



*You're invited to the 28<sup>th</sup> INTERNATIONAL*  
**Thyroid Cancer Survivors' Conference**  
**September 26-28, 2025**

Sponsored by ThyCa: Thyroid Cancer Survivors' Association, Inc.<sup>SM</sup> • [www.thyca.org](http://www.thyca.org)

**Confirmed Speakers** as of October 2, 2025  
Meet and learn from these experts!

**Christina Abouzeid, APRN, MSN, FNP-C**, is a nurse practitioner who has been with MD Anderson Cancer Center since 2019. Her primary specialty is advanced thyroid cancer. She has worked side by side with Dr. Maria Cabanillas since joining MDA. Prior to joining the team at MDA, she worked in general endocrinology and diabetes for 2 years. She graduated with her MSN, FNP in 2016 from UTMB. She has been an RN since 2010. Christina is passionate about thyroid cancer and patient care, prioritizing patient education to achieve better outcomes.



**Sarimar N. Agosto Salgado, MD**, is an oncologic endocrinologist at Moffitt Cancer Center in Tampa, Florida. Dr. Agosto Salgado's clinical interest centers on the management of thyroid nodules and all stages and types of thyroid cancer, including administration of systemic therapies for aggressive tumors. She is also interested in the management of hereditary endocrine neoplasia disorders, pituitary tumors, adrenal tumors, adrenocortical carcinoma and pheochromocytoma-paraganglioma tumors. Her research interest focuses on intermediate-high risk thyroid cancers in terms of management, surveillance protocols, targeted therapies and potential redifferentiation of tumors resistant to radioactive iodine.



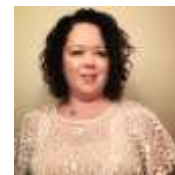
**Ruth A. Aponte-Wesson, DDS, MS, FACP, FAAMP**, is a professor in the section of Oral Oncology and Maxillofacial Prosthodontics of the Department of Head and Neck Surgery at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, TX. Dr. Aponte Wesson is a member of a large multidisciplinary practice at MDACC. She works very closely with colleagues in head and neck surgery, radiation oncology, plastics, speech pathology, lymphoma / myeloma, leukemia / breast medical oncology among other disciplines. Her focus has always been on improving quality of life of the patient after cancer treatment. Some of the areas explored are related to materials used in the rehabilitation of intra and extraoral defects as well as reported outcome assessment, specifically oral morbidities related to cancer therapies.



**Victoria E. Banuchi, MD, MPH**, is an associate professor at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, TX in the Department of Head and Neck Surgery. She obtained her MD from Columbia University in New York, NY in 2008, along with a Master's in public health from Columbia Mailman School of Public Health. After completing her medical residency in otolaryngology – head and neck surgery, she pursued a Fellowship in Head and Neck Surgery and Skull Base Surgery at the New York Head and Neck Institute. Dr. Banuchi previously served as an assistant professor of head and neck surgery at Weill Cornell in New York, where she also directed Head and Neck Surgery at Lincoln Hospital from 2016 to 2023. She specializes in head and neck surgical oncology, particularly in the management of thyroid cancer and parathyroid disease. She is known for her expertise in thyroid diagnostic ultrasounds, fine-needle aspiration biopsies, sublabial endoscopic thyroid surgery, and radiofrequency ablation as a non-surgical option for thyroid nodules.



**Charlotte A. Bayala, E-RYT, YACEP**, is a certified yoga teacher, caregiver advocate, award-winning podcaster of *The Cancer Caregiver* in Rogers, AR. Her award-winning show is dedicated to supporting the voices and well-being of cancer caregivers. As a thyroid cancer caregiver for her husband for more than a decade, Charlotte brings both lived experience and over 12 years as a yoga and meditation teacher to her work. She integrates breathwork, mindfulness, and practical self-preservation tools into strategies caregivers can actually use in the middle of daily demands. Her podcast and programs are shared by cancer organizations, recommended by social workers, and trusted by caregiver networks across the country. A frequent conference speaker, Charlotte challenges the belief that caregivers must sacrifice their own health, showing instead how resilience and balance can be rebuilt through small, consistent practices. Whether through her workshops, yoga-based sessions, or advocacy, she empowers caregivers to sustain their strength while caring for the people they love.



**Laura Beilke, Esq.** is a cancer rights attorney from Triage Cancer in Chicago IL. Having experienced the loss of her mother to cancer at a young age, Laura is driven by a desire to leverage her legal expertise and background to make a positive impact within the cancer community. Beyond her professional pursuits, she engages in personal challenges, dedicating her free time to training for and participating in long-distance running events. Laura earned her Juris Doctor from Brooklyn Law School and her Bachelor of Arts in Neurobiology and Psychology from the University of Wisconsin – Madison. Laura is a member of the State Bar of Wisconsin.



**Lindsay A. Bischoff, MD**, is a professor of medicine in the Division of Endocrinology at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, TN. She is the Co-Interim Division Director for Education and Faculty Affairs, Medical Director of the Vanderbilt Thyroid and Adrenal Center, and the Program Director for the Endocrine Fellowship. Her clinical practice focuses on diagnosis and treatment of thyroid cancer. She is an active member of the American Thyroid Association (ATA) and International Thyroid Oncology Group (ITOG), having chaired committees for both and is on the Board of Directors for ITOG. She is an author of the 2025 ATA Guidelines on Differentiated Thyroid Carcinoma and is Vice-Chair for the Guidelines on Thyroid Carcinoma of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network. She has served on the editorial boards of *Clinical Thyroidology* and *JCEM Case Reports*. She is actively involved with the World Congress on Thyroid Cancer and serves as an Associate Board member.



**Jeffrey M. Blumberg, MD, FACO**, is a head and neck surgery otolaryngologist at UNC School of Medicine in Chapel Hill, NC. Dr. Blumberg is board certified in Otolaryngology and graduated from University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. Dr. Blumberg frequently treats conditions like oral cancer, head and neck cancer, soft tissue sarcoma of head, face and neck along with other conditions.



**Marcia S. Brose, MD, PhD, FASCO**, is a medical oncologist and professor at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia, PA, where she is involved in clinical trials of new treatments for patients with advanced thyroid cancer. Her clinical focus is familial cancer syndromes and cancer risk evaluation, Phase I/II clinical trials, and novel drug target discovery. Her research focuses on genomic characterization of cancers of the head and neck, thyroid, and lung; novel drug target discovery; and the use of genetic testing in the diagnosis, prognostication, and treatment of cancer. Dr. Brose received her bachelor's degree from Amherst College, her medical degree from Cornell University Medical College, and her Ph.D. from The Rockefeller University. She is a ThyCa Medical Advisor.



**Naifa L. Busaidy, MD**, is an endocrinologist and professor in the Department of Endocrine Neoplasia and Hormonal Disorders at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, TX. Dr. Busaidy specializes in thyroid cancer and has authored numerous peer-reviewed research articles and book chapters. Dr. Busaidy has spoken at many ThyCa conferences. Dr. Busaidy is a 2011 ThyCa Research Grant recipient. She is a ThyCa Medical Advisor.



**Maria E. Cabanillas, MD**, is an oncologic endocrinologist, professor, and the Faculty Director of Clinical Research in the Department of Endocrine Neoplasia at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, TX. As a clinician and clinical researcher, Dr. Cabanillas treats both early and advanced thyroid cancers, including medullary, differentiated, and anaplastic. Her research focus is in advanced and aggressive thyroid cancer and molecular targeted therapies and immunotherapy. She is a principal investigator on several clinical trials for treating advanced disease and has been a member of and currently serves on the board of directors of the International Thyroid Oncology Group (ITOG). She is a ThyCa Medical Advisor.



**Alaina L. Carr, PhD**, is a clinical health psychologist at Georgetown University and the National Center for Health Psychology in Washington, DC. Dr. Carr specializes in working with adults with thyroid cancer and their families to cope with the challenges of cancer diagnosis, treatment, and survivorship. She received federal funding to help patients with thyroid cancer make an informed decision about whether to undergo radioactive iodine treatment and provide informational support to manage symptoms from radioactive iodine treatment.



**Luz E. Castellanos, MD**, is a board-certified pediatric endocrinologist and recent graduate of the Oncologic Endocrinology Fellowship at MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, Texas. She will be joining their Department of Endocrine Neoplasia and Hormonal Disorders as faculty this fall. After completing her MD at McGovern Medical School, she did her pediatric residency at University of Texas at Austin Dell Children's and pediatric endocrinology fellowship at Massachusetts General Hospital. After fellowship, she coupled her clinical practice with clinical trial research on artificial pancreas technologies for diabetes. Dr. Castellanos plans to pursue an academic career specializing in the care of children with cancer-related endocrinopathies and endocrine neoplasia.



**Eduardo Castro Echeverry, MD**, is a pathologist at Sonic Reference Laboratory in Austin, TX. He is a molecular pathologist and hematopathologist with 10 years of experience in the field of personalized medicine. He received his medical degree from Tulane University School of Medicine and his residency and subspecialty training in anatomic and clinical pathology and hematopathology at Scott & White Clinic/Texas A&M School of Medicine. He subsequently pursued a molecular pathology fellowship at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, where he was first introduced to the Thyroseq Genomic Classifier. In addition to an active practice that includes daily sign out of Thyroseq cases, hematopathology, and medical student education, Dr. Castro has taught bioinformatics courses at the United States and Canadian Academy of Pathology (USCAP) and served on a number of committees related to bioinformatics, education, and fusion detection for the Association for Molecular Pathology (AMP).



**Mark S. Chambers, DMD, MS**, is a tenured professor and clinical investigator in the Department of Head and Neck Surgery, Division of Surgery, and in the Department of Radiation Oncology, Division of Radiation Oncology, at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, TX. He is the Susan and Christopher Damico Chair in Viral Associated Malignancies. He also serves as Deputy Chair for the Department of Head and Neck Surgery and Chief of the Section of Oral Oncology. Dr. Chambers is recognized nationally and internationally as an oral oncologist and clinical investigator with a focus on developing novel therapeutic approaches to the oral sequelae of cancer therapy. Research interests include biomarker analyses and the oral microbiome influence on cancer development. Hence, research focuses to develop strategies in reducing cancer treatment-related oral morbidity and protocols to prevent or reduce such complications. Dr. Chambers serves as a ThyCa Medical Advisor.



**Robin Clough** is a ThyCa member and was diagnosed with anaplastic thyroid cancer in November 2022 at Cedar-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles. Upon being referred to MD Anderson, she became aware of the issues related to telehealth across state lines. Because of this experience and others shared by members in her support groups, she proposed a bill through the California Senior Legislature, which was introduced into the state legislature this year as SB 508 and is still pending.



**Elizabeth C. Conti, PhD**, is a health psychologist and assistant professor at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, Department of Palliative, Rehabilitation, and Integrative Medicine in Houston, TX. She received her PhD in clinical psychology from West Virginia University with a specialization in geropsychology and behavioral medicine. She completed her clinical internship, a research fellowship, and served on staff at the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center in Houston, TX. In her current role in Integrative Medicine, she conducts research and provides psychotherapy to patients with cancer. She helps individuals to manage stress, improve sleep, enhance meaning, and make lifestyle changes to improve overall health and reduce risk of cancer recurrence.



**Trisha D. Cubb, MD**, is an oncologic endocrinologist who will join the University of North Carolina-Lineberger Cancer Center, at the end of this year as associate professor and director of endocrine neoplasia. Previously, she served as an assistant professor at Houston Methodist Hospital-Weill Cornell Medical College, specializing in the diagnosis and treatment of thyroid disorders. She later completed an oncologic endocrinology fellowship at MD Anderson Cancer Center, driven by her passion for caring for patients with advanced thyroid cancer. Dr. Cubb is an active member of the American Thyroid Association, where she chairs the Lab Services Committee, and she also serves as an associate editor for *Clinical Thyroidology*.



**Ramona Dadu, MD**, is an endocrinologist at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, TX. Dr. Dadu is an assistant professor in the Department of Endocrine Neoplasia and Hormonal Disorders, Division of Internal Medicine. Dr. Dadu received her MD from Iuliu Hatieganu University of Medicine and Pharmacy in Romania where she also trained in clinical pharmacology and toxicology. After graduation from an internal medicine residency in Connecticut, she joined the Baylor College of Medicine/MD Anderson Cancer Center endocrinology fellowship program and entered the Clinical Scientist Training Program where she received extensive training in grant writing, conduct of research, and biostatistics. Dr. Dadu is the principal investigator in research titled “Immune Markers in Medullary Thyroid Cancer and their Clinical Significance.” She is the author of several peer-reviewed publications related to thyroid cancer and was awarded the Women in Endocrinology Young Investigator Award in 2014.



**Kaniksha Desai, MD, ECNU**, is an endocrinologist and clinical associate professor of endocrinology at Stanford University in Palo Alto, CA. She completed her endocrinology fellowship at the Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville, FL, with an emphasis on the management of patients with thyroid cancer. Dr. Desai’s clinical practice, located in Palo Alto, CA, focuses on the management of patients with thyroid diseases, including thyroid nodules and thyroid cancers. Her clinical research focuses on thyroid cancer survivorship care. Additionally, she is the endocrinology quality director.



**Vaninder K. Dhillon, MD, FACS**, is a dual fellowship trained Otolaryngologist, specializing in endocrine head and neck surgery and laryngology which includes voice and swallow. She is Associate Professor within the Department of Otolaryngology at Johns Hopkins in the National Capital Region in Washington, DC and Bethesda, MD. Her focus is voice and swallow outcomes after thyroid surgery as well as radiofrequency ablation. She also focuses on laryngeal outcomes for her patients as a whole, trying to incorporate new interventions and multidisciplinary therapy for patients with voice, swallow and breathing concerns.



**Julia Diersing, M, PA-C**, is a graduate of the Baylor College of Medicine Physician Assistant Program. Prior to her clinical training, she received a Master of Science degree in Medical Sciences from the University of North Texas Health Science Center (2016) and Bachelor of Science degree in Cell & Molecular Biology from the University of Texas at Austin (2011). She has practiced in the Department of Head and Neck Surgery at MD Anderson Cancer Center for the past six years. Her subspecialty interest in the care of patients with advanced thyroid cancer was inspired by the experience of her family member who is a poorly differentiated insular thyroid carcinoma survivor. Honoring the legacy of her parents and maternal grandparents who were public school teachers, she is passionate about educating patients and their families.



**Gene Dorio, MD, MS**, is a geriatric physician in Santa Clarita, California. His practice includes both office and hospital care, and he is known for making house calls to older adults with mobility issues. Currently, he provides in-home care for his companion, Robin Clough, who is an anaplastic thyroid cancer patient. He serves as an Assembly member for a volunteer state organization, the California Senior Legislature, and has introduced several proposals related to seniors “aging in place.” Additionally, he is a healthcare writer whose articles have appeared both locally on his blog, SCVPhysicianReport.com, and nationally.



**Carlos S. Duque, MD**, is a head & neck surgeon trained at the University of Miami, Miller School of Medicine, Department of Otolaryngology - Head & Neck Surgery. He worked as a head and neck surgeon for more than twenty years at the Hospital Pablo Tobón Uribe in Medellín, Colombia. Dr. Duque’s passion has been the treatment and management of thyroid cancer. He has published numerous articles on this topic, as well as an e-book in Spanish, entitled *¡Uuyyy, TENGO CANCER DE TIROIDES!*, which is also available in English, *Oh no, I HAVE THYROID CANCER!*. He has led sessions in both English and Spanish at numerous past ThyCa conferences.



**Tim A. Erickson, PhD**, is a researcher at Providence Portland Cancer Center in Providence, OR. Shortly after his diagnosis in 2014 with MTC, he decided that he would take his research skills and aim to find a cure for MTC. He has published several papers in the journal *Thyroid* on the immune-tumor interface of MTC and cell therapy to treat MTC with the help of collaborators at Providence and CU-Anschutz Cancer Centers. Dr. Erickson is currently developing a triad of T cell engagers to treat medullary thyroid cancer. These protein therapeutics enable direct killing of tumor cells by immune cells called T cells. The goal of his research is to develop a systemic therapy for MTC, comparable in efficacy to radioactive iodine in differentiated thyroid cancer. Dr. Erickson is a 2021 & 2025 ThyCa Research Grant Recipient.



**Robert Flavell, MD, PhD**, is a nuclear medicine physician at the University of California in San Francisco, CA. He is the Chief of Molecular Imaging and Therapeutics Clinical Section in the Department of Radiology and Biomedical Imaging. He received his medical degree from Weill Cornell Medical College, and his PhD from the Rockefeller University. Dr. Flavell’s laboratory focuses on the development of new molecular imaging and therapeutic tools in cancer. Major areas of focus include the development of novel theranostic and radiopharmaceutical therapy methods, as well as methods for imaging the tumor microenvironment.



**Aime T. Franco, PhD**, is an assistant professor and investigator with the Center for Childhood Cancer Research at The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia in Philadelphia, PA. Dr. Franco directs the newly established Pediatric Thyroid Cancer Translational Research Laboratory. She earned her PhD in Cancer Biology from Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN and conducted her postdoctoral fellowship in genetics of thyroid cancer at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, New York, NY. Her research interests include the molecular biology and genetics of thyroid cancer and improving quality of life and survivorship outcomes for thyroid cancer. Dr. Franco is a 2012 ThyCa Research Grant recipient and has spoken at many ThyCa conferences.



**Ruchi Gaba, MD, FACE, FEAA**, is an associate professor of medicine and program director of the endocrinology fellowship at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, TX. She specializes in thyroid and parathyroid disorders, with particular expertise in thyroid cancer, especially advanced and complicated cases. As Medical Director of the Thyroid and Parathyroid Center at the Dan Duncan Cancer Center, she leads a multidisciplinary team to provide comprehensive, patient-centered care and contributes nationally to guideline development and educational initiatives in endocrinology.



**Matti Gild, BSc, MBBS, PhD, FRACP**, is an endocrinologist at Royal North Shore Hospital, Sydney, Australia. Dr Gild's interests are in signaling pathways in *RET* mutant thyroid cancer. Her PhD was completed through both Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in the laboratory of Prof. James Fagin and the Cancer Genetics Lab at the Kolling Institute. Her clinical research is focused on optimizing patient outcomes in thyroid cancer and she maintains her basic science platform investigating genetics of thyroid cancer. She works clinically at Royal North Shore Hospital as a Staff Specialist in Endocrinology and is a Senior Lecturer in Medicine at the Northern Clinical School.



**Wendy Girbach, MSSW, LCSW-S, OSW-C**, is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with almost 20 years of health care experience that includes clinical work with patients/caregivers and macro-level work involving project management and quality improvement. She joined MD Anderson as a clinical social worker in the Head and Neck Clinic in 2008, transitioned to a program management role within social work in 2014, and then moved over to the Children's Cancer Hospital to lead the AYA Program when it launched in 2018. In her current role as AYA Program Director, Wendy manages the strategic development and implementation of multiple program components including provision of clinical services, programming, and outreach.



**Melanie Goldfarb, MD, MSc, FACS, FACE**, is an endocrine surgeon at Saint. John's Institute in Santa Monica, CA. Dr. Goldfarb is a fellowship-trained endocrine surgeon specializing in minimal access surgery for thyroid, parathyroid, and adrenal tumors as well as neck ultrasound, thyroid biopsy, and radiofrequency ablation. She is a graduate of Brown University and completed her surgery training at Beth Israel Deaconess (Harvard Medical School) followed by a fellowship at the University of Miami. Dr Goldfarb is an Associate Editor for *Thyroid*, and on the editorial board for *Annals of Surgical Oncology* and the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism*. With over 100 publications, her personal research field focuses on endocrine tumors, secondary malignancies, thyroid ultrasound, adolescent and young adult thyroid cancer, and cancer survivorship.



**Elizabeth G. Grubbs, MD**, is a surgeon and associate professor in the Department of Surgical Oncology at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, Texas. She earned her medical degree at Duke University School of Medicine in Durham, North Carolina, followed by postgraduate training at Duke and at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. She is author of numerous peer-reviewed original research articles, as well as book chapters. Dr. Grubbs has spoken at many ThyCa conferences. Dr. Grubbs is a 2014 ThyCa research grant recipient. She is a ThyCa Medical Advisor.



**Theresa A. Guise, MD**, is a bone expert and professor in the Department of Endocrine Neoplasia and Hormonal Disorders at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, TX. Dr. Guise directs a basic, translational and clinical research program on the effects of cancer and cancer treatment on bone, muscle and metabolism. Dr. Guise obtained her M.D. and Internal Medicine Residency Training from the University of Pittsburgh and completed an Endocrinology Fellowship at the University of Texas. Recognitions include the Fuller Albright, the Paula Stern Achievement and the Stephen M. Krane Awards (ASBMR), Philip S. Hench and Legacy Laureate Awards (University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine), Fellow of the ASBMR, and Established Investigator and Scholar of CPRIT. Dr. Guise is currently principal investigator in several grant-funded research projects from the NIH, the Department of Defense and CPRIT.



**Sarah Hamidi, MD, FRCPC**, is a board-certified endocrinologist with specialized fellowship training in oncologic endocrinology. She currently serves as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Endocrine Neoplasia and Hormonal Disorders at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. Dr. Hamidi's clinical and research work is dedicated to the care of patients with advanced thyroid cancers, with a particular focus on anaplastic thyroid carcinoma. She leads and collaborates on clinical trials and translational studies aimed at identifying novel treatment strategies and improving outcomes in this rare, aggressive disease.



**Jennifer Holkem**, is a dedicated educator and patient advocate for thyroid patients. After a successful RFA treatment of a large benign thyroid mass in 2019, she founded Save Your Thyroid—an advocacy community for patients seeking minimally invasive, non-surgical treatment options. Recognizing a lack of patient-focused resources, Jennifer creates and shares educational content through her podcast and social media. She also developed the [saveyourthyroid.org](http://saveyourthyroid.org) website, which provides patient-oriented resources, and as of 2025, she offers personalized patient navigation services. Jennifer devotes a full-time effort to building awareness of treatment advancements worldwide.



**Mimi I. Hu, MD**, is an endocrinologist and professor at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, TX. Dr. Hu has served on the faculty at MD Anderson Cancer Center since 2007. Her clinical expertise is in the evaluation and treatment of patients with papillary, follicular, and medullary thyroid cancers, hereditary endocrine neoplasia disorders, and metabolic bone and mineral disorders. She is the primary investigator and collaborator on multiple clinical trials evaluating various targeted therapies for advanced thyroid cancer. Dr. Hu has published articles and book chapters evaluating the management of medullary thyroid cancer, multiple endocrine neoplasia, bone health in cancer patients, endocrine complications of head and neck surgery, and paraneoplastic endocrine disorders. Dr. Hu is a ThyCa Medical Advisor.



**Helen K. Hughes, MD, MPH**, is an associate professor of pediatrics at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore, MD. Dr. Hughes attended medical school at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine and received a Master of Public Health from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Dr. Hughes is the co-editor of the Harriet Lane Handbook, 21st Edition, which is one of the most widely used pediatric handbooks internationally. Dr. Hughes is a national leader in the field of telemedicine and patient-facing digital health technologies. Dr. Hughes serves as Medical Director for Johns Hopkins Medicine's Office of Telemedicine and Medical Director of Pediatric Telemedicine for the Johns Hopkins Children's Center. She is a medical informaticist and co-chairs the Johns Hopkins Patient Family Centered Design (MyChart) committee.



**Priyanka C. Iyer, MD**, is an oncologic endocrinologist in the department of Endocrine Neoplasia and Hormonal disorders at University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. She treats advanced thyroid cancer including anaplastic thyroid cancer. She is one of the 5 oncologic endocrinologists in the FAST team at MD Anderson, a leading referral center for Anaplastic thyroid cancer. Dr. Iyer's clinical panel and research interests include novel approaches in the management of locally advanced and metastatic thyroid cancer with the use of targeted therapies and their combinations with immunotherapy. Her research involves exploring real world studies in advanced thyroid cancer that inform real world evidence and practice. Dr. Iyer is also the Associate program director for the Oncologic Endocrinology Fellowship program at MD Anderson. She is very involved with the education of fellows and trainees who are interested in pursuing a career in oncologic endocrinology.



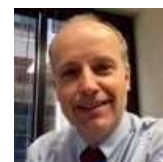
**Sonya Khan, MD**, is an endocrinologist and assistant professor at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, TX in the Department of Endocrine Neoplasia and Hormonal Disorders. She is also the Center Medical Director of the Endocrine Center. She did her residency in Internal Medicine followed by fellowship at the University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston, TX and trained at MD Anderson Cancer Center during her fellowship. Her current outpatient practice includes diabetes, thyroid cancer, pituitary disorders, bone health, hypercalcemia and immunotherapy induced endocrinopathies in the oncologic population.



**Jennifer H. Kuo, MD, MS, FACS, ECNU**, is an endocrine surgeon at Columbia University in New York City, NY. She is the Richard L. White Associate Professor in Endocrine Surgery at Columbia University. She is a board-certified surgeon-scientist nationally recognized for her expertise in the surgical treatment of thyroid, parathyroid, and adrenal diseases. Dr. Kuo is an accomplished, high-volume surgeon in minimally invasive surgical techniques, including trans-oral thyroidectomy and robotic adrenalectomy. She is one of the leading international experts in ultrasound-guided percutaneous ablation of thyroid nodules and spearheaded the new Interventional Endocrinology program at Columbia. Dr. Kuo also serves as Program Director of the Endocrine Surgery Fellowship Program and the Endocrine Surgery Research program. Her research focuses on the use of predictive algorithms to improve and optimize care for endocrine patients, and is internationally recognized as a pioneer in the safe adoption of new technology in surgical care.



**Jochen H. Lorch, MD, MSc**, is a medical oncologist and professor of medicine and medical director of the Head and Neck and Thyroid Programs Northwestern Medical Group in Chicago, IL. He graduated from the University of Regensburg in Germany in 1993 and completed his internship and residency at the University of Pennsylvania/Presbyterian Medical Center in 1999. He was awarded a fellowship in hematology and oncology at Northwestern University in Chicago. In 2002, he returned to Germany to complete his German Board Certification in Internal Medicine and Medical Oncology. He returned to the US in 2005 to take a faculty position at Boston University in Boston, MA and started as a faculty member at Dana Farber Cancer Institute in Boston, MA in 2008. He became the inaugural director of the Thyroid Center at Dana Farber. In 2021 he left Dana Farber as Associate Professor of Medicine to join the faculty at Northwestern University. He has conducted many investigator-initiated studies for patients with aggressive thyroid cancer. He is a member of the NCCN thyroid cancer board. Dr. Lorch is a ThyCa Medical Advisor.



**Shannon MacDonald, MD**, is a radiation oncologist and associate professor of radiation oncology at Harvard Medical School in Boston, MA. She also serves as Director of the Base of Skull Service and Sarcoma Service and is a member of the Pediatric Service in the Department of Radiation Oncology at the Massachusetts General Hospital. Her expertise lies in the treatment of breast, pediatric and base-of-skull tumors and sarcoma with a technology called proton therapy. Dr. MacDonald is a Primary Investigator of a Children's Oncology Group (COG) Trial for Central Nervous System (CNS) Germ Cell Tumors, and a Clinical Co-Chair of The Radiotherapy Comparative Effectiveness (RADCOMP) Consortium Trial.



**Priya Mahajan, MD, MS**, is an associate professor of pediatrics at the University of Washington and a pediatric oncologist at Seattle Children's Hospital. She completed her pediatric residency at Children's Hospital of Orange County and her pediatric hematology/oncology fellowship at the University of Texas Southwestern. Dr. Mahajan is an integral member of the solid tumor program and has a disease specific interest and expertise in rare tumors, thyroid cancer, and germ cell tumors. Dr. Mahajan is an active member of the pediatric thyroid cancer program at Seattle Children's Hospital. She is actively involved in both national and international committees to advance the field of pediatric oncology.



**Anastasios Maniakas, MD, PhD, FRCSC**, is an otolaryngologist at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, TX. Dr. Maniakas is an assistant professor in the Department of Head and Neck Surgery. He received his undergraduate, master's, and doctoral degrees from McGill University, and his MD from the University of Montreal. He completed his residency at the University of Montreal followed by a fellowship in head and neck surgical oncology at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. His clinical expertise is in head and neck cancers, with an emphasis on thyroid and parathyroid disease, oral cavity cancer, skin cancers, and salivary gland neoplasms. Dr. Maniakas' research interests focus on translational research, with the goal to identify and develop novel head and neck cancer treatments and lead pre-clinical and multi-phase clinical trials. Dr. Maniakas is a 2025 ThyCa Research Grant Recipient.



**Aarti Mathur, MD, PhD, FACS**, is an associate professor of surgery and oncology at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore, MD. She serves as Associate Vice Chair for Faculty Development in the Department of Surgery, is the Fellowship Director for the Endocrine Surgery Fellowship, and directs the CORES Endocrine Surgery Research Group. Dr. Mathur earned her medical degree at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, TX. She completed a general surgery residency at Georgetown University Hospital during which she spent time several years at National Cancer Institute. She then completed a fellowship in endocrine surgery at Johns Hopkins. She has a busy clinical practice that focuses on thyroid, parathyroid, and adrenal diseases and has a focused practice designation for adult complex thyroid and parathyroid surgery. One of her research interests is environmental risk factors for thyroid cancer.



**Brittany McKelvey, PhD**, is a pediatric thyroid cancer survivor, diagnosed with papillary thyroid cancer at age 13. Brittany then became passionate about learning more about her disease, culminating in receiving her PhD in molecular biology and genetics from Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, where she received a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship (NSF GRFP) studying the molecular mechanisms of thyroid cancer. Brittany is actively involved as a patient advocate with multiple organizations, including the National Cancer Institute (NCI) as a previous member of the NCI Council of Research Advocates (NCRA), a current member of the Society of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging (SNMMI) Patient Advocacy Advisory Board, and a co-facilitator of the ThyCa Teens Support Group.



**Meroe B. Morse, MD, ABoIM**, is an integrative medicine physician at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, TX. A graduate of Brown University, Dr. Morse received her medical degree from Tulane University School of Medicine, completed her residency training at New York University-Bellevue Hospital. Dr. Morse approaches the practice of medicine through a biopsychosocial model of care. She uses integrative strategies such as lifestyle modifications, nutrition, mind-body techniques, and movement to prevent, reverse, and manage chronic disease, the effects of cancer, and cancer therapies. As a patient advocate, Dr. Morse guides individuals as they navigate the healthcare system while empowering them to make meaningful changes in their health journey.



**Michelle S. Mullin, RN, BSN**, is a nurse navigator in the division of Head and Neck Oncology at Dana Farber Cancer Institute in Boston, MA. Her clinical interests include symptom management and relationship-based nursing care.



**David Myssiorek, MD, FACS**, is an ENT-Otolaryngologist at Bronxcare Health System, Bronx, NY. A graduate of New York University School of Medicine, Dr. Myssiorek did his internship at Lenox Hill Hospital and was Chief Resident at New York University/Bellevue. He is the author of numerous articles on thyroid cancer surgery and other head and neck surgery. He has conducted numerous surveys of our population to learn more from us, with his survey on patients' voice issues receiving more than 6,000 responses. At ThyCa conferences Dr. Myssiorek has spoken about general surgical issues and issues related to having additional neck surgeries, as well as on the causes, prevention, and solutions for voice issues. Dr. Myssiorek is a ThyCa Medical Advisor.



**Brenna Newfell, MSN, FNP-BC**, is a nurse practitioner at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston, MA. She works in the division of Head and Neck Oncology with a population focus of advanced thyroid cancer. Her clinical interests include symptom management and optimizing the integration of palliative care in her patient population through their continuum of care.



**Sarah C. Oltmann, MD**, is an endocrine surgeon at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, TX. She is the Section Chief of Endocrine Surgery at University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, and Director of Endocrine Surgery for Parkland Health and Hospital Systems. She attended Baylor University, graduating cum laude. She went on to earn her MD at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, graduating Alpha Omega Alpha. She completed her General Surgery residency at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. During her surgery training, she was diagnosed with thyroid cancer, which greatly influenced her decision to pursue Endocrine Surgery as a career. She completed an Endocrine Surgery fellowship training at University of Wisconsin in Madison, WI. Her research interests include management and clinical outcomes in endocrine surgery. She is a 2015 recipient of the ThyCa Research Grant for her work on cancer progression and therapeutic response in a mouse model of medullary thyroid cancer. She is an avid knitter.



**Maria Papaleontiou, MD**, is an endocrinologist at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Her clinical interests include management of thyroid disease and cancer, especially in older adults. Her research, funded by the NIH and other grants, focuses on the impact of age and comorbidity on thyroid disease/cancer decision making, the overtreatment with and misuse of thyroid hormone in older adults, and the roles of the physician and patient in the management of thyroid disorders/cancer. In addition, Dr. Papaleontiou has a long-standing interest in elevating clinical endocrinology through contributions to both physician and patient education. She is active in the American Thyroid Association (ATA), currently serving as Chair for the Women in Thyroidology and Co-Chair for the ATA task force to revise the hypothyroidism guidelines.



**Theodora Pappa, MD, PhD**, is an onco-endocrinologist and physician scientist committed to precision medicine in thyroid cancer. Her clinical practice at Brigham and Women's Hospital/Dana-Farber Cancer Institute is focused on advanced thyroid cancer and she conducts translational research on thyroid cancer genomics collaborating with colleagues from Harvard Medical School and the Broad Institute. The focus of her research activities is to chart the tumor ecosystem in thyroid cancer and clinically interpret thyroid cancer genome, to eventually develop novel prognostic biomarkers and tailor treatment options based on the tumor's molecular profile. Dr. Pappa is a 2022 ThyCa Research Grant recipient.



**Beena Patel, MSc, PA-C**, is a physician associate in oncology who has worked clinically in Bone Marrow Transplant and GU Oncology/Clinical Trials at leading cancer institutions including Columbia University Medical Center, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, and Weill Cornell Medical College. Through her interest in integrative medicine that was sparked by patients, physicians, and her own personal journey with thyroid cancer at the age of 21, her path led her into the world of holistic healing and wellness. She is now also a Certified Yoga Teacher and Reiki Healer at The Yoga Movement. She uses her background in both medicine and alternative healing to provide a more integrative approach to cancer care.



**Catherine R. Powers-James, PhD**, is a licensed clinical psychologist and faculty member at University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, TX. She received her doctoral degree in Clinical Health Psychology an internship and postdoctoral fellowship at the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center in Houston. Dr. Powers-James is interested in preventative care and health promotion within cancer populations. She uses evidence-based treatments, such as cognitive-behavioral therapy, motivational interviewing, acceptance and commitment therapy to help patients with their cancer diagnoses and to allow them to live a healthy, well-balanced life. Her primary research focuses on mind-body interventions and treatment of psychosocial symptoms.



**Sarika N. Rao, DO**, is an endocrinologist at Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville, FL. Dr. Rao received her medical degree from Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. She completed a residency in internal medicine at the University of Massachusetts and stayed for a fellowship with the school's Division of Endocrinology, Metabolism and Diabetes. Dr. Rao went on to earn the sole annual oncologic endocrinology fellowship at the University of Texas' prestigious MD Anderson Cancer Center. There, she focused on the treatment of conditions such as advanced thyroid and adrenal cancers, as well as endocrinopathies that arise from other cancers or chemotherapy.



**Holly Reckers, BM, MA, CCC-SLP**, is a speech-language pathologist at Columbia University Center for Voice and Swallowing as well as an adjunct professor at Teacher's College Columbia University in New York City, New York. She specializes in voice, swallowing, and upper airway disorders. She has worked with professional voice users who perform on Broadway, The Metropolitan Opera, tv/film, and national/international tours. She has presented and published on the topics of vocal hygiene and training of collegiate and professional singers, effects of thyroid cancer treatment on voice and swallowing, and the effect of COVID-19 on professional voice users. Holly holds a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (CCM) in voice performance/opera and her Master of Arts from the University of Cincinnati. She completed her voice fellowship at Lakeshore Ear, Nose, and Throat Professional Voice Center in St. Clair Shores, Michigan.



**Thomas J. Roberts, MD, MBA**, is a medical oncologist at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, MA. Dr. Roberts also serves as the Clinical Director for Oncology Services for Mass General Brigham Healthcare at Home, where he is working to improve supportive care at home for patients with cancer. Dr. Roberts treats patients with head and neck cancers and thyroid cancer. He has published extensively on topics ranging from developmental therapeutics to cancer epidemiology and healthcare access. He is an investigator on dozens of clinical trials evaluating early and late stage therapies for these types of cancers.



**Bruce Robinson, MD**, is an endocrinologist and professor at the University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia. He has been the head of the Cancer Genetics Unit at the Kolling Institute of Medical Research, Royal North Shore Hospital, since 1989. He has been chairman Hoc Mai Foundation, a major program in medical and health education and exchange with Vietnam since 2001. In 2015 Dr. Robinson was appointed as chair of Australia's peak advisory and funding body for medical research, National Health, and Medical Research Council. His research has focused on identifying genetic changes which either predispose or directly cause endocrine tumors, and among other highlights has been the formation of an international consortium of families from around the world to study medullary thyroid carcinoma and pheochromocytoma.



**Siddharth Sheth, DO, MPH**, is a medical oncologist and a tenured Associate Professor of Medicine in the Division of Oncology at the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Chapel Hill. His clinical expertise is in head and neck cancers including thyroid malignancies. His research focuses on clinical trials and evaluating promising biomarkers in clinical studies. He leads multiple trials with an interest in neoadjuvant trials. At UNC, Dr. Sheth co-leads the head and neck cancer program and leads the head and neck POD (clinical trials group). Dr. Sheth is an active member of ASCO, SITC, and AACR, ITOG, and participates in NCI Cooperative Groups including Alliance, NRG, ECOG/ACRIN and ETCTN.



**Catherine B. Skefos, MA, MS**, is a certified genetic counselor in the Clinical Cancer Genetics Program at the University of Texas, MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, TX, where she provides cancer risk assessment and counseling to patients in the Endocrine Center. As a genetic counselor working with both pediatric and adult patients, she helps patients and family members understand and adapt to information about genetic testing and inherited cancer risk. Prior to becoming a genetic counselor, she received a master's degree in medical Anthropology from the University of South Florida, where her research focused on health care access and health disparity. Catherine has a special interest in teaching, particularly educating health care providers about the utility of genetic counseling and testing with the goal of improving patient access to genetic services.



**Julie Ann Sosa, MD, MA, FACS, FSSO**, is an endocrine and oncologic surgeon at the University of California, San Francisco in San Francisco, CA. She is also the Chair of the Department of Surgery and the Leon Goldman, MD Distinguished Professor in the Department of Surgery. Her previous position was at Duke University Medical Center in Durham, NC. She is a principal investigator or co-principal investigator of studies of new drug treatments for advanced thyroid cancer as well as a natural history registry for patients with medullary thyroid cancer. She co-chaired the committee that wrote the newly published iteration of the American Thyroid Association practice guidelines for the management of adult patients with differentiated thyroid cancer. Following undergraduate education at Princeton University, she received an MA in Human Sciences at the University of Oxford in the United Kingdom and her medical degree from Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore, MD. She received postgraduate training at Johns Hopkins Hospital as well as the John Radcliffe and Churchill Hospitals in Oxford, England. Dr. Sosa is a ThyCa Medical Advisor.



**Samer A. Srour, MB, ChB, MS**, is an associate professor of medicine at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, TX. Chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) T-cell therapy has been changing with several approved indications for patients with hematologic malignancies. Several challenges hampered its success in solid tumors. Dr. Srour's current clinical position as a transplant and cellular therapist, along with his background in caring for a diverse group of patients with solid tumors, have given him the opportunity to be directly engaged in the treatment of patients with both solid tumors and high-risk hematologic malignancies, and to manage a variety of toxicities associated with transplant and cellular therapy. His research interest and clinical investigations are currently focused on exploring and improving outcomes of cellular therapies in solid tumors. Dr. Srour is leading for that purpose several adoptive cell therapy clinical trials with an overall goal to improve outcomes by not only inducing durable responses but also to minimize associated toxicities and potentially cure some of these high-risk cancers.



**James W. Suliburk, MD, FACS**, is Chief of Endocrine Surgery at Baylor Medicine in Houston Texas. He completed his Endocrine Surgery Fellowship at the world-renown University of Sydney Endocrine Surgical Unit as the TS Reeve International Fellow in Endocrine Surgery. He directs the Endocrine Surgery Clinic at Ben Taub Hospital, part of Harris Health System and is a founder of the Baylor Thyroid and Parathyroid Center at Baylor Medicine. He performs high volume endocrine surgery both at Baylor St. Lukes Medical Center as well as Ben Taub Hospital, seeing patients with benign and malignant thyroid, parathyroid and adrenal disease. He is a funded researcher by the NIH as well as the Cancer Prevention Institute of Texas (CPRIT) in using mass spectrometry to aid in the diagnosis of endocrine neoplasia both in real-time on the operative field as well as in FNA specimens. He also conducts research in endocrine neoplasia focusing on patient-centered cognition as well as in mobile technology for communication in perioperative self-care.



**Valentina D. Tarasova, MD**, is an endocrinologist at Moffitt Cancer Center in Tampa, FL. Dr. Tarasova received her MD at Kubansky State Medical University. She completed an internal medicine residency at Yale New Haven Hospital, Yale School of Medicine, New Haven, CT and an endocrinology, diabetes and metabolism fellowship at the University of Omaha, NE. Most recently, Dr. Tarasova completed a thyroid cancer fellowship at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York, NY. Dr. Tarasova's clinical interests include thyroid neoplasm, particularly diagnosis, monitoring, and treatment of thyroid carcinoma (from low risk to advanced progressive forms of thyroid cancer). Her research interests include the role of molecular markers in diagnosing and determining the prognosis of thyroid neoplasm, risk stratification of patients with thyroid cancer and developing tools to estimate the prognosis and determine the management of patients with thyroid cancer.



**K. Elaine Thrift, MSN, APRN, FNP-BC, CDCES, ADM-BC**, is a nurse practitioner at Mercy Endocrinol in Fort Smith, AR. In addition to being a healthcare professional, she is a thyroid cancer survivor. Diagnosed in 2012 with papillary thyroid cancer, she has experienced the vast emotions and difficulties that accompany a cancer diagnosis. She has used her personal cancer experience to impact the life of many patients.



**Caleb R. Trotter, JD**, is a senior attorney at Pacific Legal Foundation in Sacramento, CA. He litigates on behalf of individuals and small businesses fighting for their constitutional rights to free speech, economic liberty, and equal protection under the law. Caleb attended law school at Loyola University New Orleans, where he graduated cum laude and served as a member of the *Loyola Law Review* and moot court program. He also earned a BSM in finance and legal studies in business at Tulane University.



**Jennifer R. Wang, MD, PhD, ScM, FRCSC**, is an assistant professor in the Department of Head and Neck Surgery at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, TX. She is a surgeon scientist with clinical practice focused on the treatment of patients with thyroid cancers. Dr. Wang received her undergraduate degree in health sciences from McMaster University and her medical degree from University of Toronto. Dr. Wang also has a PhD in genetic epidemiology from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. She is member of the FAST team (Facilitating Anaplastic Thyroid Cancer Specialized Treatment) at MD Anderson Cancer Center, dedicated to providing rapid diagnosis and treatment for patients with anaplastic thyroid cancer. Her laboratory is focused on studying genetic changes that are found in patients with thyroid cancers that can help to predict disease behavior and treatment response. Dr. Wang is a 2019 ThyCa Research Grant recipient.



**Ari J. Wassner, MD**, is a pediatric endocrinologist at Boston Children's Hospital in Boston, MA. He serves as the Medical Director of the Thyroid Center, Director of the Endocrinology Fellowship Training Program at Boston Children's Hospital, and is Associate Professor of Pediatrics at Harvard Medical School. He earned his MD from Harvard Medical School and completed residency in Pediatrics and fellowship in Pediatric Endocrinology at Boston Children's Hospital. Dr. Wassner is an international expert in pediatric thyroid disease, serving for the American Thyroid Association (ATA) Pediatric Thyroid Cancer Guidelines Task Force and the writing group of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) congenital hypothyroidism guidelines. Dr. Wassner's primary clinical focus is on congenital hypothyroidism and thyroid neoplasia in children.



**James Wu, MD**, is a board-certified Endocrine Surgeon and Associate Professor of Surgery at UCLA. He trained in Complex Head and Neck Oncologic Surgery at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, following general surgery training at UCLA. Dr. Wu has received research awards from the American Thyroid Association and American Association of Endocrine Surgeons. His research focuses on decision-making in thyroid cancer and optimal care of thyroid cancer patients. In this clinical practice he is devoted to patients in all aspects of thyroid nodules and thyroid cancer, including active surveillance and radiofrequency ablation. Finally, he serves on the ATA patient education and advocacy committee and produces videos via UCLA health on thyroid, parathyroid, and adrenal topics.



**Mark E. Zafereo, MD**, is a head and neck surgeon and tenured Professor at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, TX. He is Section Chief of Head and Neck Endocrine Surgery and Associate Medical Director of the Head & Neck Center. He has served on the Board of Directors of the International Thyroid Oncology Group (ITOG) and the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery and was recently elected to serve on the Board of Directors of the American Thyroid Association. His clinical practice focuses on patients with thyroid cancer, particularly patients with advanced thyroid cancer, wherein he leads several multicenter neoadjuvant phase II clinical trials. Dr. Zafereo is a ThyCa Medical Advisor.

