

**CASEY DESANTIS CANCER RESEARCH PROGRAM**  
**Florida Cancer Innovation Fund Awardees**  
**Fiscal Year 2024-25**

Principal Investigator	Title of Project	Institution	Amount Requested
Christina von Roemeling	Fueling Immunity: Targeting Lipid Metabolism to Enhance Immune Checkpoint Blockade and Brain Metastasis Control in Triple-Negative Breast Cancer	University of Florida	\$924,371.00
Dejana Braithwaite	Florida Partnership for Adding Social Context to Address Cancer Survivorship Outcomes (ASCENT)	University of Florida	\$598,993.00
Timothy Yeatman	Integrating spatial analysis of the lipidome, transcriptome, and microbiome to fundamentally advance our understanding of the tumor microenvironment at the single cell level---a key to cancer cures	University of South Florida	\$1,995,456.00
Scott Kelley	Developing a biodegradable stent to protect patients from post-surgical anastomotic leaks (AL) following rectal cancer surgery	SafeGuard Surgical, Inc.	\$1,994,665.00
Derek Duckett	Reprogramming Cancer: A Paradigm Shift in Oncology Treatment	H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center & Research Institute, Inc.	\$1,754,880.00
Harleen Kaur	Effects of a multimodal exercise intervention on chemotherapy uptake in newly diagnosed pediatric and AYA sarcoma patients	University of Miami - Miller School of Medicine	\$328,052.00
Tracy Crane	Fasting InTervention for Endometrial cancer (FIT-ENDO)	University of Miami	\$557,637.00
Laura Szalacha	Increasing Lung Cancer Screening Uptake by Innovatively Using TIMS®, a Tailored Navigation Intervention, among Underserved Populations	University of South Florida	\$309,993.00
Victoria Marshall	GOALHealth: Geriatric Oncology Adherence Link: Testing an Established Prototype to Support Older Adults Prescribed Oral Anticancer Medication	University of South Florida	\$213,219.00
Annette Khaled	Exosome Interception: A New Strategy to Stop Breast Cancer Metastasis	The University of Central Florida Board of Trustees	\$257,948.00
Jihe Zhao	Make FDA-Approved Anticancer Drugs Effective for the Most Difficult-to-Treat Breast Cancer Patients by Targeting a Novel Drug-Resistant Cancer Gene Using Innovative Drug-Delivery Technologies	The University of Central Florida Board of Trustees	\$510,656.00
Paul Okunieff	Complementary Utility of Two HPV Biomarkers to Optimize Response and Personalize Cervical Cancer Treatment	University of Florida Board of Trustees	\$1,592,243.00
Michael Gubanov	CancerAIKG: a Web-scale Trustworthy AI-Knowledge Graph-LLM hybrid on Cancer, Constructed and Interrogated for Bias using Deep-Learning	Florida State University	\$664,966.00
Nezamoddin Kachouie	A Multimodal Lung Cancer Risk Assessment Model using Comprehensive Data Integration	Florida Institute of Technology	\$422,453.00
Darlah Lopez	Mitigation of Chemotherapy-induced Nephrotoxicity via Podocyte Protection	149 BIO, LLC	\$941,944.00
Noah Berlow	Reducing Cancer Health Disparities in Florida through Functional Precision Medicine and Artificial Intelligence - Pilot Study serving Minority, Underserved Cancer Patients.	First Ascent Biomedical	\$2,000,000.00
Hyo Han	A Chemotherapy-free Treatment Regimen for HER-2 Positive Breast Cancer utilizing HER2-directed Intratumoral Dendritic Cell Immunotherapy plus Trastuzumab and Pertuzumab	H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center & Research Institute, Inc.	\$1,429,728.00

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Heather Jim	Patient-Reported Outcomes as Novel Biomarkers for Monitoring Cancer Progression and Response to Treatment: A Validation Study	Moffitt Cancer Center	\$1,561,399.00
Nagaraj Nagathihalli	Urolithin A (UroA), a natural compound, as a novel therapy to reduce chemotherapy-induced toxicity in pancreatic cancer patients	University of Miami	\$1,410,132.00
Chris Beltran	Advancing Personalized Ion Radiation Therapy: Integrating Cellular Pathomics and Relative Biological Effectiveness Modeling for Improved Cancer Outcomes in Florida.	Mayo Clinic Jacksonville	\$946,965.00
Sungjune Kim	Epigenetic Immune Regulation in Breast Cancer	Mayo Clinic Florida	\$781,795.00
John Copland	Induction of catabolism as a therapeutic strategy to enhance sensitivity to the SCD1 blockade therapy in hepatobiliary cancers	Mayo Clinic Jacksonville	\$730,227.50
Claudia Andl	Characterization of probiotic Lactobacillus spp. and their metabolites as a novel therapeutic for esophageal adenocarcinoma in innovative pre-clinical model systems	The University of Central Florida Board of Trustees	\$380,272.00
Atif Hussein	AI-Enhanced Biomarker-Driven Early Detection and Precision Therapies for Glioblastoma and Brain Metastasis	Memorial Cancer Institute, Memorial Healthcare System	\$1,280,557.00
Mandip sachdeva	Development of Genetically Engineered Smart Exosomes for Targeted Treatment of Cancer	Florida A&M	\$281,879.00
Dmitriy Minond	Pre-clinical studies of spliceosomal immunomodulators in combination with checkpoint inhibitors in humanized melanoma mouse model .	NSU	\$424,289.00
Oleg Gligich	A Retrospective Review and Cross-Platform Comparison of ctDNA Results for Standardization, Clinical Validation, and Application in Cancer Monitoring.	Mt Sinai Comprehensive Cancer Center	\$156,300.00
Nezamoddin Kachouie	A Twin SQL and Smart Cancer Repository and Query System with Analytical Intelligence Capability and Shared Access	Florida Institute of Technology	\$600,071.00
Elizabeth Franzmann	Rapid, low-cost early detection test for lung cancer	Vigilant Laboratories	\$882,198.00
Leerin Shields	Building on Trust: Navigating Preventive Lung, Breast, and Prostate Cancer Screenings at Community Resource Spots	Adventist Health System/Sunbelt, Inc. AdventHealth Orlando	\$1,703,501.00