

BCRFA MEDICAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

As of January 2025



OVERVIEW

The Breast Cancer Research Foundation of Alabama's Medical Advisory Council is a group of volunteer scientists that assist in raising awareness for the organization's mission, especially within the breast cancer research community, ensuring the most promising research initiatives from across Alabama are submitted for consideration to the BCRFA upon its annual Request for Proposals. All experts in their field, members assist with a scientific review of the proposals received, guaranteeing that the resources invested by the BCRFA are advancing innovative, dynamic ideas.

MEMBERS



Deepa Bedi, M.D., Ph.D.

Tuskegee University (Tuskegee, AL)

Associate Professor, Biomedical Sciences, College of Veterinary Medicine

Research Focus Area: Triple-negative breast cancer (TNBC)



Joel L. Berry, Ph.D.

Astound Research, Inc. (Birmingham, AL)

Chief Scientific Officer

Research Focus Area: Design and development of 3D tissue engineered systems for human tumor development



Rebecca J. Boohaker, Ph.D.

Southern Research (Birmingham, AL)

Associate Fellow, Oncology

Research Focus Area: Biochemical mechanisms that drive cancer initiation and progression.



Karim I. Budhwani, Ph.D.

CerFlux (Birmingham, AL)

CEO-Scientist

Research Focus Area: Micro and nanomedicine



Sara Cooper, Ph.D.

HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology (Huntsville, AL)

Faculty Investigator

Research Focus Area: Understanding mechanisms of cancer pathology, progression, and chemoresistance



Andres Forero-Torres, M.D.

Seagen (Bothell, WA)

Global Development Lead, Early-Stage Clinical Development

Innaugural holder of the O'Neal-Sokol BCRFA Endowed Chair at UAB

Research Focus Area: Breast cancer and hematology, specializing in translating lab successes to patient care via clinical trials



Manoj K. Mishra, Ph.D.

Alabama State University (Montgomery, AL)

Professor and Director, Cancer Biology Research and Training Program

Research Focus Area: The role of dietary compounds, microbial metabolites, and immune cells in cancer development and progression



Omar Moukha-Chafiq, Ph.D.

Southern Research (Birmingham, AL)

Principal Scientist

Research Focus Area: Medicinal chemistry, small molecules organic synthesis and nucleoside analogs chemistry



Shreyas S. Rao, Ph.D.

University of Alabama (Tuscaloosa, AL)

Associate Professor, Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering

Research Focus Area: The role of microenvironment in cancer progression, therapeutic response, and resistance



Bin Ren, M.D., Ph.D., FAHA

University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) (Birmingham, AL)

William D. Jordan, Jr. M.D., Endowed Professor in Vascular Sciences in the Department of Surgery, University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) Heersink School of Medicine.

Research Focus Area: Angiogenesis, Cancer stem cells, Arteriolar Niches in cancer stem cells, and metastatic progression



Gabrielle Rocque, M.D., MSPH

University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) (Birmingham, AL)

Associate Professor of Medicine in the Divisions of Hematology & Oncology and Gerontology, Geriatrics, & Palliative Care

Research Focus Area: Healthcare delivery for cancer patients with an emphasis on quality, patient-reported outcomes



Chandrani Sarkar, Ph.D.

Mitchell Cancer Institute, University of South Alabama (Mobile, AL)
Assistant Professor, Department of Pathology/ Mitchell Cancer Institute.

Research Focus Area: Tumor microenvironment, angiogenesis, lymphangiogenesis, metastasis, the role of neuromodulators in cancer progression



Seema Singh, Ph.D.

University of Mississippi Medical Center (Jackson, MS)
Professor of Cell and Molecular Biology; Associate Director of Education and Training

Research Focus Area: The role of inflammatory signaling in cancer progression, angiogenesis, and metastasis, cancer stem cells, and cancer health disparities



Bruce F. Smith V.M.D., Ph.D.

Auburn University (Auburn, AL)
Director, Auburn University Research Initiative in Cancer; Professor of Pathobiology

Research Focus Area: Molecular biology, genetics, genetic approaches to therapy for cancer