



Association of
Chinese Americans
in Cancer Research



ACACR 2026 Career Development Workshop

August 28, 1:00 pm – August 30, 1:00 pm

Taubman Biomedical Science Research Building (BSRB)

<https://medschool.umich.edu/facility/alfred-taubman-biomedical-science-research-building-bsrb>

BSRB auditorium

Organized by

Association of Chinese Americans in Cancer Research

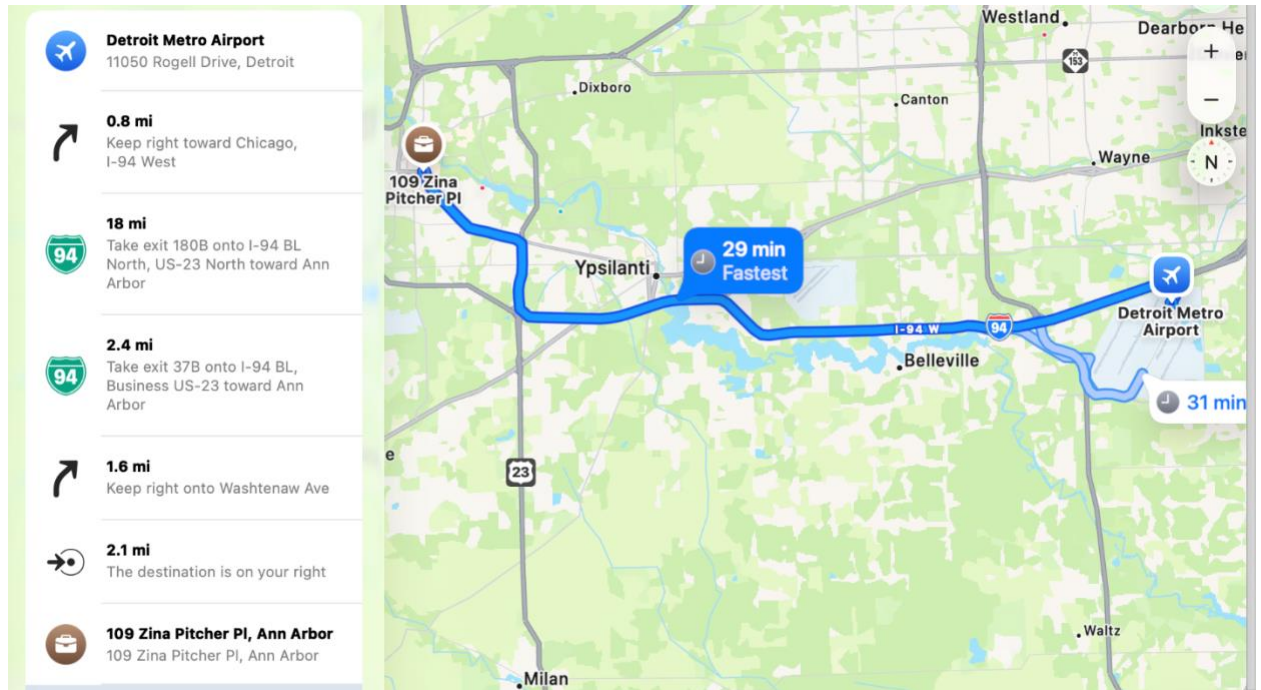
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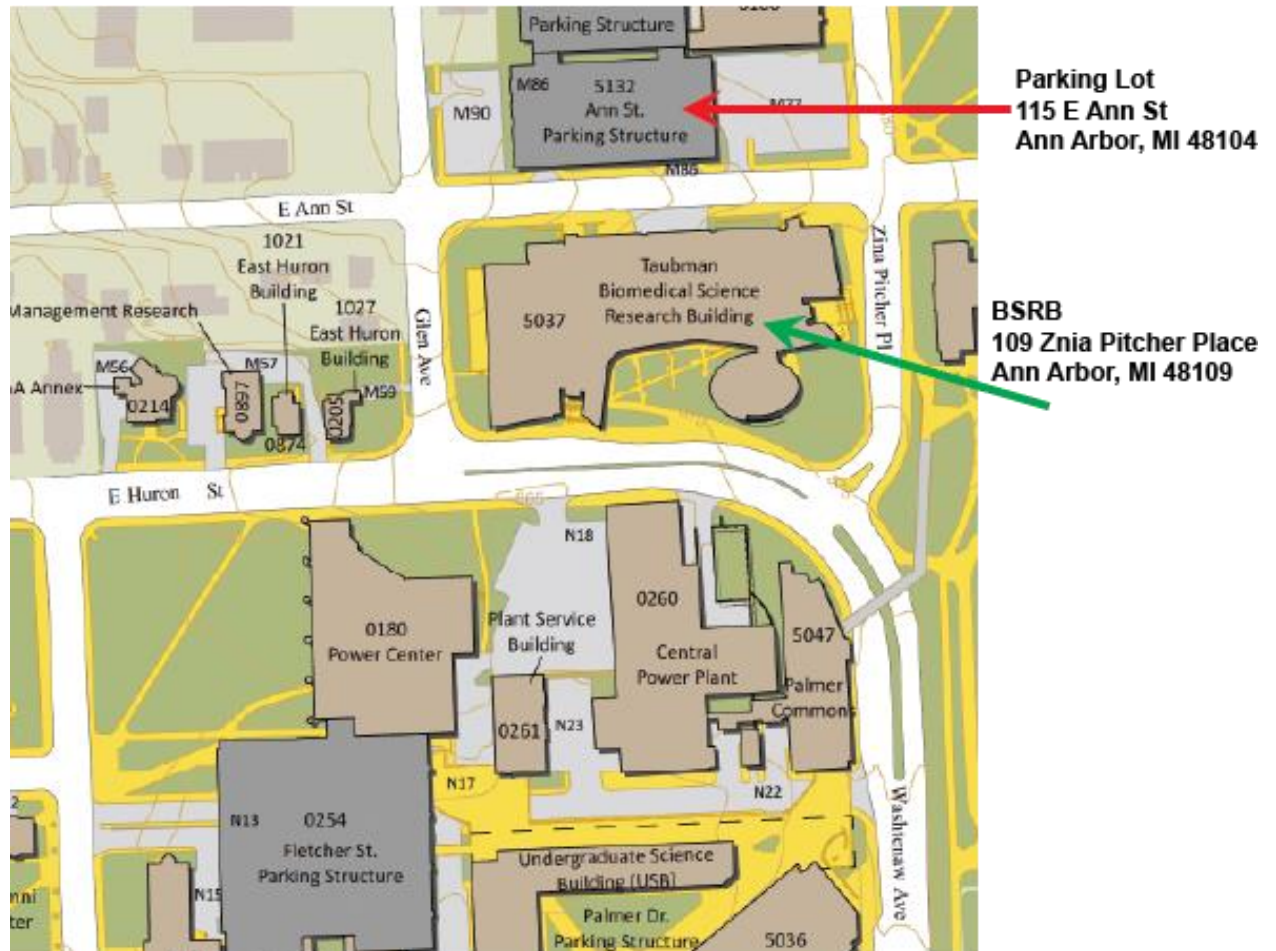
Directions: From Detroit Metropolitan Airport to the workshop site, BSRB (109 Zina Pitcher Place, Ann Arbor, MI 48109) or BSRB Parking lot address 115 E Ann St, Ann Arbor, MI 48104.

a). by car:



The **BSRB parking lot** address is **115 E Ann St, Ann Arbor, MI 48104**.

It is at the corner of Ann Street and Zina Pitcher Place, as below:



b). By Bus:

First, take the [Michigan Flyer Bus](#) from DTW airport to Ann Arbor Blake Transit Center; The [bus schedule](#) can be found [here](#).

Then, take the Ann Arbor local bus, [TheRide](https://www.theride.org/) (<https://www.theride.org/>) to **Ann & Zina Pitcher** stop using **bus #4**.

c). Take Uber or Lyft to **109 Zina Pitcher Place, Ann Arbor, MI 48109**.

Program

Friday, August 28, 2026

- 1:00 – 5:00 pm Registration/check-in/vendor table setup
- 5:00 – 5:10 pm Welcome messages by Dr. Wei Xu (ACACR President, University of Wisconsin-Madison) and Dr. Shaomeng Wang (Board of Directors of ACACR, University of Michigan) to introduce Dr. Chinnaiyan
- 5:10 – 6:00 pm Keynote Speech “Unraveling Gene Fusions in Solid Tumors: Pathways to Precision Oncology” Dr. Arul M. Chinnaiyan, S P Hicks Endowed Professor of Pathology, Section Head, Michigan Center for Translational Pathology, University of Michigan
- 6:10 pm Networking & Buffet Dinner

Saturday, August 29, 2026

8:00 – 9:00 am Breakfast

9:00 – 10:30 am Junior Faculty Presentations - 1: Drug development

Co-Chairs: Rong Huang/Purdue University and Xinli Liu/University of Houston

Qingbin Cui/University of Toledo

Survivin inhibitor 7114 synergizes with docetaxel in castration-resistant prostate cancer by disrupting survivin dimerization and inducing its proteasome-dependent degradation

Yalong Wang/University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

MTA-Cooperative Targeting of PRMT1: A Novel Therapeutic Strategy

Fanfei Meng/University of Houston

From Escape to Release: Engineering Lipid Nanoparticles for Efficient Intracellular RNA Delivery

Jia Xu/University of Alabama at Birmingham

Proteolysis-targeting chimeras (PROTACs) as an effective strategy for targeting epigenetic factor

Liping Yang/Ohio State University

A robust, accessible resource for mapping the uncharacterized extracellular interactome

Shang Su/ Louisiana State University

Development of peptide-based BioPROTAC degraders against undruggable transcription factors using PPI-guided structure modeling

10:30 – 10:45 am Break

10:45 – 12:00 noon Junior Faculty Presentations - 2: Cancer Metabolism

Co-Chairs: Gensheng Wu/Wayne State University and Yan Dong/Wayne State University

Jianhua Xiong/Emory University

Metabolic Control of Cell Fate and Immune Function in Cancer

Jin Zhou/ The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center

Lipid droplets heterogeneity shape adaptation in metastasis

Fabin Dang/Case Western Reserve University

Metabolic Control of Tumor Immune Evasion in Lung Cancer

Chengheng Liao/University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas

Targeting Metabolic Vulnerabilities to Overcome Therapeutic Resistance in Triple-Negative Breast Cancer

Cheng Zhang/The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center

Systems Biology Reveals P80 as a Therapeutically Targetable Synthetic Lethal Vulnerability in VHL-Deficient Clear Cell Renal Cell Carcinoma

Kuo-Hui Su/University of Toledo

HSF1-driven proteostasis as a metabolic vulnerability in pancreatic cancer

12:00 – 1:00 pm Keynote by Dr. Weiping Zou, Director, Center of Excellence for Cancer Immunology and Immunotherapy, University of Michigan

1:00 – 2:00 pm Round Table Lunch Discussion on Tenure, Promotion, and Preparation

Discussants: Drs. Hua Lu/Tulane U., Rugang Zhang/MD Anderson Cancer Center, Haian Fu/Emory U., Duxin Sun/U. of Michigan, Weiping Zou/U. of Michigan

2:00 – 5:00 pm Junior Faculty Presentations - 3: Tumor Microenvironment and Immunotherapy

Co-Chairs: Jianmin Zhang/U. Toledo and Xiaohong Li/University of Toledo

Chenyang Zhan/Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center

Patient-Derived Uveal Melanoma Organoids Enable Integrated HLA-I Antigen Discovery and Tumor-Reactive T-Cell Identification

Xiaoqi Cheng/Washington University
Interleukin-34–Induced Arg1+ Macrophages Play a Key Role in Breast Cancer Brain Metastasis

Xiekui Cui/Emory University
Defining Neuron–Tumor Crosstalk in Aggressive Prostate Cancer

Peng Zhang/Northwestern University
Hijacking the hijackers: Nanotherapeutic targeting of immunosuppressive myeloid cells in glioblastoma

Yang Gao/Ohio State University
A neutrophil interferon program predicts immunotherapy resistance and limits durable anti-tumor immunity

3:00 – 3:20 pm, Break

Gaofeng Xiong/Ohio State University
Targeting Collagen Prolyl Hydroxylation to Overcome Breast Cancer Therapy Resistance

Wei Gao/University of Houston
Advanced Therapeutic Strategies to Modulate B Cell Immunity Against Cancer

Hongyan Guo/Louisiana State University
ZBP1 Signaling as a Regulator of Programmed Cell Death, Antiviral Immunity, and Cancer Biology

Li Liu/The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center
Multimodality Imaging of the Tumor Microenvironment and Cancer Therapy Response

Tianxiang Hu/Georgia Cancer Center
Mechanisms of leukemia transformation and immune evasion, and targeted therapies

Xiao Song/Medical University of South Carolina
Beyond gene-centric biology toward an isoform-centric understanding of glioma

5:00 – 6:00 pm Leadership Experience and Entrepreneurship

Discussants: Drs. Mingyan Liu/U. of Michigan, Jianting Zhang/U. of Toledo, Shaomeng Wang/U. of Michigan, Yaguang Xi/U. of Georgia, Duxin Sun/U. of Michigan

6:00 pm Dinner on your own

Sunday, August 30, 2026

7:00 – 8:00 am Breakfast

8:00 – 10:45 am Junior Faculty Presentations - 4: Cancer etiology, progression and therapy resistance

Co-Chairs: Shiyong Sun/Emory University and Xuefeng Liu/Ohio State University

Dongyin Guan/Baylor College of Medicine
Rhythmic QTLs Link Circadian Regulation to Cancer Risk

Huaiying Zhang/Carnegie Mellon University
Phase separation in telomere maintenance of ALT cancer cells

Hongbo Liu/University of Rochester
Genetic architecture and epigenetic regulation in aging and cancer

Yixing Li/Harvard Medical School
Epigenetic Control of Lung Cancer Cell Identity and Therapeutic Response

Yang Yi/Northwestern University
Uncovering the crosstalk between EZH2 and tRNA methylation in advanced prostate cancer

Chang Jiang/Moffitt Cancer Center, Tampa, FL
NRF2 activation suppresses GPX4 expression and confers ferroptosis vulnerability under selenium-restricted conditions

Jianneng Li/University of Notre Dame
5 β -Dihydrotestosterone reveals a mutant androgen receptor vulnerability in prostate cancer

9:20 - 9:35 am Break

Meng Zhang/Emory University
Targeting Surface Protein Heterogeneity in Prostate Cancer

Yaru Xu/Yale University
Long non-coding RNAs in prostate cancer lineage plasticity and therapeutic resistance

Jinyu Zhang/University of Toledo
DSTYK predicts Chemoresistance in Triple-Negative Breast Cancer Patient-Derived Xenograft Models

Ping Yi/University of Houston

TRAF4-mediated ubiquitination in prostate cancer progression and therapeutic resistance

Xuhang Liu, Roswell Park Cancer Center

Harnessing RNA to fight cancer: from mechanism to translational innovation

10:45 am – noon Grant Application and Team Science (P and U grants)

Panelists: Dr. Xiaoqi Liu/U. of Kentucky, Jianmin Zhang/U. of Toledo, Zhenghe (John) Wang/Case Western Reserve U., Qing Zhang/UT Southwestern, Jindan Yu/Emory University

12:00 noon Closing remarks by Dr. Shi-Yuan Cheng (Founding President of AACR, Northwestern University)

Departure

ACACR 2026 Career Development Workshop Organizing Committee

Shaomeng Wang	University of Michigan
Duxin Sun	University of Michigan
Weiping Zou	University of Michigan
Wei Xu	University of Wisconsin-Madison
Shi-Yuan Cheng	Northwestern University
Erxi Wu	Baylor College of Medicine
Xing Fan	University of Michigan



Keynote Speaker



Dr. Chinnaian is a molecular pathologist and physician-scientist at the leading edge of translational cancer research and precision oncology. He is an Investigator of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, American Cancer Society Research Professor, and Director of the Michigan Center for Translational Pathology at the University of Michigan. He was awarded the 2022 Sjöberg Prize for Cancer Research by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences and is an elected member of the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Medicine, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Dr. Chinnaian is best known for the discovery of TMPRSS2-ETS gene fusions in a majority of prostate cancers, the first causative gene fusion in a common solid tumor. This landmark discovery was made using a bioinformatics approach to detect outlier genes in an aggregated tumor gene expression database developed by his group. In 2011, he established the first integrative, comprehensive clinical sequencing approach for advanced cancer patients called MI-ONCOSEQ, which has served as a paradigm for cancer precision medicine. He has also leveraged integrative sequencing to investigate the noncoding genome, particularly in the context of biomarker discovery and therapeutic development.

His current research focuses on defining and therapeutically targeting transcriptional and epigenetic mechanisms that drive cancer, linking these insights to biomarker development and therapeutic strategies. His group has defined key molecular features of prostate cancer, including alterations in FOXA1 and CDK12, and identified pathways involving SWI/SNF chromatin remodeling and CBP/p300-mediated transcriptional regulation, while advancing the targeting of transcription factor–driven enhancer complexes (“neo-enhanceosomes”). Building on these insights, his team is developing therapeutic approaches—including small molecules, protein degraders, and induced-proximity strategies. Notably, his group has pioneered Domain-ALTeration Chimeras (DALTACs), which rewire oncogenic transcriptional complexes, leading to collapse of aberrant enhancer programs and offering a distinct strategy beyond conventional inhibition or degradation.

Workshop Organizing Committee



Shaomeng Wang, Ph.D., ACACR Board Member. Dr. Wang is the Warner-Lambert/Parke-Davis Professor in Medicine and professor of internal medicine, pharmacology and medicinal chemistry at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan and the Director of Michigan Center for Therapeutic Innovation. His research has been focused on targeting protein-protein interactions and protein degradation and has advanced 10 compounds into Phase 1-3 clinical development and one on the market. He is an author of 400+ peer-reviewed publications, and an inventor of 80+ granted US patents and hundreds of international patents. He served as Co-Editor-in-Chief for the

Journal of Medicinal Chemistry, American Chemical Society between 2002-2020. He received the University of Michigan Distinguished Innovator Award in 2014 and was elected as a Fellow of the National Academy of Inventors in 2014 and a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 2019. He received the Division of Medicinal Chemistry Award of the American Chemical Society in 2020 and inducted into the Hall of Fame of the Division of Medicinal Chemistry, the American Chemical Society in 2020. Dr. Wang has co-founded 6 start-up biotech companies to advance those discoveries from his laboratory into clinical development and commercialization.

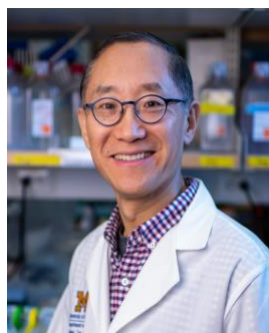


Dr. Duxin Sun is Associate Dean for Research and the Charles Walgreen Jr. Professor of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences at the University of Michigan College of Pharmacy. He is the founding director of the Institute of AI-Driven Therapeutics Discovery and also directs the Pharmacokinetics (PK) Core. He holds joint appointments in the Chemical Biology program, the Interdisciplinary Medicinal Chemistry program, and the University of Michigan Comprehensive Cancer Center.

Dr. Sun's research focuses on drug development, cancer nanomedicine, cancer vaccines, and pharmacokinetics. He established the STAR system (Structure–Tissue/Cell Selectivity–Activity Relationship) to address the 90% failure rate in drug development. He has designed albumin-based nanomedicines that improve the efficacy of immunoncology drugs by targeting immune cells in the lymphatic system and tumors, and developed SARS-CoV-2 B epitope–guided neoantigen peptide and mRNA vaccines that activate CD4/CD8 T cell immunity through B cell–mediated antigen presentation.

Dr. Sun holds a BS in Pharmacy, an MS in Pharmacology, and a PhD in Pharmaceutical Sciences, with additional training in molecular biology as a visiting scientist. Drawing on research experience in both academia and industry, he has published more than 300 papers and mentored 40 PhD students and 75 postdoctoral fellows and visiting scientists.

He is an elected Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and the American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists (AAPS).



Weiping Zou, MD, PhD, is Charles B. de Nancrede Professor, the Director of the Michigan Center of Excellence for Cancer Immunology and Immunotherapy and the Co-Director of the Signaling and Tumor Microenvironment Program at the University of Michigan Rogel Cancer Center. He co-directs the Surgical Oncology Fellow Training (T32) program. Nationally, he served as the AACR Cancer Immunology (CImm) Chairperson from 2019 to 2020 and was the Cancer Immunology Abstract Programming Chair for AAI for four years. He serves on the editorial boards of 12 scientific journals, such as *Science Immunology*, *Cancer Discovery*, *Journal of Experimental Medicine*, *Journal of Clinical Investigation*, and *Science Advances*.

Dr. Zou has delivered over 400 invited lectures at various institutions and conferences and has published more than 200 articles and book chapters. His laboratory is among the most cited in the field of immunology, with their work frequently highlighted by scientific news agencies. Dr. Zou and his collaborators have led pioneering research on identifying immunosuppressive mechanisms in the human tumor microenvironment (TME) and their relevance to cancer therapy. They originally demonstrated the expression and function of PD-L1 (B7-H1) in the human TME, the tumor trafficking mechanisms and significance of T cell subsets (such as regulatory T cells, Th17 cells, and Th22 cells), as well as the immune characteristics of tumor epigenetic regulation, tumor metabolism, and tumor ferroptosis.



Wei Xu, Ph.D., ACACR President. Dr. Xu received a B.S. in Chemistry from Beijing University and an M.S. in Biophysics from the Institute of Biophysics, Chinese Academy of Sciences. She received a Ph.D. in Biochemistry from University of Iowa. After postdoctoral training with Dr. Ronald Evans at Salk Institute, she started as a tenure-track Assistant Professor at University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2005. She was promoted from Assistant Professor to Full Professor in 9 years. The Xu lab focuses on targeting estrogen receptors and epigenetic regulators for breast cancer therapy. Dr. Xu's laboratory has employed biochemical and functional genomic approaches, as well as mouse genetics, to decipher the contribution of protein arginine methylation to the epigenetic

control of cancer cells. Dr. Xu revealed essential roles of "writers" and "readers" of protein arginine methylation in breast carcinogenesis and genetic drivers for the development of Wilms tumors. Dr. Xu is a Marian A. Messerschmidt Professor in Cancer Research and Vice Chair in the Department of Oncology. Dr. Xu is also the PI for Cancer Biology T32 training grant and the Genetics and Epigenetics Program co-leader for Carbone Comprehensive Cancer Center, Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison. Dr. Xu has received numerous awards, including the Department of Defense Era of Hope Scholar Award, the Society of Toxicology Achievement Award, the AACR-Bayer Innovation and Discovery



Grant, American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) fellow, among others.

Shi-Yuan Cheng, Ph.D. Founding President of ACACR

Dr. Cheng is currently a tenured Professor of Neurology at The Ken & Ruth Davee Department of Neurology, Lou & Jean Malnati Brain Tumor Institute, and the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, Chicago, IL, USA.

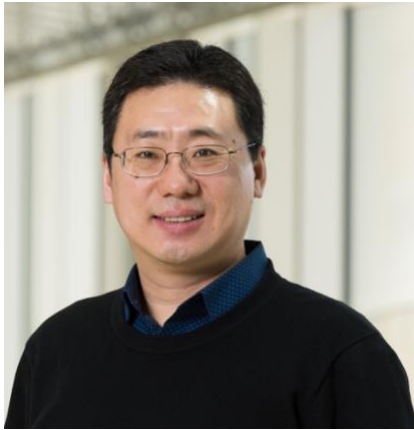
Dr. Cheng received his BS degree in biochemistry from Wuhan University in China in 1982 and his PhD degree in biochemistry from The Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio in 1992. From 1992 to 1999, Dr. Cheng received his postdoctoral training at UCSD and the Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research in La Jolla, California, USA. From 1999 to 2012, Dr. Cheng was an Assistant then a tenured Associate Professor at Hillman Cancer Center & Department of Pathology at University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, Pittsburgh, PA. In 2012, Dr. Cheng joined faculty at Northwestern University as a tenured Professor at the Department of Neurology. Dr. Cheng is a fellow of American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). He was also honored as a Zell Scholar, Kimmel Scholar, and V Scholar for Cancer Research. Dr. Cheng's research interests are to study dysregulated oncogenic signaling, non-coding RNAs, autophagy, epigenetics, and ferroptosis in adult and pediatric brain gliomas, RNA splicing in glioma tumor and tumor-associated myeloid cells, mechanisms underlying GBM resistance to therapies, and develop novel therapeutic approaches for treating brain tumors. His research has been continuously supported by the US NIH, American Cancer Society, DOD Research Programs, and other funding agencies.



Erxi Wu, Ph.D., ACACR President-Elect. Dr. Wu is a dedicated cancer biologist and neuroscientist, whose work has gained both national and international acclaim. He is Professor at Baylor College of Medicine (BCM), Vice Chair for Research in the Department of Neurosurgery at BCM-Temple, Deputy Director of Neuroscience Institute at Baylor Scott & White Health (BSWH), and Chief, Neuro-Oncology Research, Neuroscience Institute at BSWH as well as Clinical Professor at Texas A&M School of Medicine; he is Professor (Affiliate) of the Cancer Research Center and Department of Internal Medicine, Dell Medical School at

the University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin). Critically, Dr. Wu is the PI and Director of the CPRIT Cancer Agent Target Discovery and Aptamer Development (CATDAD) Core at BSWH (bswhealth.com/CATDAD). Central to his research program is the development of biomarkers, the identification of therapeutic targets, and the discovery of novel drugs for cancer and neurodegenerative diseases. Among his notable achievements are the discovery of agents targeting cancer stem cells, the establishment of a comprehensive biomarker analysis platform, and significant advancements in understanding neurodegenerative disease pathology. Dr. Wu obtained Ph.D. from the University of

Sheffield, UK under the tutelage of Professor Graham Russell and received postdoctoral training with Professor Margaret Shipp at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Harvard University. He has published over 200 scientific papers in various scientific journals, many of which are highly regarded, such as *Signal Transduction and Targeted Therapy*, *Nature Medicine*, *Nature Methods*, *Molecular Cancer*, *Bioactive Materials*, *Journal of the American Chemical Society*, *Nature Communications*, *Journal of Clinical Investigation*, *Brain*, *Molecular Therapy*, and *Science Advances*, resulting in over 11,050 citations and an H-index of 60. Supported by grants from the NIH, CPRIT, and others, his work extends to the scientific community through roles like NIH study section reviewer since 2017 and editorial positions with *Genes & Diseases* and *Drug Resistance Updates*. He has reviewed for over 150 scientific journals, delivered over 40 seminars globally, and introduced Nobel Laureates at conferences. Mentorship is a key aspect of his career, guiding over 80 professionals in their academic and industry endeavors. His involvement in shaping educational curricula and leadership roles in organizations like AACR (President-Elect 2026-2028) reflects his commitment to advancing science. Dr. Wu serves as the President of the Chinese Association for Science & Technology USA (CAST-USA) (2025-2026). Dedicated to pioneering new diagnostic and therapeutic methods for cancer and neurodegenerative diseases, he strives to impact human health through teaching, research, service, and leadership.



Xing Fan, M.D., Ph.D. Dr. Fan is an Associate Professor of Neurosurgery and Cell & Developmental Biology in the University of Michigan Medical School. Dr. Fan received his M.D. degree in 1994 and completed neurosurgical training in China in 1997. He subsequently earned a Ph.D. in Cancer Genetics from the University of Navarra, Spain, in 2002, focusing on the molecular genetics of brain tumors. As part of his doctoral training, he conducted research in cytogenetics at the University of Helsinki, Finland, and in gene delivery using retroviral vectors at the Université Pierre et Marie Curie (UPMC)/Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) in Paris, France.

Following completion of his Ph.D., Dr. Fan pursued postdoctoral training at Johns Hopkins University from 2002 to 2008, where he studied neuropathology and developmental cancer biology. He joined the faculty of the University of Michigan in 2008 and currently holds appointments in the Departments of Neurosurgery and Cell & Developmental Biology.

Dr. Fan's research program is focused on developing novel therapies for malignant brain tumors, particularly glioblastoma (GBM) and medulloblastoma (MB), through targeting cancer stem cells (CSCs). His pioneering studies demonstrated that inhibition of the Notch signaling pathway depletes CSCs, suppresses tumor propagation, and prevents engraftment of MB and GBM cells. This work provided some of the first evidence that a therapeutic strategy targeting CSCs could be effective against solid tumors and established a foundation for the development of CSC-directed therapies for brain cancer.

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