Researchers and Scientists Honored for Improving Cancer Prevention, Treatment and Patient Care

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Leaders in cancer care will be recognized as part of the American Society of Clinical Oncology Special Awards Program. The Special Awards recognize the dedication and significant contributions of researchers, patient advocates, and leaders of the global oncology community to enhancing cancer prevention, treatment, and patient care. Among this year’s awardees are an international leader in geriatric oncology and a hematologic oncologist whose work has improved patient care and the education of health care providers in Honduras.

“This year’s Special Awards recipients have made outstanding contributions to the field of oncology, leading a global effort to transform cancer care and improve the lives of people living with cancer,” said Clifford A. Hudis, MD, FACP, Immediate Past President of ASCO and Chair of the Special Awards Selection Committee. “It is our honor to recognize their innovation and dedication with the highest honors that ASCO awards every year.”

The 2015 Special Awards Honorees are:

David A. Karnofsky Memorial Award and Lecture
First presented in 1970, the David A. Karnofsky Memorial Award and Lecture honors Dr. Karnofsky by recognizing an oncologist who has made outstanding contributions to cancer research, diagnosis and/or treatment.

Suzanne L. Topalian, MD, is professor of surgery and oncology and director of the Melanoma Program in the Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. Dr. Topalian’s studies of human antitumor immunity have provided a foundation for the translational development of cancer vaccines, adoptive T-cell transfer, and immunomodulatory monoclonal antibodies. Her current research focuses on manipulating immune checkpoints such
as programmed cell death-1 in cancer therapy and the discovery of biomarkers to aid in the development of these therapies. Named one of *Nature*'s 10 in 2014, her research has helped establish immunotherapy as an important treatment modality in cancer.

Science of Oncology Award and Lecture
Created in 2005, the Science of Oncology Award and Lecture is presented annually in recognition of a recipient’s outstanding contributions to basic or translational research in cancer.

**James P. Allison, PhD,** is professor and chair of The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center Department of Immunology in the Division of Basic Science Research. He directs the Immunotherapy Platform and is deputy director of the David H. Koch Center for Applied Research in Genitourinary Cancers. He also is a Howard Hughes Medical Institute Investigator. His research focuses on T cell response mechanisms and applying that basic understanding to overcome cancer’s evasion of attack by the immune system. These discoveries led to the clinical development of ipilimumab to block CTLA-4, FDA approved to treat melanoma. Ipilimumab and other agents continue to demonstrate effectiveness against other cancers.

ASCO-American Cancer Society Award and Lecture
First presented in 1993, the ASCO-ACS Award and Lecture recognizes significant contributions to cancer prevention and control research or practice.

**Ernest Hawk, MD, MPH,** is vice president and head of the Division of Cancer Prevention and Population Sciences at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, co-leader of the institution’s Cancer Control Platform, executive director of the Duncan Family Institute for Cancer Prevention and Risk Assessment, and the Boone Pickens Distinguished Chair for Early Prevention of Cancer. His work has resulted in over 175 publications regarding cancer prevention and control. His research interests include preclinical and clinical chemoprevention; integrating risk assessment and preventive interventions in clinical trials; and increasing the participation of minority and underserved populations in translational and clinical research.

B.J. Kennedy Award and Lecture for Scientific Excellence in Geriatric Oncology
Created in 2007 in honor of B.J. Kennedy, MD, this award and lectureship recognizes an ASCO member who has made outstanding contributions to the research, diagnosis and treatment of cancer in the elderly, and in bringing an understanding of geriatric oncology to fellows and junior faculty.

**Silvio Monfardini, MD,** is director of the Geriatric Oncology Program at Istituto Palazzolo, Fondazione Don Gnocchi, in Milan. An international leader in geriatric oncology, Dr. Monfardini has served as past president of the European Society for Medical Oncology (1984-1987), the
Associazione Italiana di Oncologia Medica (1986-1988), and the International Society of Geriatric Oncology (2003-2004). Dr. Monfardini has served as chief of the Division of Medical Oncology of the Istituto Oncologico Veneto of Padua, scientific director of the Istituto Nazionale per lo Studio e la Cura dei Tumori di Napoli, and scientific director of the Centro di Riferimento Oncologico of Aviano. He has authored more than 340 indexed publications in oncology, more than 95 of which are dedicated to geriatric oncology.

Distinguished Achievement Award
Created in 2009, the Distinguished Achievement Award recognizes leadership or mentorship by a scientist, practitioner or researcher in any subspecialty of oncology that has benefited ASCO members and/or their patients.

George Bosl, MD, has devoted his oncology career to patient care, research, and education. While probably best known for his work in the management of testicular cancer, he also cared for patients with other genitourinary cancers and head and neck malignancies and was an early investigator in the application of larynx preservation techniques. Dr. Bosl holds the Patrick M. Byrne Chair in Clinical Oncology at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (MSKCC) and is a Professor of Medicine at the Weill Cornell Medical College. He is also chair of the Department of Medicine MSKCC, overseeing 33 services in five divisions and more than 350 physicians. He served on the ASCO Board of Directors and was Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*.

Excellence in Teaching Award
First awarded in 2014, the Excellence in Teaching Award recognizes an ASCO member who has had a demonstrable impact on their trainees and who have inspired and shaped the trainee’s practice of cancer medicine.

Dean F. Bajorin, MD, FACP, is an attending physician and member at Memorial Hospital, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (MSKCC) and professor of medicine at Weill Medical College of Cornell University in New York, serving as a member of the MSKCC Genitourinary Oncology faculty. With a long-standing commitment to teaching, he is the director of MSKCC’s Medical Oncology/Hematology Fellowship Program and the Advanced Oncology Fellowship Program. Dr. Bajorin's research focus is on the development of novel treatments for patients with genitourinary cancers, and he has published extensively in this area. He also has served as a reviewer for genitourinary cancer research in international journals such as the *Journal of Clinical Oncology* and the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

Gianni Bonadonna Breast Cancer Award and Lecture
First presented in 2007 and named in honor of cancer research pioneer Gianni Bonadonna, this award recognizes an active clinical and/or translational researcher with a distinguished record of
accomplishments in advancing the field of breast cancer and with exceptional mentoring abilities.

Matthew Ellis, MD, PhD, is a renowned clinician scientist in the area of genomics and molecular profiling of breast cancer. He has been instrumental in developing a Genome Atlas and Therapeutic Road Map for estrogen receptor-positive breast cancer. He also pioneered research into the clinical relevance of activating mutations in HER2 and in the deployment of patient-derived xenografts for the pharmacological annotation of breast cancer genomes. He is co-leader for The Cancer Genome Atlas (TCGA) Breast Project and co-PI for the Clinical Proteomic Tumor Analysis Consortium that endeavors to translate TCGA genomic discoveries into protein-based biomarkers with clinical utility. Dr. Ellis is director of the Lester and Sue Smith Breast Center and professor of Medicine and Cellular and Molecular Biology at Baylor College of Medicine.

Humanitarian Award
First presented in 2011, the Humanitarian Award recognizes an oncologist who personifies ASCO’s mission and values by going above and beyond the call of duty in providing outstanding patient care through innovative means or exceptional service or leadership in the U.S.A. or abroad.

Jose Angel Sanchez, MD, hematologic oncologist at Hospital Escuela, University of Honduras, personifies ASCO’s mission and values by going above and beyond the call of duty in providing outstanding patient care through exceptional service and leadership. He was passionate about caring for underserved patients. His personal dream was to improve the education of health care providers in Honduras and he made that dream possible by volunteering for the International Cancer Corps/Health Volunteer Overseas, which partners with oncologists and oncology nurses to discuss the needs of patients and health care providers in Honduras. Since 2010 he has seen an improvement in patient care and a newfound enthusiasm among practitioners who are eager to learn and make a difference in their community.

Partners in Progress Award
First awarded in 2003, the Partners in Progress Award recognizes a person involved in patient advocacy activities that impact public awareness about cancer, its causes, cures, or treatment, or activities that result in additional support either legislatively or fiscally for cancer research, treatment, prevention or care.

Mary Lou Smith, JD, MBA, is a long-time advocate for cancer patients. In 2003, she co-founded the Research Advocacy Network (RAN) to bring patients and researchers together to ensure that patients’ voices are part of clinical research. For more than a decade, RAN has influenced research—from initial concept to patient delivery—through collaboration, education, and mutual support. Using focus groups and surveys, RAN has gathered information about patients’ preferences for various treatments to better understand the trade-offs they make between benefits
and side effects. Ms. Smith is also co-chair of the ECOG-ACRIN Cancer Research Group Cancer Research Advocates Committee and a member of the National Cancer Institute Board of Scientific Advisors.

Pediatric Oncology Award and Lecture
First presented in 2002, the Pediatric Oncology Award recognizes the career and achievements of an individual who has contributed outstanding scientific work—laboratory, clinical, or epidemiologic—of major importance to the field of pediatric oncology.

**Stephen E. Sallan, MD,** is professor of Pediatrics, Harvard Medical School, and a pediatric oncologist at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and Boston Children’s Hospital. Combining both research and patient care has been the hallmark of his life’s work, which has led to a better understanding of acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL), the most common malignancy in children. Understanding childhood ALL also helped him to champion the improvement of care for young adults with cancer who historically experienced lower cure rates (40%) than children (80%).

Special Recognition Award
Created in 1992, the Special Recognition Award honors achievements of an individual whose research and innovations have had a transforming and lasting effect in areas of clinical oncology, cancer research, clinical trials, and patient advocacy activities or outstanding long-term service to ASCO and/or to clinical oncology.

**Archie Bleyer, MD,** has devoted four decades to clinical research. He is a clinical research professor at the Knight Cancer Institute of the Oregon Health & Science University. He also served as chair of the Children’s Cancer Group, the world’s largest pediatric cancer research organization, and as the American Cancer Society professor at the University of Washington and head of the Division of Pediatrics at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. His current national clinical research project is working to improve the outcomes of young adults and adolescents with cancer. To help reach this goal, he was a founding member of Critical Mass, an advocacy organization on a mission to transform the treatment of young adults with cancer.

Fellows of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (FASCO)
The Fellow of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (FASCO) distinction recognizes ASCO members for their extraordinary volunteer service, dedication, and commitment to ASCO. Their efforts benefit ASCO, the specialty of oncology, and, most importantly, the patients for whom they serve. The 2015 recipients of this distinction are:

- Kathy S. Albain, MD
- Craig Earle, MD, MSc
- Roscoe F. Morton, MD, FACP
- Lori J. Pierce, MD
All of the awards listed above and the Fellows of the American Society of Clinical Oncology will be presented at the 2015 ASCO Annual Meeting taking place in Chicago, May 29–June 2 at McCormick Place, with the exception of the Gianni Bonadonna Breast Cancer Award and Lecture, which will be presented at the 2015 Breast Cancer Symposium, taking place September 25-27 in San Francisco, California.

For a list of the specific dates and room locations of the awards presentations, please contact Gaye Walker, gaye.walker@asco.org.

The ASCO Special Awards acknowledges the generous support of the American Cancer Society for the ASCO-American Cancer Society Award and Lecture, the Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine and The John A. Hartford Foundation for the B.J. Kennedy Award and Lecture for Scientific Excellence in Geriatric Oncology, and GlaxoSmithKline Oncology for the Gianni Bonadonna Breast Cancer Award and Lecture.

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**About ASCO:**

Founded in 1964, the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) is the world’s leading professional organization representing physicians who care for people with cancer. With more than 35,000 members, ASCO is committed to improving cancer care through scientific meetings, educational programs and peer-reviewed journals. ASCO is supported by its affiliate organization, the Conquer Cancer Foundation, which funds groundbreaking research and programs that make a tangible difference in the lives of people with cancer. For ASCO information and resources, visitasco.org. Patient-oriented cancer information is available at Cancer.Net.