



## *IUSCC news*

January 2014

### NCI site visit is Feb. 25

For the past 18 months, the IU Simon Cancer Center's executive committee, research program leaders, shared facility directors, and its 220+ members have been working together to prepare for an intensive National Cancer Institute (NCI) site visit on Feb. 25.

The site visit is the next step in the cancer center's multi-step competitive process for renewal of its Cancer Center Support Grant (CCSG) and its NCI designation. Last September, the cancer center submitted a 1,011-page CCSG application to the NCI. Since then, NCI officials and others from NCI-designated cancer centers have been reviewing the grant application and soon 24 reviewers will be on campus for the site visit.

During the site visit, **Patrick Loehrer**, MD, director of the IU Simon Cancer Center, will present an overview of the cancer center and its six essential characteristics:

- **Facilities:** Physical facilities dedicated to the conduct of cancer-focused research, and to the center's shared resources, and administration, are appropriate and adequate for the task.
- **Organizational capabilities:** The center takes maximum advantage of institutional capabilities in cancer research.
- **Transdisciplinary collaboration and coordination:** Substantial coordination, interaction and collaboration, both among center members from a variety of disciplines and between center members and investigators in other institutions, enhance and add value to the productivity and quality of research.
- **Cancer focus:** The center members' grants and contracts, as well as the structure and objectives of its formal research programs, demonstrate a clearly defined cancer research focus.
- **Institutional commitment:** The center is a formal organizational component of the institution, with sufficient space, positions and discretionary resources to ensure its stability and fulfill the center's objectives. The center director has authorities appropriate for managing the Center and furthering its scientific mission. The institution recognizes team science in its promotion and tenure policies.
- **Center director:** The director is a highly qualified scientist and administrator with leadership experience and expertise appropriate for establishing a vision for the center, advancing scientific goals and managing a complex organization.

In addition, all of the research program co-leaders will present overviews of their respective programs and will field questions from the reviewers. The research programs and the co-leaders are:

- **Breast Cancer:** [Kathy Miller](#), MD, and [Hari Nakshatri](#), BVSc, PhD
- **Cancer Prevention and Control:** [Victoria Champion](#), PhD, and [Jiali Han](#), PhD
- **Experimental and Developmental Therapeutics:** [Daniela Matei](#), MD, and [Zhong-Yin Zhang](#), PhD
- **Hematopoiesis, Hematologic Malignancies, and Immunology:** [Hal Broxmeyer](#), PhD, and [David Roodman](#), MD, PhD
- **Tumor Microenvironment and Metastasis:** [Theresa Guise](#), MD, and [Murray Korc](#), MD

### What happens next?

Four to six weeks after the site visit, the cancer center will receive a draft summary statement. In April or May, the NCI's review committee, having received feedback on the draft from cancer center leadership, will work to produce the final summary statement for the National Cancer Advisory Board (NCAB). The NCAB will issue the final summary statement in May or June. In September, the new funding cycle of the CCSG begins.

The CCSG is an important source of funding for the cancer center's [shared facilities](#). This support, along with IU Simon Cancer Center funding, assures that cancer center members have access to the highest quality technology for their research.

The IU Simon Cancer Center's last renewal was in 2008. Since that time, the cancer center's total research space has increased from 25,000 square feet to 125,000 square feet, NCI projects increased by 30 percent (56 to 73 per year), and average NCI funding is up \$3.5 million.

The IU Simon Cancer Center is one of only 68 NCI-designated cancer centers in the nation. The designation recognizes centers around the country that meet rigorous criteria for world-class, state-of-the-art programs in multidisciplinary cancer research. These centers put significant resources into developing research programs, faculty, and facilities that will lead to better approaches to prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer. The NCI designation not only recognizes excellence but opens doors to greater federal funding, information sharing, and resources.

### CANCER CENTER HISTORY

- **1992:** The National Cancer Institute awarded a planning grant to the IU School of Medicine for a cancer center, establishing the Indiana University Cancer Center
- **1999:** IU Cancer Center earned its first NCI designation
- **2004:** Designation renewed
- **2006:** The cancer center was renamed the Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Cancer Center
- **2008:** Designation renewed
- **2014:** NCI site visit

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## Music therapy has positive effects on young cancer patients' coping skills

Jan. 27, 2014

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

INDIANAPOLIS -- A new study conducted by researchers at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis has found that adolescents and young adults undergoing cancer treatment gain coping skills and resilience-related outcomes when they participate in a therapeutic music process that includes writing song lyrics and producing videos.

Published early online in [Cancer](#), a peer-reviewed journal of the American Cancer Society, the findings indicate that such music therapy interventions can provide essential psychosocial support to help young patients positively adjust to cancer.

Few interventions target the unique psychosocial needs of adolescents and young adults with cancer, said IU School of Nursing faculty members [Joan E. Haase](#) and [Sheri L. Robb](#), who led a team that tested a music therapy intervention designed to improve resilience in such patients undergoing stem cell transplant treatments for cancer. Resilience is the process of positively adjusting to stressors, including those associated with a cancer diagnosis and treatment.

[Debra Burns](#), associate professor of music therapy and interim associate dean for research in the Purdue School of Engineering and Technology at IUPUI, was a member of the research team. Drs. Burns, Haase, Robb and [Paul Haut](#),

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lead physician on the study, also are researchers at the Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Cancer Center. [Patrick Monahan](#), another IU School of Medicine faculty member, also is a team member.

The researchers' Therapeutic Music Video intervention was designed to help adolescents and young adults explore and express thoughts and emotions about their disease and treatment that might otherwise go unspoken. Through the creative process of writing song lyrics and producing videos, a board-certified music therapist offers structure and support to help patients reflect on their experiences and identify what is important to them, such as their spirituality, family and relationships with peers and health care providers.

As they move through phases of the intervention -- including sound recordings, collecting video images and storyboarding -- patients have opportunities to involve family, friends and health care providers in their project, maintaining those important connections during treatment and encouraging communication. Once complete, videos can be shared through video premieres, which allow others an opportunity to gain a better understanding about the patients' perspectives on their cancer, their treatments and their desires for the future.

For the study, 113 patients age 11 to 24 who were undergoing stem cell transplant treatments for cancer were randomized to be part of a Therapeutic Music Video intervention group or to be part of a control group that received audiobooks. Participants completed six sessions over three weeks.

After the intervention, the Therapeutic Music Video group reported significantly better courageous coping. One hundred days after stem cell transplant treatments, the Therapeutic Music Video group reported significantly better social integration and family environment.

The investigators found that several protective factors helped adolescents and young adults be resilient in the face of cancer treatments, including spiritual beliefs and practices; having a strong family environment characterized by adaptability, cohesion and positive communication; and feeling socially connected and supported by friends and health care providers.

"These protective factors influence the ways adolescents and young adults cope, gain hope and find meaning in the midst of their cancer journey," Haase said. "Adolescents and young adults who are resilient have the ability to rise above their illness, gain a sense of mastery and confidence in how they have dealt with their cancer, and demonstrate a desire to reach out and help others."

When the investigators interviewed the patients' parents, they found that the videos gave parents insights into their children's cancer experiences; however, parents needed help to initiate and sustain important conversations about messages shared through their children's videos. To address this need, the study team has received funding from the National Institutes of Health and the Children's Oncology Group to examine the potential benefits of adding a parent communication component to their intervention.

The study's findings provide evidence supporting the use of a music-based intervention delivered by a music therapist to help adolescents and young

adults positively cope with high-risk, high-intensity cancer treatments.

"The availability of music therapy services from a board-certified music therapist in the United States has become more widespread, and through studies like this one, we hope to see increased availability and access to this important allied health service," Robb said. "One of the challenges in health care today is making sure that research findings from studies such as ours are used to inform health care practices and service delivery.

"One of our team's next steps is to disseminate findings; train professional music therapists on this intervention; and then conduct an implementation study to examine how the intervention may change as it moves into the standard care setting and whether, in the presence of these changes, patient benefits are maintained."

In addition to Haase, Robb and Burns, authors of "Randomized clinical trial of therapeutic music video intervention for resilience outcomes in adolescents/young adults undergoing hematopoietic stem cell transplant: A report from the Children's Oncology Group" are Kristin A. Stegenga, Paul R. Haut, Patrick O. Monahan, Jane Meza, Timothy E. Stump, Brooke O. Cherven, Sharron L. Docherty, Verna L. Hendricks-Ferguson, Eileen K. Kintner, Ann E. Haight and Donna A. Wall.

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## Vera Bradley Foundation pledges \$15 million to IU Simon Cancer Center

Jan. 9, 2014

INDIANAPOLIS -- The Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer announced today a \$15 million pledge to support breast cancer research at the [Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Cancer Center](#).

This new pledge adds to the previous \$20 million in commitments completed in November 2013 and will continue to fund the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer Research Laboratories, named for the foundation in 2010. The completion of this pledge will bring the total giving to the IU Simon Cancer Center to \$35 million.

"We strongly believe in the research team's focus: precision therapeutics," said Catherine Hill, executive director of Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer. "Stated simply, precision therapeutics is giving the right medicine to the right patient at the right time based on genetic factors of both the patient and the tumor."

"Since 1998, the Vera Bradley Foundation has been the IU Simon Cancer Center's partner in conducting breast cancer research that is saving and extending the lives of women everywhere," said Patrick J. Loehrer Sr., M.D., director of the IU Simon Cancer Center. "Their \$15 million pledge is a testament to their commitment to make a difference in women's lives. The researchers at the IU Simon Cancer Center will honor the trust they have placed in us by our commitment to our mission to conduct novel, collaborative research that has a meaningful impact on patients with cancer and to train the next generation of scientists to carry forward this mission."

The gift will support IU researchers as they:

- Search for gene alterations that drive specific subtypes of breast cancer and look for new or existing drugs that are more likely to be effective
- Identify genetic markers that will allow them to predict, with a high level of accuracy, who will suffer from life-changing and life-threatening side effects to treatment, or whose cancer is likely to metastasize
- Combine this knowledge to deliver clinical trials to patients with the goal of improving cure rates and quality of life

The gift will also establish the Vera Bradley Foundation Scholars Program to train scientists and physicians who will be the future leaders in breast cancer research and care. As a result of support from the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer, the number of IU researchers focused on breast cancer has grown to 38, up from six in 1999.

"We are extraordinarily grateful for the commitment and generosity of The Vera Bradley Foundation, which is emerging as one of the nation's leading supporters of breast cancer research. This generous pledge will help the IU School of Medicine further advance not only its research and education missions, but also to translate these findings to improve the health of women with breast cancer," said Jay Hess, M.D., Ph.D., MHSA, dean of the IU School of Medicine.

The **Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer** recently completed its 2013 fiscal year, raising \$2.7 million. The Foundation's main benefactor is [Vera Bradley Inc.](#), which contributes approximately \$1 million each year to the cause. Additional support comes from several sources, including events and individual donations. Vera Bradley's co-founders began raising funds for a cure after the loss of a dear friend to the disease in 1993. To learn more about the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer visit

<http://www.verabradley.org>.

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CANCER CENTER**  
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# IUSCC news

January 2014

## News briefs

### Hoosier Oncology receives \$1.9 million gift

Indianapolis-based [Hoosier Oncology Group](#) received a \$1.9 million gift to help conduct clinical trials of new cancer treatments. The group, founded in 1984, said it would use the money in part to expand its capacity to store blood and tissue samples for later study. The gift came from the estate of Margaret M. Weeks, who was a schoolteacher in the Indianapolis Public Schools. She died in February at the age of 94. Since its founding, Hoosier Oncology Group has initiated more than 150 clinical trials involving more than 3,000 patients. The group was spun out from the Indianapolis-based Walther Cancer Institute in 2007.

### Pack the House for Charity

The Indiana Ice is hosting "Pack the House for Charity" at 7:05 p.m.



Saturday, March 1 when they take on the Chicago Steel at Bankers Life Fieldhouse. A portion of the online ticket sales benefit research at the IU Simon Cancer Center. Visit this [site](#) to order tickets and use the group ID "IUSCC." Parking is available at the Maryland Street Parking Garage, 121 E. Maryland St., for \$5. Go, Ice!

### IUSCC offers travel awards for AACR

The AACR (American Association for Cancer Research) 2014 annual meeting is April 5-9 in San Diego. IUSCC travel awards are available for post- and pre-docs and clinical fellows to attend the 2014 meeting. This award will partially cover the cost of travel expenses for the meeting.

Eligibility requirements:

- Accepted abstract
- Mentor must be IU Simon Cancer Center member
- Should be willing to participate and present for IUSCC seminar on June 19.

Application requirements:

- Accepted abstract – indicate poster/platform presentation
- CV

Application deadline is March 3 and should be submitted to [chasmill@iupui.edu](mailto:chasmill@iupui.edu). Recipients will be announced March 17.

## Reminders

### Navigators help researchers at IUPUI, IU-B, Notre Dame, Purdue

Researchers, did you know there are navigators to help you more easily connect with translational science resources across the state? Tammy Sajdyk, PhD, a neuroscientist and clinical and translational sciences research officer at the Indiana Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute, is the new IUPUI campus navigator. There are additional navigators at IU Bloomington, Purdue University and the University of Notre Dame.

[full story >](#)

### Cancer center seeks high school, college students for 2014 Summer Research Program

Although summer seems far away because of the deep freeze, it's not too early to think about the IU Simon Cancer Center's 2014 Summer Research Program. If you know of high school or college students from underrepresented populations interested in exploring a career in cancer research, encourage them to apply. Applications are due Feb. 28.

[more >](#)

### Cancer center members in the news

- ["Finding Solutions for Chemobrain,"](#) published in the winter 2013 issue of Cure magazine, features Diane Von Ah, PhD.



Chang

- **Hua-Chen Chang**, PhD and **Michael Robertson**, MD, were co-senior authors of ["Soypeptide Lunasin in Cytokine Immunotherapy for Lymphoma,"](#) published in Cancer Immunology, Immunotherapy. Other authors included **Karen Pollok**, PhD.
- The V Foundation for Cancer Research recently produced a video with some of its grant recipients from 2013. **Daniela Matei**, MD, and **Kenneth Nephew**, PhD, grant recipients for their work in ovarian cancer, appear in the video.

[Watch the video.](#) The grants were awarded to aid cancer researchers transforming lab discoveries into clinical applications and fund "rising star" scientists, according to the V Foundation.



Rawl

- **Susan Rawl**, PhD, received the American Cancer Society's 2013 St. George National Award, the highest honor for volunteer service in the society.
- **Kathy Miller**, MD, has been appointed chair of the ECOG-ACRIN breast cancer committee. Dr. Miller previously served as co-chair of the committee and has been the lead investigator on several of the group's landmark breast cancer clinical trials.
- **Valerie Jackson**, MD, has been named executive director of the [American Board of Radiology](#), effective July 1. Dr. Jackson is the Eugene C. Klatter Professor and chair of radiology and



imaging sciences at the IU School of Medicine.

**New members**

Safi Shahda, MD

Associate Member, [Experimental and Developmental Therapeutics](#)  
*Department of Medicine*

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