



11TH ANNUAL MIDWEST TUMOR MICROENVIRONMENT CONFERENCE

May 18-20, 2026
Medical College of Wisconsin

MONDAY, MAY 18

11:00 - 12:00	Check-in		MCW Main Entrance
12:00 - 12:10	Welcome and Introduction	Michael Dwinell, PhD Gustavo Leone, PhD Medical College of Wisconsin	Kerrigan Hall
12:10 - 1:10	Session 1: Molecular and Engineering Approaches	Paolo Provenzano, PhD , Session Chair	Kerrigan Hall
12:10 - 12:40	<i>Non-invasive Visualization of Cancer Features Using Radio-pathomic Mapping in Brain and Prostate Cancer</i>	Peter LaViolette, PhD, MS Medical College of Wisconsin	
12:40 - 12:55	<i>Targeting MET-Expressing NSCLC with a VNAR-Based Theranostic Agent</i>	Jayden West (#5) LeBeau Lab, UW-Madison	
12:55 - 1:10	<i>Mechanobiological Mechanisms of Formation and Behaviors and Influences of Senescent Cancer-associated Fibroblasts in Pancreatic Ductal Adenocarcinoma</i>	Leah Truskinovsky (#8) Provenzano Lab, University of Minnesota	
1:10 - 1:30	Break		
1:30 - 2:45	Session 2: Cell to Cell Communication	Sunila Pradeep, PhD , Session Chair	Kerrigan Hall
1:30 - 2:00	<i>How Tertiary Lymphoid Structures Form in Tumors</i>	Andrew Gunderson, PhD Ohio State University	
2:00 - 2:15	<i>The Role of Atp5e in Cancer-Associated Fibroblasts (CAFs) and Tumor-Stroma Crosstalk in Pancreatic Ductal Adenocarcinoma: Insights into Metabolic Reprogramming</i>	Fangfei Zhang, PhD (#45) Leone Lab, MCW	
2:15 - 2:30	<i>Radiation Therapy-induced Dysfunction of Conventional Dendritic Cells Impairs Anti-tumor Immunity in PDAC</i>	Jie Chen (#26) Denardo Lab, Wash U	
2:30 - 2:45	<i>The SPHK1-B Cell Axis: A Unique Target in Ovarian Cancer Immune Regulation</i>	Mona Roshan Singh (#14) Pradeep Lab, MCW	
2:45 - 2:55	Break (Blitz Presenters Group A Line Up)		Kerrigan Hall
2:55 - 3:25	Poster Blitz Group A		Kerrigan Hall



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3:25	Attendees will be escorted to the Center for Cancer Discovery (CCD)	
3:25 - 4:55	Poster Session A	CCD 1st Floor
4:55 - 6:30	Social/Networking Heavy appetizers and drinks	CCD Lobby
6:30	Dinner on your own	

TUESDAY, MAY 19

7:15 - 7:30	Shuttles to MCW 1st Shuttle to MCW: leaves Residence Inn 7:15, leaves SpringHill Suites 7:25	
7:45 - 8:00	2nd Shuttle to MCW: leaves Residence Inn 7:45, leaves SpringHill Suites 7:55	

7:30 - 8:30	Breakfast and Vendors	Alumni Center
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8:30 - 10:00	Session 3: Body to Tumor: Systematic Mechanisms	Michael Dwinell, PhD , Session Chair	Kerrigan Hall
8:30 - 9:30	<i>The Link Between Weaning and Breast Cancer Metastasis to the Liver</i>	Pepper Schedin, PhD Oregon Health & Science University	
9:30 - 9:45	<i>Plastic Mammary Epithelial Cells from Chemotherapy-associated Tissue Damage: A Potential Origin for Second Primary Breast Cancer</i>	Priyanga Jayakrishnan, PhD (#89) Lytle Lab, MCW	
9:45 - 10:00	<i>Caloric Restriction Enhances Macrophage Phagocytosis and Unmasks SIRPα as a Targetable Immune Checkpoint in Ovarian Cancer</i>	Ramandeep Rattan, PhD (#92) Rattan Lab, Henry Ford-MSU Health	

10:00 - 10:20	Break	
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10:20 - 11:35	Session 4: Tumors to Body: Cachexia	Todd Miller, PhD , Session Chair	Kerrigan Hall
10:20 - 10:50	<i>Systemic Host Responses Driving the Onset and Progression of Cancer Cachexia</i>	Ishan Roy, MD, PhD Northwestern University	
10:50 - 11:20	<i>TGF-beta as a Regulator of Skeletal Muscle Metabolism in Cancer</i>	Erin Talbert, PhD University of Iowa	
11:20 - 11:35	<i>Pancreatic Cancer Causes STAT3-dependent Changes in Hepatic Metabolic Gene Expression</i>	Paige Arneson-Wissink, PhD (#64) Wissink Lab, Rosalind Franklin	



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11:35 - 1:05	Lunch and Vendors		Alumni Center
1:05 - 2:05	Session 5: Tumor and Metastatic Niches	Pradeep Chaluvally-Raghavan, PhD, Session Chair	Kerrigan Hall
1:05 - 1:35	<i>Dissecting Organ-dependent Metastatic Programs in Pancreatic Cancer</i>	Kaloyan Tsanov, PhD University of Chicago	
1:35 - 1:50	<i>Metastatic Microenvironments Drive Pro-metastatic Chromatin States in Colorectal Cancer</i>	Jonathan Rennhack, PhD (#80) Rennhack Lab, Loyola	
1:50 - 2:05	<i>Mitochondria-targeted Metformin Analogs Trigger ER Stress and the PERK-integrated Stress Response to Induce Apoptosis in Pancreatic Cancer</i>	Maria Poimenidou, PhD (#77) Dwinell Lab, MCW	
2:05 - 2:25	Break		
2:25 - 3:30	Session 6: Career Development Workshop		Kerrigan Hall
2:25 - 2:30	<i>Impact of AI and ML on Biomedical Group Research (Careers)</i>	Nikki Lytle, PhD, Brittany Allen-Petersen, PhD, Panel Discussion Moderators	
2:30 - 2:40	<i>What is AI?</i>	Andrew Nencka, PhD Medical College of Wisconsin	
2:40 - 2:50	Panelist Introductions	Ashlee Ford Versypt, PhD University at Buffalo, The State University of New York	
		Amit Joshi, PhD Medical College of Wisconsin	
		Peter LaViolette, PhD, MS Medical College of Wisconsin	
		Andrew Nencka, PhD Medical College of Wisconsin	
2:50 - 3:30	<i>Q&A with Panelists</i>		
3:30 - 3:40	Break (Blitz Presenters Group B Line Up)		
3:40 - 4:10	Poster Blitz Group B		Kerrigan Hall



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4:10	Attendees will be escorted to the Center for Cancer Discovery (CCD)	
4:10 - 5:40	Poster Session B	CCD 1st Floor
5:45 - 6:15	Shuttles to Dinner Venue 1st Shuttle: 5:00 2nd Shuttle: 5:45	Meet in CCD Lobby
6:15 - 9:00	Dinner Gift cards and drink tickets will be distributed upon arrival	Milwaukee Public Market
8:00 - 9:30	Shuttle to Hotels 1st Shuttle: 8:00: drop at SpringHill Suites, then Residence Inn 2nd Shuttle: 9:00: drop at SpringHill Suites, then Residence Inn	

WEDNESDAY, MAY 20

7:30 - 8:30	Breakfast and Vendors		Alumni Center
8:30 - 9:00	Rising Star Award Presentation	Alexander Birbrair, PhD University of Wisconsin - Madison	Kerrigan Hall
9:00 - 10:30	Session 7: Microbiome Tumor Interactions	Akinyemi Ojesina, Session Chair	Kerrigan Hall
9:00 - 9:30	<i>Microbiota-Derived Bile Acids Shape Intestinal Tumorigenesis Through FXR-Dependent Signaling</i>	Ting Fu, PhD University of Wisconsin - Madison	
9:30 - 10:00	<i>Microbe-associated Tumor Microenvironment States in Triple-negative Breast Cancer</i>	Akinyemi Ojesina, MD, PhD Medical College of Wisconsin	
10:00 - 10:15	<i>Mycobiome-derived Metabolites Impact the Pancreatic Tumor Microenvironment</i>	Dominik Awad, PhD (#1) Lyssiotis Lab, University of Michigan	
10:15 - 10:30	<i>High-Fat Diet Exacerbates Helicobacter pylori-Associated Metaplasia Phenotypes</i>	Xuyao Zhao, MS (#42) O'Brien Lab, Purdue	
10:30 - 10:50	Break		



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10:50 - 11:50	Session 8: Emerging in Silico Approaches	Michael Dwinell, PhD , Session Chair	Kerrigan Hall
10:50 - 11:20	<i>Mapping Spatial Biology with Spatial Transcriptomics and Dynamic In Silico Agent-Based Models</i>	Ashlee Ford Versypt, PhD University at Buffalo, The State University of New York	
11:20 - 11:50	<i>Image guided Assessment and Modulation of the Solid Tumor Microenvironment: From Host Genetics to immune-stimulation</i>	Amit Joshi, PhD Medical College of Wisconsin	
11:50 - 12:05	Closing Remarks	Michael Dwinell, PhD Medical College of Wisconsin	Kerrigan Hall

WiFi Instructions:
Username: wifiguest
Password: community

Use this QR code to view abstracts, speaker bios, participant list and other program details:



Attendees are invited to stay for a Lunch & Learn seminar beginning at 12:30 pm in Kerrigan Hall sponsored by Quanterix, ***Investigating the Tumor Microenvironment with Spatial Proteomics***, presented by: Matthias Koenning, PhD, Senior Field Application Scientist, Quanterix

