



Rustbelt CFAR Retreat
Thursday, October 9, 2025

UPMC Magee Womens Hospital
300 Halket Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15213
Hutchinson Hayashi Auditorium, 0 Level

<https://www.rustbeltcfar.org/>



Dear Rustbelt CFAR Members,

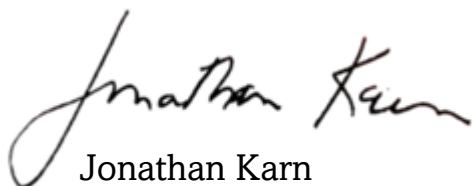
Welcome to our fourth in-person Rustbelt CFAR retreat. To those of you from Cleveland, we welcome you to Pittsburgh and thank you for making the drive. To all our colleagues, we warmly greet and thank you for taking time away from your many other duties to join us today.

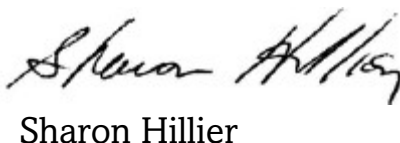
We are three and a half years into our five-year journey as a joint CWRU-Pitt CFAR. The CFAR has brought rich opportunities for new collaborations across our two campuses through the provision of core services and ongoing discussions hosted by our vibrant Scientific Working Groups focused on Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE) and research on HIV Across the Lifespan. During the poster session, you will have a chance to see some of the work from young investigators and pilot projects.

Another key feature of the Rustbelt CFAR is our extensive mentoring opportunities for our junior colleagues. During the first three years, we have awarded 15 developmental awards. Most of these awardees have benefited from using the CFAR Cores to support their research projects. We will announce the 2025 pilot awardees during our meeting today! Early-stage investigators are the future of HIV, and we trust you as we celebrate their contributions and their talents.

Thank you all for attending.

Sincerely,


Jonathan Karn


Sharon Hillier

Administrative Core A



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Sharon Hillier, PhD
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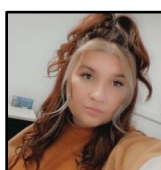
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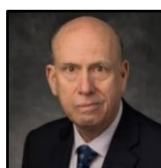


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Administrative Core A and Developmental Core B



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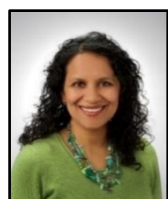


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Clinical Sciences Core D

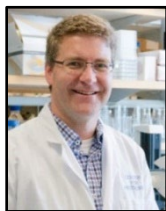


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Systems Biology & Biostatistics Core F



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Charles Rinaldo, PhD

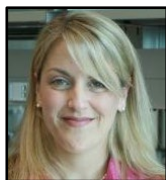
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HIV Across the Lifespan (SWG)



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Catherine Chappell, MD

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Ending the HIV Epidemic Strategic Working Group (EHE SWG)



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Cederick Taylor

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Community Co-Chair
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Rustbelt CFAR Retreat Agenda

Thursday, October 9, 2025

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Hutchinson Hayashi Auditorium, 0 Level

9:30-9:50	Coffee and Pastries	
9:50-10:00	Rustbelt CFAR Annual Retreat Welcome	Sharon Hillier
Moderator: Sharon Hillier		
10:00-10:40	Implementation Science for the HIV Response: A Premortem Analysis <i>Division of Infectious Diseases at Washington University in St. Louis</i>	Elvin Geng
10:40-10:55	AIDS Free Pittsburgh PrEP Subcommittee Findings & Future of Long-Acting Injectable PrEP in Ending the HIV Epidemic.	Ken Ho
10:55-11:10	Community Engaged Research: Lessons Learned from Project CERCEI.	Emily Dauria & Akeem Rollins
11:10-11:25	Creation of a Novel Geospatial Information System (GIS)-Based Reportable Diseases Mapping Tool (REDMAP) for the Cuyahoga County Board of Health with the Goal of Optimizing Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE) in the United States Programming	Justin Yax
11:25-11:40	BREAK	
Moderator: Alan Levine		
11:40-11:55	Citrullinated Protein-Reactive CD8 T cells in PWH who Smoke	Mike Freeman
11:55-12:10	Human Brain-in-a-Dish Model Reveals Neuro-Immune Crosstalk Regulating HIV-1 Neuropathogenesis	Sheetal Sreeram
12:10-12:25	Dysbiosis and Immune Cell Dysregulation in PWH- Implications in neuroimmune interactions	Pushpa Pandiyan
12:25-12:40	Molecular Relay Race: Host Protein Hand-Off of HIV Capsid & Exploitation for Improved ARVs	Zandrea Ambrose
12:40-13:40	LUNCH	
Moderator: Ann Avery		
13:40-13:55	HBV/HCV and HIV/HCV Outcomes in the Era of Direct-Acting Antivirals.	George Yenedewa
13:55-14:10	Women-Centered PrEP in the Context of IPV: A Stakeholder-Informed Intervention Pilot Study in Cuyahoga County	Teagen O'Malley
14:10-14:25	Translating HIV Science – from Bench to Bedside	Igho Ofotokun
14:25-14:40	Designing Nanocarriers for Enhancing Vaginal Drug Delivery to the Lymphatic System.	Sravan Patel
14:40-14:55	BREAK	
Moderator: Nicolas Sluis-Cremer		
14:55-15:10	Transcriptomic Signatures of Comorbidities in People With HIV	Cheryl Cameron
15:10-15:25	HIV Work in Progress - Two Ongoing Stories from the Lab	Chip Tilton
15:25-15:40	Autologous Dendritic Cell-Based HIV-1 Therapeutic Vaccination	Beej Macatangay
15:40-15:55	Aging During Pathogenic SIV Infection in Rhesus Macaque Model	Anna Jasinska
15:55-16:10	New Strategies to Promote NK- and T cell Clearance and Control of the HIV Reservoir	John Mellors
16:10-16:15	Closing Comments	Jon Karn

Rustbelt CFAR Poster Session 2025

Poster#	Investigator	Title	Institution
1	Aiymkul Ashimkhanova	Upregulated MTORC1 and NF-kB signaling in classical monocytes in men with HIV at high risk of CVD	University of Pittsburgh
2	Ally DePuyt	Single cell multi-omics identifies functionally distinct subsets in type one polarized dendritic cell vaccine platform	University of Pittsburgh
3	Yurisha Duwal	Nanosystem Based Strategies To Improve Drug Exposure In The Female Lower Reproductive Tract and Regional Lymphatic System	University of Pittsburgh
4	Solomon Jauro	Protecting simian immunodeficiency virus-infected macaques from Mycobacterium tuberculosis by intravenous Bacillus Calmette-Guérin vaccination requires viral control	University of Pittsburgh
5	Tom Lavin	Selective Reactivation of Latent HIV Without Global T Cell Activation using CyclinT1-Tat-Containing Virus-Like Particles	Case Western University
6	An Le	Determining critical physiological and drug specific parameters for enhancing a physiologically-based pharmacokinetics model for the female reproductive tract	University of Pittsburgh
7	Wei Li	Development of next-generation receptor decoy sCD4 biologics with broad neutralization and optimized druggability.	University of Pittsburgh
8	Harrison Lindley	Multiomic biomarkers and the interferome across ART initiation timepoints	Case Western University
9	Leighanne Main	The vaginal microbiome pre-vaccination associates with local and systemic HIV vaccine immune responses.	Case Western University
10	Lori Sedlak	Development of PROTACs Targeting the HIV-1 Nef Virulence Factor	University of Pittsburgh
11	Julie Somogyi	Substance Use and Dysbiosis: Microbial Disruption in the Context of HIV	Case Western University
12	Sheridan Sweet	Refining an eHealth Enhanced Peer Navigation Intervention to Link Young Adults Surveilled by the US Criminal Legal System to Substance Use and HIV Related Services	University of Pittsburgh
13	Justin Yax	Creation of a Novel Geospatial Information System (GIS)-based Reportable Diseases Mapping Tool (REDMAP) for the Cuyahoga County Board of Health to Optimize Ending the HIV Epidemic in the United States (EHE) programming.	University Hospitals Cleveland Medical Center Department of Emergency Medicine
14	Justin Yax	Leveraging Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to Understand HIV Screening 'Footprints' of Emergency Departments of a Single Health System in Cuyahoga County, Ohio - Preliminary Applications of the Reportable Disease Mapping (REDMAP) Platform	University Hospitals Cleveland Medical Center Department of Emergency Medicine

Rustbelt CFAR Pilot Grant Awardees 2022



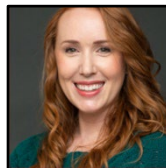
Soumya Panigrahi, PhD
Case Western Reserve University
“Endothelial GM-CSF and Vascular Immune Microenvironment in People Living with HIV”



Andrew Obuku, PhD
Uganda Virus Research Institute
“Effect of Stress Hormones on HIV Reservoir Reactivation”



Anna Jasinska, PhD
University of Pittsburgh
“Aging in a Nonhuman Primate Model of AIDS”



Erica Larson, PhD
University of Pittsburgh
“Immunometabolism of CD4 T Cells in SIV”

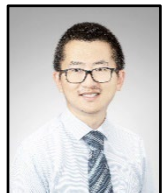


Wei Lei, PhD Jana Jacobs, PhD
University of Pittsburgh
“Development of Next Generation CD4-Based Entry Inhibitors for Preventing HIV-1 Infection”

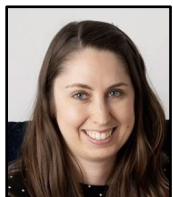
Rustbelt CFAR Developmental Grant Awardees 2023



Uri Mbonye, PhD
Case Western Reserve University
“HIV-1 latency-reversing agents that target P-TEFb with minimal T-cell activation”



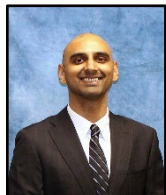
Yijia Li, MD
University of Pittsburgh
“Intact HIV-1 Provirus Decay Dynamics on Long-Term ART”



Christina Farr, PhD
Case Western Reserve University
“Defining the neovaginal microbiome in transgender women post-vaginoplasty”



Anthony Cillo, PhD
University of Pittsburgh
“Dissecting the determinants of HIV-1 reservoir dynamics and their relationships to biological sex”



Aaron Devanathan, PharmD, PhD
University of Pittsburgh
“Developing analytical methods to quantify cabotegravir concentrations for PrEP”

Rustbelt CFAR Developmental Grant Awardees 2024



Anna Jasinska, PhD
University of Pittsburgh
“Aging in a Nonhuman Primate Model of AIDS”



Teagen O'Malley, PhD
University of Pittsburgh
“Stakeholder Intervention Research for Women-Centered PrEP for Contexts of IPV”



Sravan Patel, PhD
University of Pittsburgh
“Lymphatic-Targeted Nanoparticles for Enhancing ARV Delivery Via Vaginal Route”



Michael Freeman, PhD
Case Western Reserve University
“Citrullinated Protein-Reactive CD8 T Cells in PWH Who Smoke”



Shubham Gupta, MD
Case Western Reserve University
“Formative Evaluation of an LGBTQ+ Inclusive Sex Education for HIV Prevention”

Rustbelt CFAR Pilot Grant Awardees 2025

**We will announce the awardees at the
Rustbelt CFAR Retreat at 14:45!**

Notes

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