

Meet Four Young Researchers Shaping the Future of Cancer Treatment and Care

The 2025 NCCN Young Investigator Awardees are cutting-edge researchers in breast cancer, leukemia, CAR-T therapy and more.

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PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA [April 3, 2025] — The National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) and the [NCCN Foundation](#) proudly announce four recipients for the 2025 NCCN Foundation Young Investigator Awards ([YIA](#)). These awards provide essential funding for promising up-and-coming researchers at NCCN Member Institutions, supporting studies that aim to improve cancer care. Each recipient will receive up to \$150,000 in funding over two years, with oversight provided through the NCCN Oncology Research Program ([ORP](#)).

“Early-career researchers bring fresh perspectives to some of the most complex challenges in cancer care,” said Crystal S. Denlinger, MD, Chief Executive Officer, NCCN—a former NCCN Foundation YIA recipient. “Supporting these investigators and their work is critical for advancing cancer treatment and outcomes. This program is an investment in their potential—and in the discoveries that will improve cancer outcomes in the future.”

The 2025 NCCN Foundation Young Investigator Awardees are:

- Rachel Abelman, MD, Mass General Cancer Center, a founding member of Mass General Brigham healthcare system; Harvard Medical School
 - A Phase II Study of Response-Guided Sacituzumab Govitecan (SG) in Combination with Pembrolizumab in Localized Triple Negative Breast Cancer (SG) – NeoSTAR A2 Cohort
- Mathew Angelos, MD, PhD, University of Colorado Cancer Center
 - A Phase I, First-In Human Study to Evaluate the Safety and Preliminary Clinical Activity of Autologous Anti-CD64 Chimeric Antigen Receptor (CAR) T Cells in Patients with Refractory or

Relapsed Acute Myeloid Leukemia

- Kathryn Tringale, MD, MAS, UC San Diego Moores Cancer Center
 - Comprehensive Neuroimaging and Molecular Biomarkers of Neurotoxicity Following CAR T-Cell Therapy
- Jennifer Zhang, MD, Abramson Cancer Center at the University of Pennsylvania
 - Intratumoral CD40 Agonist and Checkpoint Blockade in Resectable Breast Cancer

“It is an honor to support some of the rising stars in oncology who are driving the next wave of cancer breakthroughs,” said Patrick Delaney, Executive Director of the NCCN Foundation. “These talented researchers are tackling pressing challenges in cancer care today. We are eager to see how their work will transform the field.”

YIA-funded research contributes to the broader oncology community in numerous ways. Prior awardees recently presented their findings during the [NCCN 2025 Annual Conference](#). Their research covered topics, including molecular residual disease-guided adjuvant therapy and electronic symptom monitoring for palliative care. Those abstracts can be found at [JNCCN.org](#), the online home of JNCCN—Journal of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network.

This year’s awards were made possible through funding from the NCCN Foundation with support from AbbVie; Boehringer Ingelheim; Edith C. Blum Foundation; Exelixis; Jazz Pharmaceuticals; Merck & Co., Inc; Joanne Mohr-Harshorne; Pfizer, Inc. The NCCN Foundation has awarded more than \$11.7 million since 2011 through the YIA program, to a total of 79 researchers. Visit [NCCN.org/YIA](#) to learn more about the program and past recipients.

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