



## BIOSTATISTICS SEMINARS

- ❖ September 10, 2025 TBD
- ❖ September 24, 2025 Erica Moodie  
McGill University
- ❖ October 8, 2025 TBD
- ❖ October 15, 2025 Teng Fei  
MSKCC
- ❖ October 22, 2025 Ji-Hyun Lee  
University of Florida

## HALVORSEN CENTER FOR COMPUTATIONAL ONCOLOGY SEMINAR SERIES

- ❖ September 26, 2025 TBD
- ❖ October 21, 2025 TBD

## EPIDEMIOLOGY SERVICE MEETINGS

- ❖ September 8, 2025 Elizabeth Kantor  
MSKCC
- ❖ September 15, 2025 Loren Lipworth  
VUMC
- ❖ October 13, 2025 Xiang Shu & Ying Liang  
MSKCC
- ❖ October 27, 2025 Maria Monroy Iglesias  
MSKCC

## POPULATION SCIENCES RESEARCH PROGRAM SEMINAR SERIES

- ❖ September 16, 2025 TBD
- ❖ October 21, 2025 Garth Graham  
UW School of Medicine

## HEALTH OUTCOMES RESEARCH GROUP SEMINARS

- ❖ September 18, 2025 Talya Salz  
MSKCC
- ❖ October 16, 2025 Corita Grudzen  
MSKCC

## JOIN THE NEWSLETTER

Interested in joining the Epi Bio newsletter?  
Contact **Joey Kanik** for more information!



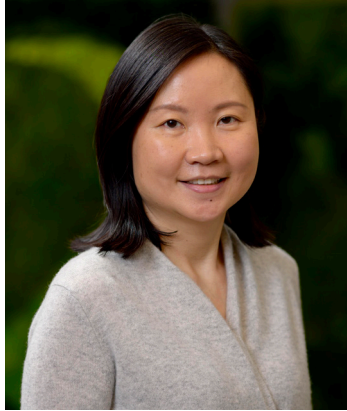
DEPARTMENT CHAIR - Colin Begg, PhD

### EDITORS

Shireen Lewis, MPA  
Prusha Patel, MPH  
Charlie White, MS  
Jessica Kretli Zanetti, MS  
Megan Mills, MFA  
Michelle Dongel  
Richard Koppenaal  
Joseph Kanik

## PASSING THE BATON FOR CHIEF OF BIOSTATISTICS

Congratulations to the new Interim Chief of the Biostatistics Service, **Ronglai Shen**! Ronglai joined MSK in 2007 after earning her PhD in Biostatistics from the University of Michigan. Her research centers on the development of statistical and computational methods to decode cancer genomics and advance precision oncology. Ronglai developed and co-developed widely adopted tools including iCluster for integrative tumor subtype discovery and FACETS for allele-specific copy number analysis.



Her recent work focuses on harnessing rare variants through the Hidden Genome framework to improve tumor classification and uncover germline-somatic interactions, as well as single cell and digital pathology methods to address translational questions in immuno-oncology.

Of course, Ronglai is taking over for **Mithat Gonen**, who served as Chief of the Biostatistics Service for 10 years before passing the baton to Ronglai in July. Luckily for us, Mithat won't be going anywhere, as he will return to his previous role as an Attending Biostatistician.

On behalf of the Department, the BEACH Newsletter Committee would like to thank Mithat for his dedicated service over the last decade as Service Chief. Thank you for all your hard work – and best of luck to Ronglai!

## WELCOMING NEW FACULTY

Welcome the department's newest faculty: Jake June-Koo Lee, Marta Łuksza and Sarah Samorodnitsky!

**Jake June-Koo Lee, MD, PhD** has joined the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics as an Assistant Attending in the Computational Oncology Service. His research focuses on the mechanisms of genomic rearrangements and their impact on cancer evolution. Jake completed his postdoctoral training at Harvard Medical School, followed by internal medicine residency at Brigham and Women's Hospital and a medical oncology fellowship at MSK. In addition to his research, Jake is also a clinician, taking care of patients with lung cancer, as a member of the Thoracic Oncology Service.



**Marta Łuksza, PhD** has recently joined Computational Oncology at Cancer Center as an Associate Attending Member. From 2018 until her 2025 transition to MSK, she served on the faculty of the Department of Oncological Sciences at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. Dr. Łuksza earned her PhD in Computer Science from Freie Universität Berlin and the Max Planck Institute for Molecular Genetics, followed by postdoctoral training at Columbia University and the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. Her research combines quantitative biophysics and evolutionary theory to reveal how rapidly adapting populations—such as viruses and cancers—evolve, with the goal of developing predictive models that inform vaccine design and cancer immunotherapies.

Memorial Sloan Kettering



**Sarah Samorodnitsky, PhD** has joined the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics as an Assistant Attending Biostatistician. Prior to joining MSK, Sarah was a postdoctoral research fellow at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center where she collaborated with investigators through the SWOG Cancer Research Network. Sarah's research interests are in developing statistical methods for the analysis of emerging omics platforms, including multiplexed spatial proteomics imaging, and for the integrative analysis of multiple types of omics datasets. Sarah received her PhD in biostatistics from the University of Minnesota School of Public Health.



## PROMOTIONS

- ❖ **Nate Aiken** promoted to Senior Data Analyst
- ❖ **Matthew Myers** promoted to Senior Comp Bio II
- ❖ **Ed Reznik** promoted to Associate Attending
- ❖ **Michelle Wu** promoted to Project Manager

## STAFF FAREWELL

We would like to extend our sincere thanks and best wishes to our fellow employees as they move on to new opportunities. Their time with us has been greatly appreciated, and we wish them all the best in whatever the future holds!

**Maria Andrade Aray** joined MSK in August 2023 and had the privilege of serving as Assistant to the Chair for Dr. Colin Begg for nearly two years, as well as supporting the PSRP administration for one year. In May 2025, Maria transitioned to the Radiology department. Maria has expressed her gratefulness for her time in Epi Bio and for the opportunity to work alongside such an exceptional team. Especially those under the leadership of an incredible boss, Colin.

**Sigrid Carlsson** has left MSK after almost a decade in Epi Bio to become the Division Head of Clinical Epidemiology of Early Cancer Detection at DKFZ German Cancer Research Center.

After 3 years as a Research Biostatistician at MSK, **Fiona Ehrich** has left to pursue a PhD at UPenn.

## STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

**Alexia Iasonos** has earned the Fellow of American Society of Clinical Oncology (FASCO) distinction in 2025. The distinction is given to ASCO members for their extraordinary volunteer service, dedication, and commitment to ASCO. Alexia attended the ASCO annual meeting this June to receive the award and represent the Journal of Clinical Oncology since she is serving as the deputy editor of JCO since 2021.

**Alexia** attended the annual ASCO meeting in Chicago and presented at early career lounge to early career faculty and trainees. She mentored trainees at Journal of Clinical Oncology central on how to be a successful author and the peer review as part of her role as deputy editor for Journal of clinical oncology.

Starting in January 2026, **Andriy Derkach** will be program chair for the American Statistical Association, biometrics section.

## PUBLICATIONS

A new cohort study led by **Jessica Lavery, Chaya S. Moskowitz**, the Exercise Oncology group, and others—titled [“Comorbidity in Midlife and Cancer Outcomes”](#)—was recently published in JAMA Network Open. The study explores how comorbid conditions during midlife are linked to both cancer risk and outcomes. Among its key findings are that individuals with a history of respiratory or cardiovascular conditions faced a significantly higher risk of developing cancer, and that each comorbid condition examined was associated with at least one type of cancer. This important research was also featured in the April edition of [MSK Research Highlights](#).

**Aaron Mitchell** and colleagues recently published a study in the Journal of Clinical Oncology examining how insurance structure may influence the use of low-value cancer care. The paper, titled [“Use of Low-Value Cancer Treatments in Medicare Advantage Versus Traditional Medicare”](#) compares the use of these treatments between Medicare Advantage (MA) and Traditional Medicare (TM) and analyze it across large MA insurers. Among the key findings is that MA has lower use of low-value cancer treatment compared to TM.

**Anne Reiner, Akriti Meza, Kathy Panageas**, and others published a paper in Cancer Medicine entitled, [“Provider Volume Impacts Neurosurgical Procedure Selection in Older Patients with High-Grade Glioma.”](#) In this population-based study using SEER-Medicare linked databases, they reported that high-volume centers were more likely to treat older patients with high-grade glioma with upfront resection. Regardless of the volume of the center, aggressive neurosurgical care improved survival.

**Brittany Small, Colin B. Begg, Irene Orlow** and others published a new study titled [“Association of Inherited Genetic Variants with Multiple Primary Melanoma”](#) in the journal of the American Association for Cancer Research. The research explores whether genetic variants previously associated with melanoma also contribute to the risk of developing multiple primary melanomas (MPM). A key finding from this study is that several genetic variants are linked to a higher chance of developing more than one melanoma, even after accounting for visible traits like mole count and skin pigmentation.

## SCT 2025

MSK had a contingent of members in attendance at the 46th Society for Clinical Trials Annual Meeting! Our dedicated team members continue to inspire as their commitment to clinical research and innovation makes a difference worldwide.

**Colin Begg** presented a panel, “Threats to the Validity of Clinical Trials and the Use of External Controls,” and **Alexia Iasonos** presented, “The Promise and Pitfalls of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning (AIML) in Clinical Trials.”

Additionally, **Alexia Iasonos** is the new president elect!



## GRANT SUCCESS

**Jonine Bernstein, Matt Buas**, and Chun Li (University of Southern California) received an R01 grant from the NCI for their project “The Genetic Epidemiology of Radiation-Associated Contralateral Breast Cancer”.

**Antoine De Mathelin De Papigny** of the **Tansey lab** received an award from The Francois Wallace Monahan Fellowship titled, “Deep Generative AI Models and Active Learning Algorithms to Discover Effective Combination Therapies”.

**Ben Greenbaum** received a Mark Foundation award titled, “Predicting actionable innate and adaptive immune modulations in cancer”.

**Noah Peeri** received a K99 award from the NCI for his project “Developing and Validating Prognostic Models for Black women with Endometrial Cancer following Hysterectomy”.

**Ed Reznik** received a Pershing Square award titled, “Defining the Physiologic and Molecular Etiology of Cachexia with Population-Scale Computational Radiology”.

**Francisco Sanchez Vega** received an MSKCC Society award titled, “Multimodal predictors of response and recurrence after neoadjuvant therapy to enhance organ preservation approaches in rectal cancer”.

**Wesley Tansey** and **Ziad El Bakouny** received an Innovation in Cancer Informatics award titled, “Population-Scale Discovery of Clinical and Genomic Determinants of Systematic Therapy Adverse Events in Patient with Solid Tumors”.

## NEW STAFF

### **Brenden Bready, Assistant Research Biostatistician**

Brenden joined the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics in February as an Assistant Research Biostatistician. Prior to MSK, he completed his M.S. in Statistics at Virginia Tech. Brenden is new to statistics in cancer research, and he excited to learn about the many applications across the various services. Outside of work, you can find Brenden either playing or watching soccer, where he will always be cheering on Tottenham Hotspur.



### **Matei Buzoianu, Research Fellow**

Matei Buzoianu is a 3rd year Urology Resident at "Iuliu Hatieganu" University of Medicine and Pharmacy Cluj-Napoca, Romania and a research fellow in Andrew Vickers' team. He also completed a post-graduate course for clinical research at Harvard Medical School, from 2023 to 2024. Matei's dream has always been to one day be part of the MSKCC family, and so far, New York has been the most wonderful experience of his life. He is looking forward for the year ahead.



### **Kevin Chen, Research Scholar**

Kevin has joined the Department of Epidemiology & Biostatistics as a trainee in the Oncology-focused Postdoctoral Training in Care Delivery and Symptom Science (OPTICS) Training Program (NCI T32). His doctoral work in epidemiology at the University of California, Berkeley focused on statistical methods for epidemiologic inference in longitudinal settings subject to time-varying confounding affected by past treatment/exposure. Kevin is grateful for the opportunity to receive mentoring and contribute to research here at MSK.



### **Nina Galanter, Research Scholar**

Nina has joined the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics as a postdoctoral scholar in the OPTICS program, working with Aaron Mitchell. Nina recently graduated with a PhD in Biostatistics from the University of Washington. Their PhD research focused on causal inference methods.



### **Robert James, Research Fellow**

Robert joins the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics as a postdoctoral research fellow under the mentorship of Dr. Neha Goel. His research focuses on the genetic determinants of breast cancer survival at the population level, with a growing interest in integrating artificial intelligence into his work. He recently completed his second year of general surgery residency at NYP Weill Cornell and aspires to become a breast surgical oncologist. Robert is grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the work being done at MSK. Fun fact: He recently started learning how to play tennis and is proud to say he can now consistently hit the ball over the net.



### **Wilson Mckerrow, Senior Computational Biologist**

Wil has joined the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics as a computational biologist in the Computational Immuno-Oncology Shared Resource (CIOSR) under Dr. Ben Greenbaum. His work in CIOSR includes developing, scaling and supporting methods for the analysis of TCR sequencing data and immunopeptidomics data. Prior to joining MSK, Wil worked at ROME Therapeutics where he identified potential cancer vaccine targets derived from repetitive element proteins.



### **Lucia Salerno, Research Fellow**

Lucia Salerno is a PGY-2 Urology Resident from San Raffaele Hospital, Milan who is doing a one-year research fellowship along with Andrew Vickers and his team. Lucia is more into uro-oncology and in particular kidney cancer. Outside the hospital, Lucia likes to read books, listening to music, sing, exercise and discover new places. She is happy to be part of the team!



### **Mookyong Son, Research Scholar**

Mookyong joins the Department of Epidemiology & Biostatistics as a Research Scholar to develop deep generative models to draw reliable insights from high dimensional cancer genomic data together with clinical outcome, opening new windows on precision oncology. He earned his PhD in Statistics from Michigan State University and previously led statistical research at the AI startup Unlearn.AI, where he advanced digital twin approaches for adaptive trial design. Passionate about cross disciplinary collaboration, he looks forward to partnering with investigators across MSK to translate rigorous methodology into better patient outcomes. Fun fact: when he's not modeling data, you'll find him roaming neighborhoods on a quest to sample every regional taco stand he can locate.



### **Braulio Valdebenito Maturana, Research Associate**

Braulio is the 2024 Henry and Alexia Fernandez Computational Oncology fellow. Thanks to this fellowship, Braulio joins MSKCC as a postdoc mentored by Ruslan Soldatov. Previously, he was a researcher in Chile where he discovered that transposable elements are activated in gastric cancer using single-cell and spatially resolved transcriptomics. Now, he will continue his research, studying the pre-malignant evolution in the gastrointestinal tract under the lens of high-resolution multi-modal spatial and single-cell assays. Outside of the lab, Braulio is an avid book reader, enjoys barbell training and running with his two dogs, Empolvado and Noel.



### **Yohyoh Wang, Bioinformatics Software Engineer**

Yohyoh joins the Computational Immuno-Oncology Shared Resource as a Bioinformatics Software Engineer. Previously, she was a Bioinformatician at Exact Sciences working on rare disease diagnostics. She graduated from Weill Cornell Medicine with a Master of Science in Computational Biology.



## NEW STAFF (CONTINUED)

### Mikayla Williams, Administrative Assistant

Mikayla has joined the Department of Computational Oncology as an Administrative Assistant working with Dr. Benjamin Greenbaum, Dr. Marta Luksza, and Dr. Elli Papaemmanuil. Prior to this, Mikayla was working as a File Clerk/Laboratory Assistant for Montefiore while completing her bachelor's in health science (BHS) degree at CUNY York College. She hoped to become a vital part of healthcare in whatever capacity that was – which led her to coming to MSK. She has begun her journey here as an Office Coordinator in the Solid Tumor Genitourinary Department uplifting spirits, providing hope, and at times advocating for her patients.



### Huiyoung Yun, Manager, Core Facilities

Huiyoung joins the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics and the Department of Pediatric Oncology as Manager Core Facilities, working with Drs. Sohrab Shah, Andrew McPherson, and Andrew Kung. Prior to joining MSK, he was a Senior Staff Scientist at the New York Genome Center and previously served as a Senior Researcher at MacroGen, Inc. He also completed a postdoctoral fellowship at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, where he focused on developing novel therapeutic approaches for T-cell acute lymphoblastic leukemia using single-cell technologies. Huiyoung earned his PhD in Pharmacology from the University of Texas Health Science Center. His passion has always been to advance cancer cures by developing new methods and therapies through a deeper understanding of cancer biology.



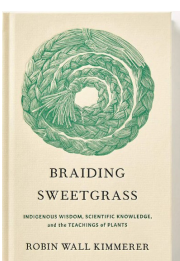
## HAPPY HOUR

The Epi Bio Summer Happy Hour was hosted on June 11th at Artie's Backroom and Rooftop! It was a lively evening full of dynamic conversations, delicious drinks, and relaxation on a beautiful sunny summer evening at the rooftop bar! Thank you everyone who attended! We look forward to our next summer happy hour!

## BOOK CLUB

Everyone is welcome to attend the Epi Bio departmental book club hosted every two months on the first Tuesday of the month at 4pm! The discussion is always lively and entertaining – join us for a good time! You may just discover your next favorite book! Contact [Elizabeth Kantor](#) to join.

The next book club meeting is on Tuesday, August 5th at 4pm. We will be discussing [Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants](#) by [Robin Wall Kimmerer](#).



## SWIMMING SWEET BOOK FAIR

[Elizabeth Kantor](#) is raising funds for cancer research by participating in a 5k swim with Swim Across America (SAA). This is a local area swim taking place in the Long Island Sound and the proceeds go to cancer research here in New York City. Swim Across America has raised over \$100 million dollars and provides funds supporting meaningful work, including the MSK immunotherapy study recently published in NEJM.

Our Community Building Team hosted a fundraising event – the Swimmin' Sweet Book Fair on Tuesday, July 15th. Members of the department donated books which were then sold, along with sweet treats and a fun duck race raffle. All proceeds went directly to Swim Across America.



## SUMMER STUDENTS

The Bridge to Biostats Committee is very excited to announce the receipt of a grant from the Pinkerton Foundation to support the [B2B Summer Program](#)! B2BSP is now also a part of the New York City Science Research Mentoring Consortium at the American Museum for Natural History, which includes other program supported by Pinkerton. Shortly after the news of the award, the program welcomed its 5 participants for the Summer, all of whom are New York City high school students. During their six weeks in the department, the students will undergo training in R, attend lessons on fundamental statistics, and present on a data analysis project.



The [QSURE program](#), now in its 8th year, recently hosted their annual PFACQ Patient Panel, featuring four members of MSK's Patient and Family Advisory Council for Quality (PFACQ). The discussion primarily focused on experiences of the panelists in clinical trials. Year after year, the QSURE fellows express how impactful this panel is, and this year was no exception. The QSURE program would like to thank PFACQ for their continued support and collaboration on this important partnership.



Lastly, Epi Bio also welcomed another cohort of 6 [GEMS](#) students in May. Each GEMS fellow has a quantitative (Epi Bio faculty) mentor and a physician-scientist mentor, with the goal of emphasizing team science. Together with their mentorship team, each GEMS fellow focuses on a genomics research project over the course of the 12-week program. If you're interested in their work this summer, the GEMS fellows will participate in a poster presentation session with MSK's summer medical fellows on Friday, August 1st in the ZRC lobby. We hope to see you there!

## PERSONAL MILESTONES

Three of our colleagues have recently welcomed new additions to their families!



Anika Meza  
[Akriti's](#) new baby girl



Eleanor Kostrzewa  
[Caroline's](#) new baby



Callum Ronald Seier  
[Ken's](#) new little boy