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The Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer Supports Scientific Research in New Collaboration with Stand Up To Cancer

MILWAUKEE – The Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC) today announced its commitment to support a new collaboration with Stand Up To Cancer (SU2C) providing research opportunities for scientists to investigate the immune system's response to cancers.

The SITC contribution to "Convergence 2.0," a SU2C-led research initiative, will team postdoctoral fellows with leading experts in the fields of life and physical sciences, mathematics and engineering to identify effective combinations of therapies to match tumor genetics. The initiative will include support from Microsoft and the Lustgarten Foundation for Pancreatic Cancer Research.

"SITC continues to develop relationships with leading organizations like Stand Up To Cancer committed to cutting-edge research of cancer and its treatment," said SITC President Lisa H. Butterfield, PhD. "Through our society's support of initiatives like Convergence 2.0, SITC remains at the forefront of cancer immunotherapy research, ensuring opportunities for early career scientists to contribute to scientific breakthroughs."

SITC members leading in the Convergence 2.0 initiative include Carl June, MD, University of Pennsylvania, and 2013 recipient of the Richard V. Smalley, MD Memorial Award and Lectureship Award; Vinod Balachandran, MD, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, and 2017 SITC Presidential Award recipient; E. John Wherry, PhD, University of Pennsylvania; and Claire Friedman, MD, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, and a member of the 2017 cohort of the SITC Sparkathon.

"It's an exciting new time in cancer research. Investigation of the human genome and individual tumor genetics is producing mammoth amounts of data that needs to be interpreted in order to deliver the best possible cancer care," said Phillip A. Sharp, PhD, chairman of the SU2C Scientific Advisory Committee and institute professor at the Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The five project teams supported by SITC will focus on the following topic areas:

- Computational deconstruction of neoantigen-TCR degeneracy for cancer immunotherapy
- Single-Cell Functional Multi-Omics to Characterize and Monitor CAR T Therapy
- Correlating Immunological Health to Cancer Susceptibility
- Connecting Immune Health and Tumor Biology in Gynecologic Cancers
- Using Artificial Intelligence to predict molecular pathways and clinical outcomes

Using newly developed analytic tools provided by Microsoft, Convergence 2.0 researchers will study terabytes of data derived from multiple data sets, including information on the patient's genome, imaging studies, medical and medication records, etc. Combining datasets from different studies or institutions has historically been plagued with difficulties — in part due to a lack of standardization in data collection and recording. This collaboration will create a common language for measurement by standardizing data collection protocols and analytics. By doing so, it will create the foundation for ongoing research that can incorporate information from trials across the U.S. and — because of these huge data sets — discern subtle variation in treatment responses across different patients. In all, seven project teams will comprise the initiative.

For a complete listing of the research team leads and their project summaries, [click here](#).

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About SITC

The Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC) is the world's leading member-driven organization specifically dedicated to improving cancer patient outcomes by advancing the science and application of cancer immunotherapy. Established in 1984, SITC, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, serves scientists, clinicians, academicians, patients, patient advocates, government representatives and industry leaders from around the world. Through educational programs that foster scientific exchange and collaboration, SITC aims to one day make the word cure a reality for cancer patients everywhere. To learn more, visit www.sitcancer.org.

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 film and media leaders who utilize the industry's 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 SU2C's scientific partner, the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) and a Scientific Advisory Committee led by Nobel Laureate Phillip A. Sharp, PhD, conduct rigorous, competitive review processes to identify the best research proposals to recommend for funding, oversee grants administration, and provide expert review of the research progress.

Current members of the SU2C Council of Founders and Advisors (CFA) include Katie Couric, Sherry Lansing, Lisa Paulsen, Rusty Robertson, Sue Schwartz, Pamela Oas Williams, Ellen Ziffren, and Kathleen Lobb. The late Laura Ziskin and the late Noreen Fraser are also co-founders. Sung Poblete, PhD, RN, has served as SU2C's president since 2011.

For more information on Stand Up To Cancer, visit www.standuptocancer.org

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