



Cancer Center

**Director, Ginny L. Clements Breast Cancer Research Institute
The University of Arizona Cancer Center
The University of Arizona
Tucson, Arizona**

THE SEARCH

The University of Arizona Cancer Center seeks a visionary and highly collaborative leader to serve as the inaugural Director of the Ginny L. Clements Breast Cancer Research Institute (GLCBCRI or the Institute). The Directorship also offers the opportunity to hold the GLCBCRI Endowed Director's Chair while building a new transdisciplinary institute focused on changing the lives of patients with breast cancer through transformational research. Housed within the University of Arizona Cancer Center (UACC or the Center) – the only NCI-designated comprehensive cancer center headquartered in the state of Arizona – the GLCBCRI will leverage the UACC's outstanding and distinctive programs in research, patient care, and community outreach, both within Arizona and nationwide.

Research at the Institute will add to the depth and breadth of the breast cancer-related work already in progress at the UACC by focusing on novel discoveries and innovative clinical trials that will test new ways to diagnose and treat breast cancer. The inaugural Director will have the opportunity to define the research goals, priorities, and direction of the transdisciplinary institute, while also building upon existing and establishing new partnerships across the UA campus and beyond.

Generous funding for the Institute has been provided by longtime University of Arizona Cancer Center supporter Ginny L. Clements, herself a breast cancer survivor. The \$8.5M gift establishes an endowment for the Institute and will fund an endowed director's chair, two professorships, startup packages for those professors, and lab renovations.

The Director will be a renowned expert in breast cancer treatment and research with exceptional leadership skills. Along with a proven track record of applying innovative and collaborative leadership, the Director will bring strong interpersonal skills focused on advancing team science, and an innate ability to fundraise. Candidates who have earned an MD, PhD, MD/PhD or equivalent degree and who qualify for a position as a tenured faculty member in the College of Medicine at the University of Arizona are encouraged to apply.

The University of Arizona Cancer Center has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in the recruitment of the GLCBCRI Director. Please direct all inquiries and applications as indicated at the end of this document.

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

Founded in 1885 as the first university in the Arizona Territory, the University of Arizona (UA) is a land-grant institution with two independently accredited medical schools. With more than \$687M in annual research expenditures – placing it in the top 40 for total research and development expenditures as measured by the National Science Foundation – the UA is a Research 1 university and a member of the AAU. Its 387-campus in central Tucson is the oldest continually maintained green space in the state.

The UA has more than 35,000 undergraduate and almost 10,000 graduate and professional students and has been designated as a Hispanic Serving Institution by the U.S. Department of Education. Additionally, it is ranked as a Top 40 Public University by *US News and World Report* and a Best Value University by *Forbes*.

Throughout its history, the UA has sought to make science practical and education accessible to the general population across the state. The university's Health Sciences includes the Colleges of Medicine (Tucson and Phoenix), Nursing, Pharmacy, and the Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health, with main campus locations in Tucson and the growing Phoenix Biomedical Campus in downtown Phoenix. From these vantage points, the Health Sciences reaches across the state of Arizona and the greater Southwest region to provide cutting-edge health education, research, and community outreach services. A major economic engine, the Health Sciences employs nearly 5,000 people, has approximately 900 faculty members, and garners \$200 million in research grants and contracts annually.

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA CANCER CENTER

The [University of Arizona Cancer Center \(UACC\)](#) is one of 51 NCI-designated Comprehensive Cancer Centers nationwide and the only one headquartered in the state of Arizona. The UACC is a leader in research on women's cancers (breast, ovarian), men's cancers (prostate), gastrointestinal cancers (colon, pancreas, and liver), lymphoma, and skin cancers, and is home to one of the largest Cancer Prevention and Control Programs among the nation's comprehensive cancer centers.

The mission of the UACC is to harness an insatiable quest to alleviate the burden of cancer in the Center's catchment area, the state of Arizona, and beyond through interdisciplinary discovery, compassionate care, and training of individuals to fight inequities through engagement, respect, and conviction.

The UACC operates in one of the most unique demographic environments in the United States and primarily serves its five surrounding, contiguous counties: Cochise, Pima, Pinal, Santa Cruz, and Yuma. This area has a total population of 1.8M characterized as 39% Hispanic/Latino/a and 2.5% American Indian. These five counties encompass more than 80% of the cancer patients served by

the UACC's academic medical center partner, Banner Health-Tucson, and have a mix of urban (Tucson), suburban, and rural communities; of note, nearly 1/3 of the region is classified as frontier. Additionally, Arizona as a whole is home to seven of the 22 federally recognized American Indian tribes, with seven of these represented in the UACC's catchment area.

The Cancer Center's 150+ members represent several UA colleges and departments.

The UACC's existing Breast Cancer Center is the premier regional center and employs a multidisciplinary approach to the diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer, offering a robust clinical trials program for access to cutting edge breast cancer treatment. Other services offered include genetic counseling, education, and survivorship.

History

In 1972, the National Cancer Institute (NCI) awarded the University of Arizona a planning grant to help initiate the first wave of clinical cancer programs. Two years later, the Southwest Oncology Group formed, allowing the University to participate in larger clinical trials. This paved the way for the first two NCI-funded program project grants (1975) and the subsequent approval of the Arizona Cancer Center as a division within the University of Arizona College of Medicine (1976).

Led by founder Sydney Salmon, MD – who served as director from 1976 to 1999 – the University of Arizona Cancer Center became a Center of Excellence at the University of Arizona Health Sciences. In 1978, the Cancer Center received its first NCI Cancer Center Support Grant. This support grant has been competitively renewed in each renewal period through to the present, with the University of Arizona Cancer Center receiving one of the first comprehensive cancer center designations from the NCI in 1990.

In 2020, Joann Sweasy, PhD, was appointed Director of the UACC by UA President, Robert Robbins, MD, and UA Health Sciences SVP, Michael Dake, MD. Sweasy is exceptionally well-qualified for the role of Center Director. She is an internationally recognized expert in the genetics, cell biology, and biochemistry of DNA repair. A professor of Cellular and Molecular Medicine, she is highly respected across the NCI community for her distinguished work and collaborations with colleagues in peer NCI-designated Cancer Centers. Prior to joining the Cancer Center, Dr. Sweasy was associate director for basic sciences and co-leader of the Radiobiology and Radiotherapy Program at the Yale Comprehensive Cancer Center, where she oversaw basic sciences for the Yale Cancer Center and all cancer-focused internal grant competitions at Yale University.

Research

There are three primary research programs at the UACC:

- ***Cancer Biology***: conducts hypothesis-driven and mechanistic studies into basic cellular and molecular mechanisms that underlie cancer. This program has built significant expertise in the understanding of basic mechanisms of cancer growth and metastasis.

- **Clinical and Translational Oncology:** focuses on developing new agents for clinical translation, the discovery of imaging and tissue-based biomarkers, and conducting clinical trials testing the efficacy of new or repurposed drugs.
- **Cancer Prevention and Control:** conducts transdisciplinary cancer prevention and control research to reduce cancer burden in the Center's catchment area and beyond.

Research Facilities and Shared Resources

The UACC is supported by a broad array of [shared resources](#) in support of all cancer research activities, including:

- Analytical Chemistry
- Behavior Measurement and Interventions
- Bioinformatics
- Biostatistics
- Cancer Imaging
- Experimental Mouse
- Flow Cytometry
- Gene Editing
- Genomics
- Human Immune Monitoring
- Metabolomics
- Proteomics
- Tissue Acquisition and Cellular/Molecular Analysis

The Center also has a comprehensive biorepository which provides biospecimen collection, processing, and storage coupled with clinical and risk factor data collection for a variety of cancers.

Clinical Trials

The UACC Clinical Trials Office supports the Center's 15 clinical research teams – including physician scientists and other health care professionals – in offering over 200 clinical trials to patients. Funding for these trials comes from a variety of sources including foundations, pharmaceutical companies, national research groups, and externally funded projects initiated by investigators.

Additionally, in 2019 the UACC received one of only five grants nationwide given by the NCI to fund the UA Prevention Clinical Trials Network. As part of this initiative, the Center serves as the lead academic institution with 12 affiliated organizations working together to perform early-phase cancer-prevention clinical trials. The network is composed of a team of physicians from diverse specialties, statisticians, clinical staff, data managers, pathologists, translational scientists and other personnel with extensive experience in early-phase (phase 0, I or II) cancer-prevention clinical trials.

Patient Care

Through a unique partnership between Banner Health and the University of Arizona, UACC patients benefit from its multi-pronged emphasis on delivering excellent clinical care, providing state-of-the-art education, and supporting ground-breaking research.

Banner Health, anchored in both Phoenix and Tucson, has established Banner-University Medicine as its new academic medicine division. The division includes three academic medical centers, with Banner-University Medical Center in Tucson serving as UACC's clinical affiliate. The Medical Center offers a wide range of medical and surgical care options, both inpatient and outpatient, in their multidisciplinary clinics staffed by teams of physicians and health care professionals.

Community Outreach and Disparities Focus

The cancer center's [Community Outreach and Engagement](#) office serves as a bridge between the Center and the diverse communities across Arizona to enable and support multidisciplinary, culturally relevant research, cancer prevention, and treatment through advocacy and communication. The Center's catchment area includes the border counties of Yuma, Santa Cruz, Cochise, and Pima, as well as Pinal County. Seven Native American tribes are located in this area, and the Center's larger impact area includes the full state of Arizona, including all 22 tribes. Their work of the Community Outreach and Engagement office is supported by a strong and active Community Advisory Board.

The UACC holds a Partnership for Health Equity grant and is the only partnership in the United States that is focused solely on American Indians. The UACC also participates in a three-state consortium project (Arizona, New Mexico, and Oklahoma) funded by the NCI Cancer Moonshot Initiative to improve the colorectal cancer screening rates of Native American populations using evidence-based strategies. The Center partners with Northern Arizona University to provide outreach, education, and training to Native American communities as part of the Partnership for Native American Cancer Prevention.

Education

The Cancer Research Training and Education Office currently oversees the training of over 1,400 individuals, ranging from high school students to early-stage career faculty, with the goal of preparing the next generation of cancer researchers. Educational opportunities include events, seminars, and grand rounds, in addition to institutional research grant opportunities.

Development

The UACC enjoys a well-established and well-deserved history of philanthropic support that provides vitally important funding for research, facilities, faculty recruitment and retention, and innovation. The UACC Director defines the philanthropic resources needed to accomplish the mission and goals of the Center, while the University Alumni and Development Program (UADP) provides leadership, management, and support of all fundraising across the UA and coordinates the resources to achieve optimum financial results. The UACC has dedicated, embedded

development officers, who are part of the UADP and work directly with UACC leaders to develop and implement action plans to support fundraising efforts. The UADP cultivates donors at all levels and UACC development officers focus on major and principal gift prospects and donors, including those who wish to impact the important work of the UACC through their estates. UACC embedded development officers work with investigators to build strong collaborative relationships and accurately communicate the value of the research and clinical activities happening across the Cancer Center in pursuit of continued investment. Breast cancer is a priority area for the philanthropic efforts at the UACC and the GLCBCRI Director will partner with the embedded development officers to help secure additional funding to further support the mission of the Institute.

THE ROLE OF THE INAUGURAL DIRECTOR

The UACC seeks a highly accomplished breast cancer researcher whose primary task is the furtherance of ground-breaking research focused on finding a cure for breast cancers and on improving its treatment. The chosen inaugural Director will bring a national and international presence, a proven record of independent research and entrepreneurship, and success in leading collaborative and team-based research activities. The ability to embrace and integrate research across all aspects of breast cancer, including basic and translational research, as well as population health, will be essential to the success of the GLCBCRI. The successful Director will have the leadership skills necessary to oversee the rapid growth and development of a nationally recognized research institute.

Serving as the face of the GLCBCRI as its primary fundraiser and advocate in all internal and external collaborations and partnerships, the Director plays a central role in the success of the interconnected web of breast cancer-related research, clinical, educational, and community outreach programs across the UACC and the UA. Reporting to both the Cancer Center Director and to the Department Chair housing their faculty appointment, the Director will develop a multidisciplinary team of researchers from within the UA science community and through external recruitments. UA faculty and newly recruited faculty will be eligible to become members of the Institute. Additional staff support will be provided along with access to all the resources of the UACC (cores, staffing, etc.)

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

To successfully lead the Ginny L. Clements Breast Cancer Research Institute, the Director will address the following key opportunities and challenges:

Lead the establishment of the Ginny L. Clements Breast Cancer Research Institute, including developing and executing a compelling strategic plan to position the Institute as a world-class destination for breast cancer research and care.

The inaugural GLCBCRI Director will work with stakeholders from across the UA to build an internationally recognized translational breast cancer research enterprise focused on new discoveries in the lab that lead to new treatments. By mapping the existing landscape of breast cancer activities on campus, the Director will define where excellence already exists, identify areas

for growth, and designate the top priorities for short-, medium-, and long-term investments. The Director will work to enhance and sustain a collaborative environment that promotes high impact and innovative research and entrepreneurship. More broadly, the Director will raise awareness and interest in basic, translational, and clinical breast cancer research – and the initiatives required to make these discoveries accessible to all patients – throughout the University of Arizona campus, as well as locally, regionally, and nationally.

Build a highly interactive and collaborative community of interdisciplinary researchers devoted to breast cancer research and care.

The GLCBCRI will operate in a unique environment that includes both an existing breast cancer-care and research infrastructure and the opportunity to further build upon this foundation. The inaugural Director will work to establish the Institute as a hub for all breast cancer-related activities at the UA. By promoting work that transcends individual efforts and creates multi-functional, multi-disciplinary, problem-solving teams, the Director will increase the university's ability to work on and successfully garner multi-investigator grant funding.

One of the UA's greatest strengths is its exceptionally collaborative culture and its strong, integrated, and mostly co-located health sciences environment. The GLCBCRI will have strong connections to the Colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, and Public Health, in addition to the College of Engineering and other sources of collaboration and affiliations. The Director will work across this heavily matrixed environment, including with Banner Health-Tucson as the clinical partner, to ensure that breast cancer-related research and clinical activities are aligned and integrated.

Represent the Institute in scientific, clinical, and professional forums, as well as serving as an ambassador within the community and with GLCBCRI stakeholders.

As the Institute grows, the Director will work to publicize its accomplishments to a statewide, national, and international audience and work to brand the GLCBCRI as an elite breast cancer research and care destination. As a leading figure in the field of breast cancer research, the Director will serve as the primary GLCBCRI representative and be an active voice for a broad range of constituents including breast cancer organizations and foundations, community partners, donors, and other stakeholders across the Institute's impact area. With an ability to convey scientific discoveries to a broad array of constituents and stakeholders – scientists and non-scientists alike – the Director will be a fierce advocate for patients, survivors, and caregivers.

Establish strong community partnerships with Arizona's unique population.

The Director will ensure that their strategic plan for the GLCBCRI aligns with the UACC's mission of providing the highest quality breast cancer prevention, diagnosis, treatment, education, and research for all people, including catchment-area populations currently facing significant adverse social determinants. The Director will build a research and clinical environment that recognizes and seeks to address differences in access to care and manifestation of disease with the goal of increasing health equity in Arizona and beyond. In collaboration with UACC's Office for Community Outreach and Engagement, the Director will prioritize culturally relevant and

partnership-driven breast cancer research, prevention, and treatment, with a special focus on the Hispanic/Latino/a, Native American, and rural/frontier populations in the state.

Work closely with Cancer Center and University leadership and professional staff to develop and advance fundraising priorities and enhance investments from a wide array of sources to support the future growth of GLCBCRI.

The founding gift for the GCLBCRI serves as a leading indicator that the UACC is further poised to make significant, rapid achievements in breast cancer research and treatment. The Director will partner with development staff from the UACC and across campus to ensure that other donors see the power of investing in this opportunity and pledge their support. The Director will thus be charged with careful stewardship of existing resources and the strategic growth of diversified revenue streams to support the Institute.

Recruit, mentor, and retain the next generation of breast cancer researchers across the University of Arizona community.

In the short-term, the inaugural Director will have the opportunity to recruit and hire two new professors, in addition to bringing together existing investigators and clinicians from across the UACC in the pursuit of curing breast cancer. On the largest scale, the Director will be responsible for ensuring strong mentorship and professional development for breast cancer-related stakeholders of all types at the UA. The Director will inspire continued growth and excellence among GLCBCRI members and find new ways to engage the broader UA health sciences community with breast cancer research.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

The successful candidate for the inaugural Director role will have a significant and successful track record as an innovative researcher, collaborative leader, and inspirational fundraiser. This individual will bring strong strategic skills and the demonstrated ability to attract talent, empower colleagues, and promote growth. The successful candidate will bring the following professional and personal qualifications:

- MD, PhD, MD/PhD or equivalent degree and the ability to qualify for a position as a tenured faculty member in the College of Medicine at the University of Arizona.
- A distinguished record of breast cancer-focused achievements as evidenced by both publications and a strong track record of extramural peer-reviewed research funding.
- An ability to articulate a compelling vision and implement a strategy that engages researchers, clinicians, institutional partners, and donors alike.
- Experience building new research and scholarship initiatives within a larger institution.
- A commitment to fundraising and an ability to present a compelling story to potential donors.
- The ability to promote collaboration among researchers and partners from a wide variety of disciplines to create something greater than the sum of its parts.

- The capacity to lead effectively within a matrixed academic community based on strong relationships between the UACC, the schools and colleges across the UA, and Banner Health-Tucson; political acumen and ability to work well with people at all levels - university, hospital, community, faculty, and staff.
- A reputation as a consensus-builder who can resolve conflict for the overall betterment of an organization.
- A fierce and demonstrated commitment to diversity and inclusion, including a history of success in working with diverse communities, building a diverse team, and training exceptionally culturally competent health professionals.
- Experience in the recruitment, retention, and development of excellent faculty, staff, and students.
- An entrepreneurial, collaborative, creative, and driven spirit.

Location

Located in the Sonoran Desert of Arizona, the Tucson metropolitan area has a population of more than a million people. With mountain ranges in all directions, the city is a diverse community and has a vibrant cultural scene. As one of the oldest continually inhabited areas in North America, Tucson is located approximately 60 miles north of the US-Mexico border and 113 miles southeast of Phoenix. In addition to award-winning biking, golf, skiing, and spas, Tucson was also named the first City of Gastronomy in the United States by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). With more than 340 days of sunshine per year, Tucson was named Arizona's top-ranked "fun" city by *WalletHub* and one of the best cities for outdoor living by *Digital Third Coast*.

TO APPLY

The University of Arizona Cancer Center has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in this search. All inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed in confidence to the following:

Patricia Hastie, Partner
Caitlin Barrett, Senior Associate
Isaacson, Miller
1700 Market Street, Suite 2140 Philadelphia, PA 19103
Electronic submission of materials is encouraged via:
www.imsearch.com/7857

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