address delivered by **Brian Rivers, PhD, MPH,** Professor and Director of the Cancer Health Equity Institute at the Morehouse School of Medicine.

In addition to the plenary session, the conference featured a riveting poster session with 58 presenters. Best Abstract Awards were distributed to 7 exceptional submissions.

- Jorge Canar
- Tamar Gurgenidze
- Korrey Hart
- Xinpei Jiang
- Andreia Lopes
- Elesha McGrath
- Gaurav Sahai Sahai

The event was a successful platform for scientific presentations, professional development, and meaningful discussions, and served to reinforce the tradition of mentorship and community within the SPEECH partnership.

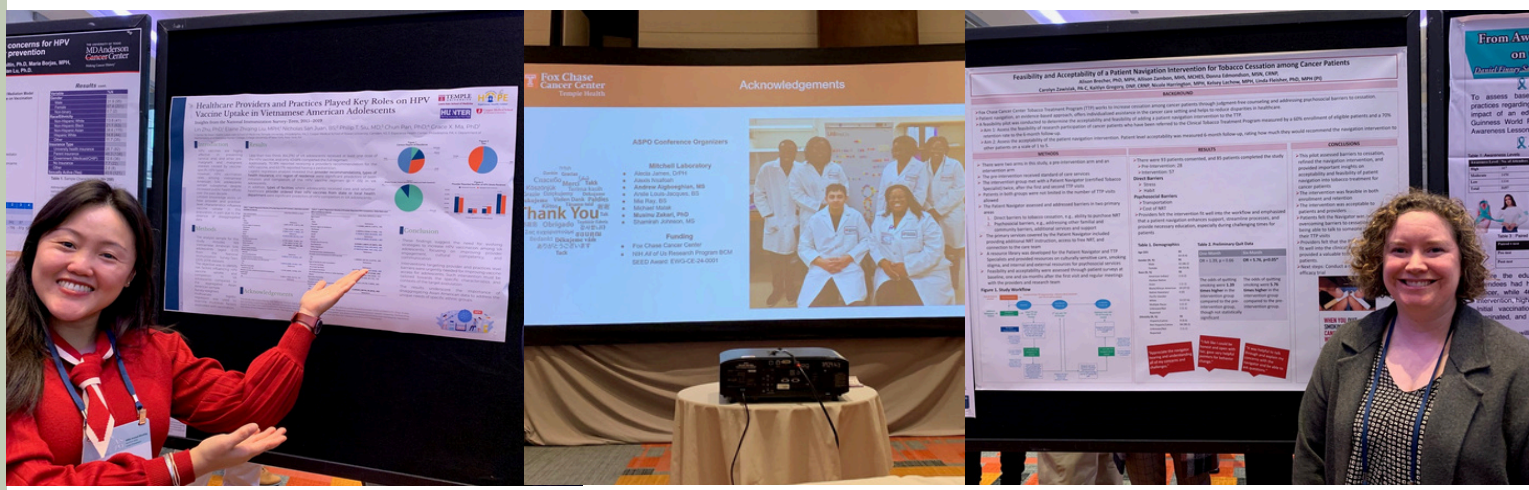
158
Registered Attendees

7
Best Abstract Awards

58
Poster Presentations

The American Society of Preventive Oncology (ASPO)

The 49th Annual ASPO Conference was held in Philadelphia, PA in April 2025. ASPO is a multidisciplinary society which sponsors a variety of professional education and research activities and is committed to serving as an advocate for cancer prevention and control research.



Members of the U54 team who presented at the 2025 ASPO Conference include **Lin Zhu, PhD** (PEC Co-Leader), **Khadijah Mitchell, PhD** (U54 Mentor), and **Alison Brecher, PhD** (U54 Trainee).

MENTOR SPOTLIGHT

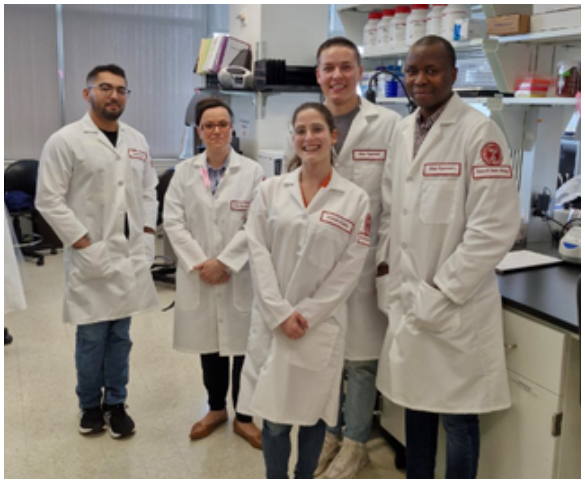
Lucia Borriello, PhD

Assistant Professor
Department of Cancer and Cellular Biology
Lewis Katz School of Medicine

Lucia Borriello is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Cancer and Cellular Biology at the Lewis Katz School of Medicine and a member of the Cancer Signaling and Microenvironment Program at Fox Chase Cancer Center in Philadelphia, PA. She holds a PhD in Cancer Biology and Pharmacology from the Medical University of Paris in France. After completing her graduate work, Dr. Borriello moved to the United States where she completed postdoctoral fellowships at the University of Southern California/CHLA in Los Angeles, and at Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York, to study how tumor, stroma, and immune cell interactions drive tumor progression, therapeutic resistance, and metastasis.

Dr. Borriello's laboratory seeks to understand how the tumor microenvironment regulates the dormancy and awakening of tumor cells. To this end, they use a multidisciplinary approach spanning multiplex immunofluorescence, organotypic culture, multiphoton intravital imaging, and in vivo models, with the mission of developing novel therapeutic strategies to eradicate dormant tumor cells and combat mortality from metastasis.

Dr. Borriello has published approximately 30 research articles and reviews in high-impact, peer-reviewed journals such as Nature Communications, Nature Methods, and Cancer Research. She is the recipient of several fellowships and awards, including the Susan G. Komen award.



MENTEE HIGHLIGHTS

We are proud to recognize the accomplishments of our trainees and extend our warmest congratulations as they continue to advance in their careers and academic pursuits!

Several of our trainees graduated this spring and are moving forward into the next phase of their professional journey.

If you are a former U54 trainee and have any updates to share, we'd love to hear from you!

Where Are They Now?

Elesha McGrath (SCRI 2023) graduated from Hunter College in May 2025 and presented her research titled "Investigating biological differences between KRAS G1^{2} mutations in response to KRAS inhibitor RMC-6^{23}6" at the CUNY Celebration of Undergraduate Research at John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

Anthony Ramadei (Pre-Pilot 2023, Pre-Pilot 2024) has started a new position as a Biotechnology Equity Research Associate at Raymond James.

Alexandra Reyes (SCRI 2023) graduated in May 2025 from Temple University with an MPH degree. She was awarded the Outstanding MPH in Social and Behavioral Sciences Award from the Temple University Department of Social & Behavioral Sciences.

Hannahlisa Smith (SCRI 2023) is currently a Master's student at CUNY School of Public Health and has a new position as a Policy Analyst at the New York City Department of Consumer and Worker Protection.

Ian Tom (SCRI 2024) recently received his registered dietitian certification and, following an internship as a Nutrition Counselor at Hunter College, began a new position as Dietetic Intern at New York City Health &

Community Collaboration

SCRI 2025 trainees **Evelyn Urgiles** and **Nathacha Cruz Perdomo** took part in a community event held in the lobby of Temple University Hospital, where they engaged directly with medical residents, fellows, and attendees.
They shared important information on cancer prevention, healthy lifestyles, and the benefits of routine health exams. In addition to providing educational materials, they organized interactive activities designed to encourage individuals to reflect more critically on their health behaviors.
Their efforts not only boosted community awareness but also highlighted the critical role that young scientists and future health professionals can play in promoting health behaviors.

SCRI 2025 Journey

SCRI Trainees

SCRI trainees are emerging scientists gaining hands-on research, clinical shadowing, and community health experience through the 8-week summer program.

After eight weeks of engaging in seminars, workshops, mentored lab research, and related activities, this exceptional cohort of trainees presented their findings at the 7th Annual Summer Cancer Research Institute Mini-Symposium. To prepare for the event, trainees were tasked with writing an abstract, designing a scientific poster, and delivering a presentation. They shared their research findings and accomplishments with mentors, staff, faculty, fellow trainees, lab members, and their family and friends.

Hunter College Trainees:

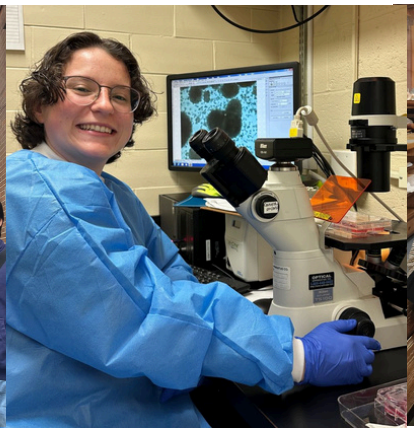
- Vladislav Iakimov
  - Mentor: Lucia Borriello, PhD
- David Xing
  - Mentor: Pedro Torres-Ayuso, PhD
- Nathacha Cruz Perdomo
  - Mentor: Seonhee Kim, PhD
- Brian Vega
  - Mentor: Jayashri Ghosh, PhD
- MD Sami
  - Mentor: Jorge Gomez-Deza, PhD
- Kaylyn Cortes-Munoz
  - Mentor: Kelly Whelan, PhD
- Savannah Sclafani
  - Mentor: Yuwaraj Kadariya, MD, PhD
- Maite Tenemaza
  - Mentor: Alfonso Bellacosa, MD, PhD

Temple University Trainees:

- Evelyn Urgiles
  - Mentor: Erin Tagai, PhD
- Dieuseul Joseph
  - Mentor: Teh Lin, PhD, FAAPM
- Sathvika Sesha Ganti
  - Mentor: Igor Astsaturov, MD, PhD
- Shreya Sen
  - Mentor: Christopher Schultz, PhD
- Lara Srour
  - Mentor: Y. Lynn Wang, MD, PhD, FCAP

The SCRI team would like to thank all of the TUFCCC faculty and staff involved in ensuring that the trainees had a fun and rewarding summer!

A special thank you to our SCRI 2025 mentors!

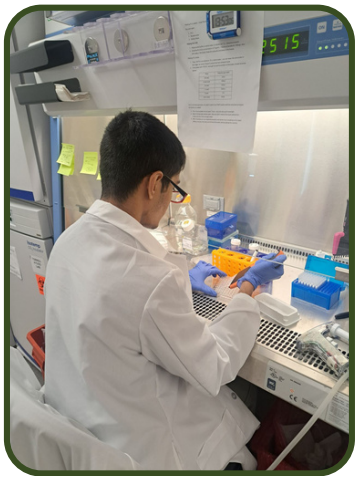


ARE YOU INTERESTED IN APPLYING FOR THE SUMMER CANCER RESEARCH INSTITUTE 2026?

To be eligible for the program, students must be currently enrolled at either Temple University or Hunter College as an undergraduate or graduate student. Applicants should have an interest in pursuing biomedical, clinical, or population-based cancer research. We encourage applications from students of all backgrounds. SCRI is held in Philadelphia each summer, on the Temple University and Fox Chase Cancer Center campuses.

Participants receive a stipend and will attend weekly cancer seminars and skill-building workshops, benefit from hands-on research training, and receive mentorship from an established investigator in the field.

If you would like to receive more information about the Summer Cancer Research Institute, please contact Emily Kaminsky at emily.kaminsky@hunter.cuny.edu or Yuku Chen at yuku.chen@fccc.edu.



Application checklist:

- Up to two letters of recommendation are highly encouraged. Please reach out to recommenders well in advance to request a letter.
- Resume or CV
- Unofficial transcripts

What makes a strong application?

- Completely answering all components of the short essay questions
- Research what you want to research!

Schedule of SCRI Information Sessions coming soon!

STAY CONNECTED

Research Education Core Leaders:
Carolyn Fang, PhD - Fox Chase Cancer Center
Frida Kleiman, PhD - Hunter College

Program Coordinators:
Yuku Chen, MPH - Yuku.Chen@fccc.edu
Emily Kaminsky, MS - Emily.Kaminsky@hunter.cuny.edu

For questions regarding the Research Education Core and any upcoming events, please contact one of our coordinators via email.

TUFCCC_HC
Research Education Core

@REC_U54

@REC_U54

The Synergistic Partnership for Enhancing Excellence in Cancer Health (SPEECH) is a highly collaborative and mutually beneficial initiative between Temple University/Fox Chase Cancer Center (TUFCCC) and Hunter College (HC). It is part of the NCI-funded U54 CPACHE (Comprehensive Partnerships to Advance Cancer Health Program). Building on the robust research infrastructure that has been established since the Partnership began in 2018, SPEECH seeks to advance cancer health research, training, and community-informed interventions through innovative, multidisciplinary projects led by basic, clinical, and population science researchers, alongside outstanding and promising trainees.

SPEECH
Synergistic Partnership for Enhancing
Excellence in Cancer Health