



Annual Meeting December 1, 2021

Speaker and Moderator Biographies



Vikrant Sahasrabuddhe, MBBS, MPH, DrPH

*National Cancer Institute, Division of Cancer Prevention
ULACNet Program Director*

Dr. Vikrant Sahasrabuddhe serves as Program Director in the Division of Cancer Prevention (DCP) at the National Cancer Institute (NCI) where he provides scientific direction and strategic guidance for clinic- and population-based precision prevention research efforts for HPV-related cancers. Dr. Sahasrabuddhe directs ULACNet, NCI DCP's newest clinical trials network focused on collaborative research on innovations in optimization of HPV immunoprevention, screening and triage, and precancer treatment in persons living with HIV. Dr. Sahasrabuddhe received his medical degree from University of Pune in India, his master's and doctorate in public health from the University of Alabama at Birmingham, and fellowship training in epidemiology at Johns Hopkins and at the NCI. He has published widely across a broad spectrum of clinical, epidemiologic, and implementation research areas on infection-associated cancers with high or rising incidence and mortality burden.



Philip Castle, PhD, MPH

*National Cancer Institute, Division of Cancer Prevention
DCP Division Director*

Philip E. Castle, Ph.D., M.P.H., was appointed Director of the Division of Cancer Prevention (DCP) at the National Cancer Institute (NCI) in July 2020. Dr. Castle earned a Ph.D. in Biophysics in 1995 and, in conjunction with his training in the Cancer Prevention Fellowship Program (CPFP), a Master's in Public Health in 2000, both at The Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland. Dr. Castle was a tenured professor in the Department of Epidemiology and Population Health at Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Bronx, New York, and a visiting professor at institutions in Singapore, China and Australia. Dr. Castle was previously the Chief Scientific Officer of the American Society for Clinical Pathology. Dr. Castle has been a principal investigator for more than 15 years, initiating, conducting, and leading several large NCI molecular and clinical epidemiologic research studies in the U.S. and internationally. Dr. Castle worked in the NCI Division of Cancer Epidemiology and Genetics (DCEG) as a fellow, investigator, and then senior investigator from 2002 through 2010. He has co-authored more than 400 published articles on HPV and cervical and anogenital cancers and other cancer-related research.



Ana Ortiz, PhD, MPH

*University of Puerto Rico Comprehensive Cancer Center
CAMPO Consortium*

Dr. Ana Patricia Ortiz is Professor of Epidemiology at the Division of Cancer Control and Population Sciences at the University of Puerto Rico Comprehensive Cancer (UPRCCC) and Ad honorem Professor of the Graduate School of Public Health, University of Puerto Rico Medical Sciences Campus in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Dr. Ortiz completed an MPH in Epidemiology with a focus on International Health and a PhD in Epidemiology at the University of Michigan where she was also a scholar with the Center for Research on Ethnicity, Culture, and Health, sponsored by the NIH. Dr. Ortiz has 17 years of experience in cancer prevention and control research, as well as mentoring undergraduate, graduate and professional students within this field. Her research interests include HPV, HPV-related malignancies, HIV, and women's health. Dr. Ortiz is currently the director of the Cancer Prevention and Control (CAPAC) Research Training Program at the UPRCCC, serves on the leadership team of the AIDS Malignancy Consortium and the University of Puerto Rico/University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center Partnership for Excellence in Cancer Research, and serves as one of the multiple Principal Investigators of the CAMPO Partnership Center in ULACNet.



Martha Abrahamsen, MPH

*Moffitt Cancer Center
ROCCHHA Consortium*

Martha Abrahamsen, MPH is a Senior Research Project Manager in the Center for Immunization and Infection Research in Cancer (CIIRC) at the Moffitt Cancer Center in Tampa, Florida. She serves as the Project Manager for the ULACNet ROCCHHA Trials. Martha received a B.S. in Molecular and Cellular Biology and a Master in Public Health from the University of Arizona. She has over 25 years of project management experience working with national and international collaborators focusing on HPV related research.



Delia Pinto-Santini, PhD

*Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
Colaboración Evita Consortium*

Delia Pinto-Santini is a laboratory scientist with a PhD in Molecular and Cellular Biology. Interested in moving from laboratory research into population-based research, she joined the HOPE (HIV Outcomes, Prevention and Epidemiology) Duerr group at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Vaccine and Infectious Disease Division, five years ago.

Her work there started as a project coordinator for HIV prevention and treatment studies in Peru (SABES and MERLIN studies). She is currently a Research Associate in the field of HIV and the gut microbiome with the same group as well as Research Manager for the ULACNet-301 trial on optimizing HPV vaccination in children living with HIV.



Eustaquia (Josefina) Chacon, BS

Leidos Biomedical Research, Inc.

Eustaquia (Josefina) Chacon is from Leidos Biomedical Research, Inc. (Leidos Biomed) Clinical Monitoring Research Program Directorate

(CMRPD). Josefina joined the ULACNet program in May 2021 to provide auditing services to the program and is a Clinical Trials Manager. Josefina has a bachelor's in Biology from George Mason University and a Clinical Trial Manager Certificate from the University of Delaware. Josefina has been a manager and previously was a monitor overseeing the conduct of Clinical Trials from start-up Pre-initiation stages to closing for many years.



Joel Palefsky, MD

*University of California San Francisco
CAMPO Consortium Principal Investigator*

Joel Palefsky, MD is Professor of Medicine at the University of California San Francisco School of Medicine. Dr. Palefsky completed his undergraduate medical training and training in Internal Medicine at McGill University and completed his fellowship in Infectious Diseases at Stanford University in 1989. He is the founder and director of the the Anal Neoplasia Clinic at the UCSF Cancer Center, Vice Chair of the NCI-supported AIDS Malignancy Consortium (AMC), and Principal Investigator of the NCI AMC Anchor (Anal Cancer HSIL Outcomes Research) Study. He is the immediate past president of the International Papillomavirus Society and is the founder and immediate past president of the International Anal Neoplasia Society. Dr. Palefsky's research interests include the molecular pathogenesis and natural history of HPV-related disease, including in the setting of HIV infection, HPV prophylactic and therapeutic vaccines, secondary prevention of anal cancer, and treatment of HPV-related disease. Dr. Palefsky serves as the contact Principal Investigator of the CAMPO Partnership Center in ULACNet and co-chairs the ULACNet precancer treatment working group.



Alexandra Hernandez, PhD

*University of California San Francisco
CAMPO Consortium*

Dr. Alexandra Hernandez is a research epidemiologist at the University of California, San Francisco. Her research focuses on human papillomavirus (HPV) infection and HPV-associated cancers including anal, oral, and cervical cancer; cervical cancer screening; HIV and aging; and global health. Dr. Hernandez is a lead investigator on a number of projects including studies of prevalent and incident HPV infection among men living with HIV in India, The Anal HPV, HIV, and Aging (AHHA) Study in San Francisco, and the Connecting Ethiopian Women with Cervical Cancer Care (CEWC-3) Study, a study cervical cancer screening implementation in Ethiopia. Dr. Hernandez holds a BA in Integrative Biology and Physical Anthropology from the University of California, Berkeley (UCB), an MPH from UCB with an emphasis in Epidemiology and Biostatistics, and a doctorate in Epidemiology, also from UCB.



Tim Wilkin, MD, MPH

*Weill Cornell Medicine
ROCCHHA Consortium Principal Investigator*

Dr. Wilkin is Professor of Medicine and Assistant Dean for Clinical Research Compliance at the Weill Cornell Medicine. He received his undergraduate degree in Mathematics at the University of Texas at Austin and attended medical school at Ohio State University, followed by residency in Internal Medicine at the University of Chicago Hospitals and fellowship training in Infectious Diseases at Columbia University. While at Columbia, he completed a Master's of Public Health with a concentration in Patient-Oriented Research. Upon joining the faculty of Weill Medical College of Cornell University, he was supported by a K23 Grant (Mentored Patient-Oriented Research Career Development Award) from NIH to study human papillomavirus infection and anal dysplasia in HIV-positive and HIV-negative men. He has chaired or co-chaired 12 multi-site clinical trials within the AIDS Clinical Trials Group, AIDS Malignancy Consortium and HIV Prevention Trials Group. Dr. Wilkin serves as the contact Principal Investigator of the ROCCHHA Consortium in ULACNet.



Yeycy Donastorg, MD, MPH

*Instituto Dermatológico y Cirugía de Piel (IDCP)
Colaboración Evita Consortium*

Dr. Donastorg is a Medical Doctor, Master in Public Health and demographer and researcher. She has experience in sexual and reproductive health programs, in the field of educational communication in health, ethics of research and conduct of clinical, sociodemographic and applied research. For the past 19 years she has coordinated the Vaccines and Research Unit at the Dermatological Institute (IDCP), where she has conducted studies of HIV, chikungunya and COVID-19 vaccines, as well as studies of antiretroviral drugs and applied research to develop models of intervention to improve the lives of people living with HIV. She is currently the principal investigator for the Herald Trial to test the CureVac vaccine against COVID-19 and is a co-investigator of the Oportunidad Study for Colaboración Evita in ULACNet.



Robinson Cabello, MD

*Asociación Civil Vía Libre
Colaboración Evita Consortium*

Robinson Cabello, MD is Executive Director of Asociacion Civil Via Libre, Peru's oldest community-based AIDS service organization. Dr. Cabello has played a key role in both adult and pediatric clinical trials of HIV and STI therapeutics and in community-based studies of HIV prevention and diagnosis. In addition to his advocacy work in national health policy for management of HIV infection, he has collaborated with investigators from UCLA, UPCH, and Asociacion Civil Impacta Salud y Educacion on studies of HIV/STI epidemiology, prevention and treatment among MSM in Peru. He earned an MD from Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia in Lima, Peru and an MAPM from the University of Lancaster in the UK.



Betania Allen-Leigh, MA, PhD

*Instituto Nacional de Salud Publica (INSP)
ROCCCHA Consortium*

Betania Allen-Leigh, MA, PhD is a researcher in Medical sciences at the Women's Health Department in the Reproductive Health Division in the Center for Population Health Research at the National Institute of Public Health in Mexico. Dr. Allen-Leigh received her BA in Latin American Studies from the University of California in Santa Cruz. She also received her Masters and PhD in Anthropological Sciences from the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana-Iztapalapa in Mexico. Additionally, Dr. Allen-Leigh is a professor at the School of Public Health of Mexico where she teaches qualitative research methods. Her research and publications focus on a variety of issues within the broad field of sexual health and services for vulnerable populations. Dr. Allen-Leigh is interested in sexual and reproductive health research that produces inputs and evidence for policy making, especially relating to quality of care, rights-based care and person-centered care that promotes gender equity.



Jorge Salmerón Castro, MS, MD, PhD

*Instituto Nacional de Salud Pública (INSP)
CAMPO Consortium*

Dr. Jorge Salmerón Castro is a full-time Professor in the Center for Research in Policies, Population, and Health, Faculty of Medicine, National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). He holds an MS from UNAM and a PhD from the National Institute of Public Health, both in Epidemiology, as well as an MD from Universidad La Salle, School of Medicine Mexico City. From 2002 to 2017, he served as Head of the Epidemiological Research Unit and Health Services, IMSS. His research interest interests include the influence of diet on carbohydrate metabolism, particularly the impact of certain dietary patterns on the risk of developing diabetes mellitus, to achieve a better understanding of the epidemiology of diabetes, and provide helpful information for the design and planning of health policies aimed at controlling the problem of diabetes in our country.



Joseph (Jody) Carter, PhD

*Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
Colaboración Evita Consortium*

Joseph (Jody) Carter PhD is a Staff Scientist in the Division of Human Biology at the Fred Hutch in Seattle, Washington. He received his PhD in biochemistry from Washington State University and has over 30 years of experience in the human papillomavirus field with an emphasis on the detection of antibody and B-cell responses. He will be Colaboración Evita Lab Core Director.



Michael Schell, PhD

*Moffitt Cancer Center
ROCCHAA Consortium*

Michael J. Schell, PhD, is a Senior Member of the Biostatistics and Bioinformatics Department at the Moffitt Cancer Center & Research Institute in Tampa, FL. Dr. Schell received his PhD in Statistics from Florida State University. Throughout his 37-year career, Dr. Schell has worked at four NCI-designated cancer centers, including three as Biostatistics Core Director (University of California at Irvine, University of North Carolina, and the Moffitt Cancer Center). Dr. Schell has authored over 200 articles. He is an expert on statistical issues in clinical trials, next-generation sequencing, biomarker studies, and prognostic studies. The primary disease areas that Dr. Schell is currently focused on are colorectal cancer, HPV-related cancers, and skin cancer. He is the first author of the “reduced monotonic regression method”, a modern technique which generally provides stronger fits to data than yielded by linear regression, since it relaxes the linearity requirement while retaining monotonicity.



Sayan Dasgupta, PhD

*Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
Colaboración Evita Consortium*

Sayan Dasgupta, Ph.D. serves as a Biostatistician in the BBE (Biostatistics, Bioinformatics, and Epidemiology) Program in the Vaccine and Infectious Disease Division at Fred Hutch. He received his doctoral degree from the Biostatistics department at UNC-Chapel Hill in 2014, where his primary focus was to study large sample properties of Machine Learning approaches in Biostatistics, especially in Precision Medicine and Cancer clinical trials. He joined Fred Hutch as a post-doctorate researcher in 2014 and worked on a range of topics, from Survival Analysis strategies for HPTN trials, Bayesian analysis of epidemiological models built by the HIV Model consortium to selecting vaccine Biomarkers for modeling treatment selection strategies. He joined Hutch on a permanent role in 2016, and currently serves as a Staff Scientist in the Vaccine and Infectious Disease Division. He has worked extensively on writing statistical analysis plans and protocols for research applications, designing, and managing clinical trials (ULACNET/GRAIL), and conducting statistical analyses with trial data (SABES/MERLIN/HPTN052). Apart from these, his research interests also include group sequential monitoring of trials, supervised learning methods in disease modeling, causal framework for biomarker analysis, among others.



Estefani Sánchez Marte, MD, MSc

*Universidad Iberoamericana (UNIBE)
Colaboración Evita Consortium*

Estefani Sánchez is Research Senior and Professor, Institute for Tropical Medicine & Global Health, Universidad Iberoamericana (UNIBE), Santo Domingo, DR. Her interest is in the pathology of infectious diseases, especially those related to the human papillomavirus, in people living with HIV and who are also in PrEP programs. Also, in the field of genetics and molecular pathology of communicable chronic diseases and oncological diseases. After obtaining her degree in medicine at the Universidad Autònoma de Santo Domingo and in order to understand the mechanisms of disease, she studied human pathology. She is currently collaborating as a researcher in a research on the genetic bases related to cardiovascular deaths, as a result of a scholarship in the National Fund for Science and Technology (FONDOCyT) by the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology (MESCyT / Spanish). With this project we seek to detect the frequency of genetic variations that increase the risk of cardiovascular diseases in the Dominican population.



Arismendy Benítez, MD

*Universidad Iberoamericana (UNIBE)
Colaboración Evita Consortium*

Arismendy Benitez is a physician specialized in pathology. He is a researcher at the Institute of Tropical Medicine and Global Health of the Universidad Iberoamericana, in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. He received his degree from the Universidad Autonoma de Santo Domingo and has had training in Molecular biology techniques and molecular pathology. He has worked in research on programs for the detection of lesions associated with the Human Papilloma Virus, such as cervical and anal cancer, in populations of people living with HIV, trans women, and MSM. He has also worked on the prevention of HIV and other STIs in these populations. He currently works in HPV identification programs in head and neck squamous cell carcinomas and implementation of self-collection of anal cytology in men. He also studied molecular bases of chronic non-communicable pathologies such as coronary heart disease in a winning project of the National Fund for Innovation and Scientific and Technological Development (Fondocy) of the Ministry of Higher Education.



Anna Coghill, PhD

*Moffitt Cancer Center
ROCCHAA Consortium*

Dr. Coghill is an Assistant Member in the Cancer Epidemiology Program at Moffitt Cancer Center. Before joining Moffitt, she earned a Bachelor of Science in Cell and Molecular Biology from Duke, a Master of Public Health from Emory, and a doctoral degree in Epidemiology from the University of Washington in Seattle. Her goal is to characterize the role of infections in both cancer development and prognosis. As part of this effort, a central focus of her research has been to examine cancer in the setting of HIV. Her work has been critical for establishing that cancer patients with underlying HIV infection experience poorer clinical outcomes compared to the general oncology population. To address this survival disparity, she has developed an HIV oncology research database and biospecimen collection protocol since joining Moffitt at the end of 2018, and her research program is focused on identifying both healthcare-related and molecular reasons for the HIV-associated cancer survival disparity. Dr. Coghill serves as the Moffitt Site Principal Investigator and Associate Chair for Cancer Prevention and Control for the AIDS Malignancy Consortium.



Josue Pérez-Santiago, PhD

*University of Puerto Rico
CAMPO Consortium*

Dr. Pérez-Santiago is an Assistant Professor of Computational Biology and Bioinformatics at the Division of Cancer Biology at the University of Puerto Rico Comprehensive Cancer Center (UPRCCC) and Ad honorem Assistant Professor at the School of Dental Medicine, University of Puerto Rico Medical Sciences Campus. Dr. Pérez-Santiago completed a Ph.D. in Bioinformatics and Systems Biology and a post-doctoral training in NeuroAIDS at the University of California San Diego. He has been an HIV researcher for more than 10 years, and his work focuses on genomics and microbiomics, with specific research interest in identifying microbial-host targets for cancer prevention and treatment in HIV and HPV.



Margaret House, RN, BSN

*National Cancer Institute, Division of Cancer Prevention
ULACNet Nurse Consultant*

Maggie House is a nurse consultant in the Division of Cancer Prevention (DCP) at the NCI and has over 30 years of oncology nursing and clinical trial experience. She earned her Diploma in Nursing from St. Joseph's Hospital School of Nursing in 1982 and graduated Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Georgetown University in 2000. In DCP, Maggie provides support to the Prostate and Urologic Cancer Research Group studies and to several early phase breast and gynecological clinical trials, as well as serving as Nurse Consultant for ULACNet. In addition, Maggie is responsible for overseeing monitoring/auditing of the DCP Early Phase Cancer Prevention Clinical Trials Consortia program, serves on the Accrual Quality Improvement Program (AQuIP) Committee, and serves as Co-Chair of the Clinical Trials Simplification Committee of the DCP Cancer Prevention Clinical Trials Network (CP-CTNet). Her clinical trial interests include chemoprevention clinical trial recruitment, and process improvement for clinical trial site monitoring and staff education.



Emma Brofsky, MSPH

*National Cancer Institute, Division of Cancer Prevention
ULACNet Scientific Program Analyst*

Emma Brofsky is a Scientific Program Analyst in the Division of Cancer Prevention at the National Cancer Institute. She serves as a Project Manager for the US-Latin American-Caribbean HIV/HPV-Cancer Prevention Clinical Trials Network (ULACNet) and supports other projects within the Breast and Gynecological Cancer Research Group and the division. Emma received a Bachelors of Biological Sciences from Cornell University and a Master of Science in Public Health in Global Disease Epidemiology and Control from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. She has experience working with local, state, and federal public health agencies as well as in international field settings on projects related to emerging infectious disease response, health program implementation, and maternal and child health.



Margaret M. Madeleine, MPH, PhD

*University of Washington, Department of Epidemiology
Colaboración Evita Consortium Principal Investigator*

Margaret M. Madeleine, MPH, PhD, is Research Associate Professor in the Department of Epidemiology in the School of Public Health at the University of Washington and an Associate Member of the Program in Epidemiology at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. She received her MPH in Epidemiology from Yale and her PhD from the University of Washington. Dr. Madeleine's research focuses on the epidemiology of infection-related cancer, especially HPV-related cancers and pre-cancerous lesions. She has led studies on immunogenetics of HPV-related cervical and vulvar neoplasia, with a focus on HLA alleles through the International Cervical Cancer Consortium, and completed a cohort study on Skin Cancer after Organ Transplant (the SCOT study), examining the role of cutaneous HPV in non-melanoma skin cancer. She currently is leading an HPV vaccine trial (the VIVA study) to investigate whether the licensed HPV vaccine interrupts progression of high-grade neoplasia. She also focuses on uptake of HPV vaccination in Washington State. Dr. Madeleine serves as the contact Principal Investigator of the Colaboración Evita Partnership Center in ULACNet.