



## 2023 Division of Cancer Biology Summer Undergraduate Research Program Conference

[NIH Louis Stokes Laboratories Building \(Bldg. 50\)](#), Room 1328/ 1334

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### Thursday, July 13, 2023

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| 8:00 a.m.          | <b>Breakfast</b><br>On your own  |
| 8:30 a.m.          | <b>Catch Shuttle at Hotel</b><br>**NOTE: You must be on the shuttle to be cleared through security on the NIH campus** |
| 9:00 – 9:30 a.m.   | <b>Registration</b><br>NIH Building 50, Room 1328/1334   |
| 9:30 – 9:45 a.m.   | <b>Welcome</b><br>Dan Gallahan<br>Director, NCI Division of Cancer Biology   |
| 9:45 – 10:15 a.m.  | <b>Lightning Introduction Talks</b><br>2 min from each attendee (no slides)  |
| 10:15 – 12:00 p.m. | <b>NIH Clinical Center Tour</b><br>DCB SURP Fellows  |
| 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.  | <b>Lunch</b><br>Lunch provided   |
| 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.   | <b>Learning from the patient perspective</b><br>Sharon Rivera-Sanchez<br>Julia Maues                                   |
| 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.   | <b>Poster Session</b><br>DCB SURP Fellows  |
| 3:30 – evening     | <b>Shuttle to hotel and D.C. networking event</b><br><br>Dinner on your own  |

**Friday, July 14, 2023**

- 8:00 a.m.                    **Breakfast**  
On your own
- 8:30 a.m.                    **Catch Shuttle at Hotel**  
\*\*NOTE: You must be on the shuttle to be cleared through security on the NIH campus\*\*
- 9:00 – 9:15 a.m.           **Arrival and Registration**  
NIH Building 50, Room 1328/1334
- 9:15 – 10:00 a.m.         **A journey to the interface of science and policy**  
Ryan Kinloch  
Program Analyst, NCI Office of Government and Congressional Relations
- 10:00 – 10:45 a.m.        **Communicating your science through social media**  
Rebekah Mikeasky, Division of Cancer Biology
- 10:45 – 11:00 a.m.        **Break**
- 11:00 – 12:00 p.m.        **Insights from current NCI Division of Cancer Epidemiology and Genetics (DCEG) Fellows**  
Toniya Brown  
Kyra Mendez  
Akemi Wijayabahu
- 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.         **Lunch**  
Lunch provided
- 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.         **Biomedical Research Talk**  
Kaitlyn Sadtler  
Earl Stadtman Tenure-Track Investigator  
Chief of the Section for Immunoengineering, NIBIB
- 2:00 – 2:15 p.m.         **Closing remarks**

**Meeting Adjourned**

## Speaker Bios

### **Sharon Rivera-Sanchez**

Sharon Rivera is the Founder and Director of Saving Pennies 4 A Cure, a non-profit 501-C3 organization that was founded in 2018. Saving Pennies 4 A Cure is an organization that educates, advocates, and empowers cancer patients. Their main focus is Breast Cancer, especially Triple Negative Breast Cancer. Saving Pennies provide custom care packages for cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy, educate, and the importance of self-care, and they advocate for finding a cure for cancer.

In 2015, Sharon was diagnosed with Triple Negative Breast Cancer; this was life changing for her and her family, but also for a multitude of other people as well. It was a stepping-stone towards her mission to help cancer patients, while educating and empowering them. After her diagnosis, Sharon participated in two clinical trials, one in California and the other in the University of Pennsylvania.

Prior to being the Founder and Director of Saving Pennies 4 A Cure, Sharon Rivera was in Sales and Business Management for 15 years as a Sales Representative in Insurance and Financial Services being ethical, persuasive, results-driven and dedicated to drive market awareness and increase sales potential. Her professional and family background armed her with skills and core values that have helped her build and run Saving Pennies 4 A Cure. What's more, Sharon has been a part of numerous conferences that have empowered her and enlightened her on matters concerning cancer, life after cancer, and cancer care.

<https://canceradvocacy.org/sharon-rivera-sanchez-breast-cancer-survivor-finds-passion-fitness-advocacy/>

<https://www.wtvr.com/health/buddy-check-6/sharon-rivera-sanchez-cancer-help-march-6-2023>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bwd8FZ9E3d8>

<https://www.trialsofcolor.net/about-us/>

<https://www.pennmedicine.org/cancer/types-of-cancer/breast-cancer/breast-cancer-patient-stories/breast-cancer-sharons-story>

<https://guides.clarahealth.com/from-adversity-to-advocacy/>

### **Julia Maues**

Ms. Maues was active professionally as an economist until December 2015. Her last job was as Economic Manager at the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. In that role, Ms. Maues oversaw the External Communications Team with responsibilities for the external website, social media and publications. She also oversaw the Bank's economic content team tasked with translating technical language used in research publications to layman's terms for the general public. Ms. Maues stopped working when her breast cancer progressed and has been a full-time patient, advocate and mother for the past 3 years.

In her advocacy role, Ms. Maues is a member of Georgetown Breast Cancer Advocates, a group of advocates at Georgetown University's Lombardi Cancer Center working with researchers, clinicians and other stakeholders to ensure research is patient-centered, innovative and accessible. She is a member of Living Beyond Breast Cancer's 2018 Hear My Voice class, a 2018 Alamo Foundation SABCS scholar, a DoD Congressionally Directed Breast Cancer Research Program reviewer and an ASCO guidelines panelist. She has served on advisory boards for Genentech, MacroGenics and Astra Zeneca. She also serves as a mentor for Imerman Angels and is an active member of closed online and Washington, DC area MBC support groups. Ms. Maues and her GBCA colleagues published a paper in August 2018 in Cancer Research titled "Promoting Scientist-Advocate Collaborations in Cancer Research: Why and How".

"I believe it is imperative that patients - or patient advocates - are included in the cancer research process. Advocates bring unique and important viewpoints, ensuring that scientific and medical advances are patient-centered and relevant. I want to be an NCI research advocate, the nation's leader in cancer research, to create productive and sustainable collaborations."

### **Ryan Kinloch**

Ryan Kinloch, PhD is an analyst in NCI's Office of Government and Congressional Relations (OGCR). Before joining NCI, she worked as policy analyst in the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). She also served as a policy analyst in CDC's Division of Diabetes Translation and the National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities. She also worked as a Microbiologist/Inspector in CDC's Division of Select Agents and Toxins. After beginning her academic career at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (B.S., Chemistry), Dr. Kinloch earned a PhD in Chemistry from the University of South Carolina and completed postdoctoral training at Emory University.

### **Toniya Brown**

Ms. Toniya Brown joined DCEG as a postbaccalaureate fellow in August 2022. Ms. Brown earned her B.A. in psychology from Duke University, Durham, North Carolina in 2020 and completed her premedical coursework in the Bryn Mawr College Postbaccalaureate Premedical Program, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania in 2021. Her most recent previous research experience was working at the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Chapel Hill as a research coordinator within the Pulmonary Division of UNC School of Medicine. As an undergraduate, she worked as a research assistant for the Duke Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, the Duke Identity and Diversity Lab, and for the National Resource Center for Psychiatric Advanced Directives.

Ms. Brown is working with the [Connect for Cancer Prevention Study](#) under Chief Scientist [Dr. Mia Gaudet](#). Within this role, she is coordinating the cross-national study sites as part of the electronic health records, biospecimen, and return of genetic results subcommittees. Her broad research interests include contextualizing disparate health outcomes amongst racial groups within the oncology patient population, and clinical efforts to minimize these outcomes through patient advocacy and shared decision making.

### **Kyra Mendez**

Kyra Mendez, PhD, MPH, RN, is a Cancer Prevention Fellow in the NCI Clinical Genetics Branch (CGB). She received a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Florida Atlantic University in 2014 and worked as a nurse in oncology-hematology. In 2016, she returned to school to pursue a PhD from Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing. Her dissertation investigated health-related technology use and intention to adopt mobile health (mHealth) apps among family caregivers who have a chronic condition and care for someone with dementia. After graduating with a PhD in 2021, she joined the Cancer Prevention Fellowship Program, where she completed a Master of Public Health from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health as part of the first year of her postdoctoral fellowship.

In CGB, Dr. Mendez is investigating accelerated aging and biomarkers of aging (specifically, telomere length) among people who have received a hematopoietic stem cell transplant under the mentorship of Dr. Shahinaz Gadalla.

### **Akemi Wijayabahu**

Akemi Wijayabahu joined DCEG as a postdoctoral fellow in the Clinical Genetics Branch (CGB) in December 2021. She earned her B.S. in molecular biology and biotechnology from the University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka (2014), and an M.S. in epidemiology (2017) and Ph.D. in epidemiology with a cancer epidemiology concentration (2021), both from the University of Florida, Gainesville. For her doctoral dissertation, she investigated associations between lifestyle factors, micronutrients, and biomarkers of biological aging.

In CGB, Dr. Wijayabahu focuses on understanding etiological relationships and modifiable risk factors of cancers that afflict women, with a special focus on endometrial cancer. Epidemiologic evidence on endometrial cancer prevention, early detection, and etiology is limited. Thus, through her work at CGB, Dr. Wijayabahu strives to help bridge the gaps in endometrial cancer research under the mentorship of [Megan Clarke, Ph.D., M.H.S.](#)

In 2022, she received the [DCEG Cancer Health Disparities Award](#) for her proposal for a study of endometrial cancer. She also received the [2023 NCI Director's Innovation Career Development Award](#) for her proposal titled "Investigating overall and race-specific differences in telomere length distribution and mean telomere length between normal, endometrial intraepithelial neoplasia (EIN), and endometrial cancer tissue."

### **Kaitlyn Sadtler**

Kaitlyn Sadtler, Ph.D. joined NIBIB as an Earl Stadtman Tenure-Track Investigator and Chief of the Section for Immunoengineering in 2019. Prior to her arrival to the NIH, she completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology with Daniel Anderson, Ph.D. and Robert Langer, Ph.D., focusing on the molecular mechanisms of medical device fibrosis. During her time at MIT, Dr. Sadtler was awarded an NRSA Ruth L Kirschstein Postdoctoral Fellowship, was listed on BioSpace's 10 Life Science Innovators Under 40 To Watch and StemCell Tech's Six

Immunologists and Science Communicators to Follow. In 2018, she was named a TED Fellow and delivered a TED talk which was listed as one of the 25 most viewed talks in 2018. She was also elected to the 2019 Forbes 30 Under 30 List in Science, selected as a 2020 TEDMED Research Scholar, and received multiple other awards. Dr. Sadtler received her Ph.D. from the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine where her thesis research was published in *Science* magazine, *Nature Methods*, and others. She was recently featured in the Johns Hopkins Medicine Magazine as an alumna of note. Dr. Sadtler completed her bachelor's degree summa cum laude at the University of Maryland Baltimore County, followed by a postbaccalaureate IRTA at the Laboratory of Cellular and Molecular Immunology at NIAID.