



Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**STAND UP TO CANCER AND SOCIETY FOR IMMUNOTHERAPY OF CANCER  
ANNOUNCE POSTDOCTORAL CONVERGENCE SCHOLAR  
FELLOWSHIP AWARD RECIPIENTS**

**MILWAUKEE** – Stand Up To Cancer (SU2C) and the Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC) today announced five Convergence Scholar Fellowship Award recipients. These early career investigators will work with leading experts in physical and biomedical science to better understand the interplay between the immune system and cancers as they develop.

Each investigator will join an established SU2C Convergence Research Team studying CAR T therapy, tumor biology in gynecologic cancers, new immuno-oncology treatments for pancreatic cancer, or immunotherapy and



cancer susceptibility. These SU2C Convergence Research Teams bring together physical and computational scientists and oncologists in integrated projects that explore fundamental questions about cancer biology, producing insights that can be rapidly applied for patient benefits.

In 2018, SITC provided \$1 million to support post-doctoral fellows on five of the seven teams, providing an opportunity for early career scientists to work with leading researchers.

These fellows will be involved in their team's collaboration with Microsoft Research, using well-characterized, de-identified patient data to study how individuals vary in their immune responses to an array of therapies and to create standardized measurement protocols that may speed the development of cancer therapies and ultimately save lives.

"It's an extraordinary opportunity for these early career cancer researchers. Study of immunotherapy combinations as well as targeted therapies and individual tumor genetics is producing extraordinary amounts of data that need to be interpreted in order to deliver the best possible cancer care," said SU2C President and CEO Sung Poblete, PhD, RN. "These fellowships will help develop the next generation of scientists who will recognize and interpret all relevant scientific knowledge across subject areas to make it possible for all cancer patients to become long-term cancer survivors."

The fellowships were awarded to Ron Dover, PhD, MS, Stanford University School of Medicine; Yang Liu, PhD, MS, Yale University; Yuki Muroyama, MD, PhD, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine; Luis Rojas PhD, MS, Mt. Sinai and Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center; and Enrico Santus, PhD, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. They were selected based on a rigorous application process that included letters of recommendation from their mentors.

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“The Convergence Scholars program exemplify SITC’s commitment to collaborate with other leading cancer societies, support careers of young investigators, and promote interactions between researchers to better understand the immune system’s interactions with developing cancers and ultimately develop better treatments,” said SITC President Mario Sznol, MD. “These research efforts bring together investigators from many fields, produce large amounts of data through the study of complex biological systems, and use very sophisticated computational tools to understand how these systems actually work. We hope the output will be new approaches to use a patient’s immune system to prevent, control and treat cancer.”

These 2019 SITC-SU2C Convergence Scholar Award Fellows will study:

**Single Cell Functional Multi-omics to Characterize CAR-T Therapy**

**Recipient:** Dr. Yang Liu

**Team Leader:** Rong Fan, PhD – *Yale University*

**Connecting Immune Health and Tumor Biology in Gynecologic Cancers**

**Recipient:** Dr. Yuki Muroyama

**Team Leader:** E. John Wherry, PhD – *University of Pennsylvania*

**Computational Deconstruction of Neoantigen-TCR Degeneracy for Cancer Immunotherapy**

**Recipient:** Dr. Luis Rojas

**Team Leaders:** Benjamin Greenbaum, PhD – *Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai Hospital*; Vinod Balachandran, MD – *Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center*

**Correlating Immunological Health to Cancer Susceptibility**

**Recipient:** Dr. Ron Dover

**Team Leader:** Mark Davis, PhD – *Stanford University*

**Machine learning for cancer immunotherapy**

**Recipient:** Dr. Enrico Santus

**Team Co-Leader:** Regina Barzilay, PhD – *Massachusetts Institute of Technology*

**About SITC**

Established in 1984, the Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC) is a nonprofit organization of medical professionals dedicated to improving cancer patient outcomes by advancing the development, science and application of cancer immunotherapy and tumor immunology. SITC is comprised of influential basic and translational scientists, practitioners, health care professionals, government leaders and industry professionals around the globe. Through educational initiatives that foster scientific exchange and collaboration among leaders in the field, SITC aims to one day make the word “cure” a reality for cancer patients everywhere. Learn more about SITC, our educational offerings and other resources at [sitcancer.org](http://sitcancer.org) and follow us on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).

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### **About Stand Up To Cancer**

Stand Up To Cancer (SU2C) raises funds to accelerate the pace of research to get new therapies to patients quickly and save lives now. SU2C, a division of the Entertainment Industry Foundation (EIF), a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, was established in 2008 by media and entertainment leaders who utilize these communities' resources to engage the public in supporting a new, collaborative model of cancer research, and to increase awareness about cancer prevention as well as progress being made in the fight against the disease. As of June 2019, more than 1,600 scientists representing more than 180 institutions are involved in SU2C-funded research projects. Under the direction of our Scientific Advisory Committee led by Nobel Laureate Phillip A. Sharp, PhD, SU2C operates rigorous, competitive processes to identify the best research proposals to recommend for funding, oversee grants administration, and ensure collaboration across research programs provide expert review of research progress.

Current members of the SU2C Council of Founders and Advisors (CFA) include Katie Couric, Sherry Lansing, Kathleen Lobb, Lisa Paulsen, Rusty Robertson, Sue Schwartz, Pamela Oas Williams and Ellen Ziffren. The late Laura Ziskin and the late Noreen Fraser are also co-founders. Sung Poblete, PhD, RN, serves as SU2C's president and CEO.

For more information on Stand Up To Cancer, please visit [StandUpToCancer.org](http://StandUpToCancer.org).

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