

Summer 2023

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Message from the Chair



In the past year, it has been great to get back to our usual routines. We had the opportunity to attend a Mets game in each of the past two summers and enjoyed a wonderful Holiday Party at the iconic Boathouse in Central Park.

Within the department, we welcomed Tian Liu, PhD, to New York as our new Chief of Physics for the Health System. She joins us from Emory University in Atlanta. Dr. Liu has already made an enormous impact in the first year she has been here. We also congratulate Rendi Sheu, PhD, who was elected President of the Radiological and Medical Physics Society of New York in August 2023 for the coming year. Mount Sinai continues to be at the leading edge of cancer care throughout the New York area and the entire country. We routinely perform one of a kind procedures and are able to help patients with special challenges get through their radiation treatment.

The department's commitment to caring even received a "shout-out" a few months ago in *The New York Times* about a patient who developed a special music playlist to help cope with his radiation treatment sessions. You can read about this story as well as awards, honors, and events in this issue.

2023 is an especially meaningful year as we continue construction on new linear accelerators and simulators. We will also begin the construction of a new MR Linac, which will allow us to tailor and modify the radiation plan on a daily basis for the patients who need this adaptability in their treatment.

Best wishes for a wonderful remainder of the year,

Kenneth Rosenzweig, MD
Professor and Chair
Department of Radiation Oncology



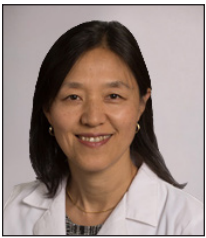
In 2022, members of the Department of Radiation Oncology share their team spirit for a New York City Subway Series match between the Mets and Yankees at Citi Field.

New Appointments

Mount Sinai Enhances Expertise in Medical Physics

The Department of Radiation Oncology is pleased to announce the appointments of **Tian Liu, PhD**, as Chief of Physics for the Mount Sinai Health System and **Ren-Dih Sheu, PhD**, as Clinical Assistant Chief Physicist.

Tian Liu, PhD



Dr. Tian Liu joins Mount Sinai Health System from Emory University, where she served as Chief of Physics. While at Emory, Dr. Liu was instrumental in the rapid growth of radiation oncology at Emory's Winship Cancer Institute and oversaw the Dosimetry and Medical Physics Service at seven Emory

sites, including the Emory Proton Therapy Center. She helped to transform the program into one of the premiere radiation oncology departments in the world. Dr. Liu managed a broad range of therapeutic technologies, including proton therapy, stereotactic radiation therapy, linear accelerator- and cobalt-based stereotactic radiosurgery, and brachytherapy. She also established a medical physics standardization program to ensure delivery of the highest quality care at all Emory sites.

Dr. Liu's research has focused on using advanced radiation techniques to limit treatment toxicity. Her work in this area led to significant Department of Defense and NIH supported grants for which she served as a principal investigator or Co-PI on multiple projects and contributed to numerous publications. An outstanding mentor and educator, Dr. Liu has lectured at prestigious institutions throughout the world. Her mentees have gone on to successful careers in academics. Over the past few years, she has worked with our own Dr. Deborah Marshall and was helpful in her receiving the prestigious NIH Director's Early Independence Award (DP5), one of only 13 researchers to receive this award nationally each year.

Dr. Liu's accomplishments have been recognized regionally, nationally, and internationally. She has received numerous awards for her research and mentorship endeavors from the American Association of Physicists in Medicine. A member of several professional organizations, Dr. Liu has chaired

a number of national committees and task groups aimed at improving the use of physics technology for patients undergoing cancer treatment. Dr. Liu is currently a member of the NRG Oncology Medical Physics Subcommittee.

Dr. Liu received her bachelor's degree in physics from Nanjing University in China and went on to pursue master's degrees in physics and medical physics from Bryn Mawr College and Columbia University, respectively. She completed her PhD in medical physics at Columbia University, where she studied ultrasonic tissue characterization using 2-D spectrum analysis. Dr. Liu then joined the faculty of Columbia University as an Assistant Professor. While there, her research focused on the use of ultrasound in the assessment of normal tissue toxicity from radiation.

Ren-Dih Sheu, PhD



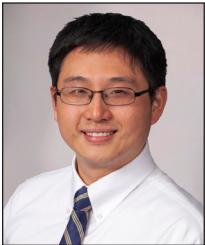
Dr. Ren-Dih Sheu has been promoted to Clinical Assistant Chief Physicist for Mount Sinai Health System. In this role, Dr. Sheu will oversee and participate in design optimization, technical evaluation and precise, accurate delivery of treatment plans. His responsibilities include chart checks, machine quality assurance, brachytherapy, special treatment, radiation safety, development, and teaching.

Dr. Sheu has also been elected President of the Radiological and Medical Physics Society of New York (RAMPS). "In extending our heartfelt congratulations to Rendi, let us collectively recognize the significance of his achievement," says Dr. Liu. "This accomplishment magnifies our department's reputation while reinforcing our shared dedication to excellence in research, education, and patient care."

New Appointments (continued)

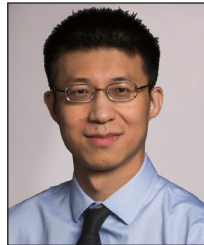
We also are pleased to welcome new faculty members to the Department of Radiation Oncology for The Mount Sinai Hospital.

Kaida Yang, PhD



Dr. Kaida Yang, physicist, previously served as an assistant professor/therapeutic medical physicist with East Carolina University.

Jiahao Zhang, PhD



Dr. Jiahao Zhang, physicist, joins us from Emory University School of Medicine, where he was an assistant professor in the Division of Medical Physics.

Spotlight on Education

Center for Radiation Sciences Education Medical Dosimetry and Radiation Therapy – Class of 2024

During the month of June 2023, radiation therapy (RTT) students donned their blue scrubs for Clinical Skills Orientation led by Maria Dimopoulos, PhD, MBA, RT(T), and Danielle McDonagh, MS, RT(T). Dosimetry students began their clinical year with a Planning 101 course led by Vishruta Dumane, PhD, and Victoria Olsen, CMD.

(Front row, from left) Gloria Choi (RTT), Jennifer Donis (RTT), Tyler Hwang (dosimetry), Christy Huang (dosimetry), Breanna Huang (dosimetry), Ting Jiang (dosimetry), and Zyhra Casero (RTT); (back row, from left) Samuel Hammer (dosimetry), Regina Yu, (dosimetry), Craig Utter (RTT), and Simon Ridley (RTT)



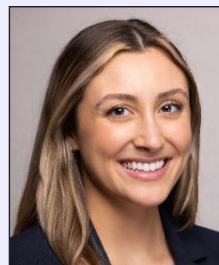
Meet Our New Residents



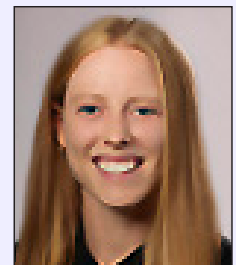
Drishti Panse, MD
Radiation Oncology



Anuja Shah, MD
Radiation Oncology



Monica Wassel, MD
Radiation Oncology



Charlotte Read, MS
Medical Physics

Recent Grant Awards

R50



Karyn Goodman, MD, MS, received a Research Specialist Award (R50) from the NCI in support of her work as a clinical trialist and her service to the NCI. Dr. Goodman is a PI on several NCI National Clinical Trials Network (NCTN) studies. She is the national Study Chair for the CALGB/

Alliance randomized phase 2 trial investigating PET scan-directed therapy for esophageal cancer and is the national Radiation Oncology PI of the RTOG/NRG 0848 phase 3 trial evaluating the use of post-operative radiotherapy for pancreatic cancer. Dr. Goodman is also Co-chair of the NCI Gastrointestinal Steering Committee and the local PI of several NCTN trials at Mount Sinai.

Lustgarten Foundation LEAD Grant

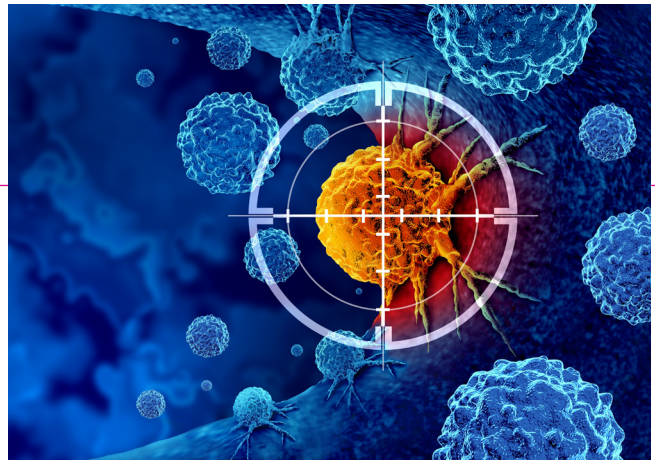
Dr. Goodman has also received an Equity, Accessibility, and Diversity Project grant from the Lustgarten Foundation for “Navigating Pancreatic Cancer Multidisciplinary Care to Address Cultural and Language Barriers to Clinical Trial Enrollment among Mandarin and Spanish Speaking Patients with Pancreatic Cancer.” The study will focus on the development of a patient navigator program for patients who speak Mandarin and Spanish and provide multidisciplinary care and clinical trial matching in participating clinics at Mount Sinai Health System, Northwell Health, and Johns Hopkins Medicine.

Tisch Cancer Institute Paul Calabresi K12 Career Development Award for Clinical Oncology



Oscar Padilla, MD, has received the Paul Calabresi Award in Clinical Oncology Research to investigate the impact of Trem2+ macrophages on diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma (DIPG) anti-tumor immunity at baseline and in response to radiotherapy. Dr. Padilla will also examine how the histone

3.3 K27M mutation in DIPG modulates immune effects of radiotherapy in the tumor microenvironment. Collectively, these studies will provide foundational knowledge of DIPG tumor immunology and instruct novel immuno-RT combination strategies.



American Society of Clinical Oncology Young Investigator Award



Daniel R. Dickstein, MD, received an American Society of Clinical Oncology Young Investigator Award for his project “Improving Sexual Health Outcomes in Sexual and Gender Minorities (SGM) with Prostate Cancer.” With the support of a multidisciplinary team, including co-

mentors Dr. Deborah Marshall, Radiation Oncology, and Dr. Karyn Goodman, Tisch Cancer Institute; Dr. Richard Stock, Dr. Robert Stewart, Dr. Jerry Liu, and Dr. Dale Lovelock, Mount Sinai Radiation Oncology; as well as additional Mount Sinai faculty and outside collaborators.

Dr. Dickstein, who serves as PI of the study, seeks to characterize problematic receptive anal intercourse in SGM after prostate radiotherapy and identify a clinically meaningful parameter to be used during radiation treatment planning to prevent this toxicity. Dr. Dickstein has already started to establish himself as an advocate for SGM with cancer. His recent “twitter-viral” article in *Nature Reviews Urology* is among the first to outline sexual health and treatment-related dysfunction in SGM with prostate cancer, including the anatomy and nerves involved in pleasurable receptive anal and neovaginal intercourse.

Additionally, Dr. Dickstein was selected to be a member of the American Radium Society Genitourinary Committee and was asked to present at the NRG Oncology Genitourinary Annual Meeting in July to continue his goal of transforming the scientific paradigm of sexual health for SGM with prostate cancer to one that is more just and equitable.

2023 Radiation Oncology Research Retreat



Among those attending the 2023 Radiation Oncology Research Retreat are (from left) Karyn Goodman, MD, MS, Vice Chair for Research and Quality, Department of Radiation Oncology, and Associate Director for Clinical Research, Tisch Cancer Institute (TCI); Jane Mei, Practice Administrator, Cancer Network, Mount Sinai Health System; Oliver Menken, Research Assistant; Daniel O’Grady, Research Manager, Riona O’Donnell, Clinical Research Coordinator, TCI; Laura Jonsson, Clinical Research Coordinator II, Radiation Oncology; Kajal Patel, Clinical Research Coordinator; and Lynda Rath, Associate Director of Research, Department of Radiation Oncology



Spotlight on Staff

Noteworthy Achievements

Catherine Cadore, DNP, MSN/NED, RN
Senior Nurse Manager
Radiation Oncology
Mount Sinai Downtown

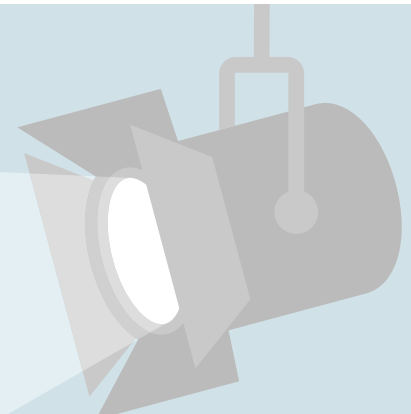


Please join us in congratulating **Catherine Cadore, DNP, MSN/NED, RN**, Senior Nurse Manager, Radiation Oncology, Mount Sinai Downtown, on achieving her Doctor of Nursing Practice degree.

Catherine has worked in oncology nursing since receiving her Associate of Nursing Degree from the Borough of Manhattan Community College in 2005. In 2014, she obtained her Bachelor of Science in Nursing followed by a Master of Science in Nursing Education in 2016 from the University of Phoenix. Catherine began her career in medical oncology before

joining the Radiation Oncology team in 2016 and has held a number of leadership positions within the Mount Sinai Health System. Since 2007, Catherine has served as an instructor and director for the Mustard Seed Healthcare Institute, an instructor for ASA College, and as an instructor for the American Heart Association.

In October 2022, Catherine received her Doctor of Nursing Practice degree from Grand Canyon University. Her dissertation focused on managing distress in radiation oncology patients beginning with their first day of treatment with an evaluation of their level of distress to implementing an intervention involving music therapy.



Beyond the Badge

Melissa Nurse

Secretary
Radiation Oncology
Mount Sinai West



Congratulations to **Melissa Nurse** from Mount Sinai West Radiation Oncology on receiving the Beyond the Badge certificate of recognition. Melissa received the award in honor of her leadership and exceptional service to our patients, guests, and colleagues.

Getting to Know You



Zarina Chmelev

Billing Supervisor
The Mount Sinai Hospital

Zarina Chmelev is a billing supervisor in the Department of Radiation Oncology at The Mount Sinai Hospital. In this role, Zarina oversees the approval process for radiation treatment. Her team manages approximately 75 cases weekly for 13 physicians at the hospital. While Zarina is not directly involved in clinical care, she has a deep commitment to Mount Sinai's mission.

"She is always willing to help patients and colleagues," says Lorena D. Pesantez-Mihov, Associate Director of

Radiation Oncology. "This team recently had a challenging approval case. Zarina not only contacted the third-party contractor used for approvals directly and handled a first and second appeal process, she then appealed with the patient's plan and finally the state. Due to Zarina's perseverance and understanding of the importance of her role, this case was overturned and approved, resulting in the patient being treated on time. We thank Zarina for advocating for our patients to ensure they receive timely treatment."

Spotlight on Staff

In the News: Using Music to Ease the Therapy

An article featured in *The New York Times* highlighted the treatment journey of a patient undergoing radiation therapy at Mount Sinai. Patients are offered the option of listening to music during therapy sessions to help ease their anxiety and remain still. Many choose meditative or classical music. This particular patient, however, opted for the music of the rock band U2. Having been an avid fan all his life, he recalls how their songs resonated with him at key moments in his life – from a high school trip to a college relationship,

to dancing with his wife at their wedding. “I think about the village of people that has helped me during this health crisis. Doctors, nurses, support staff, family, friends, colleagues. My wife, Amy, especially. Count U2 among them,” he noted in the article.

Read the full article at:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/04/28/arts/music/u2-medical-treatment.html>

Focus on Diversity

Featured Presentations



A Call for Allyship: The Evolution of Black-Asian Solidarity
Wayland Chiu, MD Candidate
Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai



People with Disability Initiatives
Tiffany Keith, Program Manager
Office for Diversity and Inclusion
Mount Sinai Health System



LGBT Programs and Policies
Barbara E. Warren, PsyD
Senior Director
Office for Diversity and Inclusion
Mount Sinai Health System

Resources

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

<https://www.mountsinai.org/about/diversity>

Road Map for Action 2023 Annual Report

<https://www.mountsinai.org/about/addressing-racism/annual-report>

People with Disabilities Courses

peak.mountsinai.org

People with Disabilities: Tips and Strategies for Creating an Inclusive Environment is a new course now available on PEAK with on-demand access. This offering supplements *Unconscious Bias: Understanding People with Disabilities*, also available on PEAK.

Office for Diversity and Inclusion

<https://www.mountsinai.org/about/odi>

For more information on our offerings or to schedule a class for your department, contact the Office for Diversity and Inclusion at (646) 605-8280 or diversity@mountsinai.org.



Special Events

International Women's Day 2023



Special Events

2022 Holiday Party



Special Events

Ugly Sweater Day



Mount Sinai Radiation Oncology Social Media

Interested in joining the social media committee?

Have a photo you would like to post?

Please reach out on our social platforms below.



Follow Us on Instagram

[@MountSinaiRadOnc](#)

[@MountSinaiRTTedu](#)



Watch Educational Programs on YouTube

To learn more about the radiation oncology simulation and treatment process, view our educational video playlist on [YouTube.com](#) by searching Mount Sinai Radiation Oncology.



Reach Residents on Twitter

Follow our Mount Sinai Radiation Oncology residents on Twitter searching the handle [@MSROResidents](#)



Share Your News

Email us at radoncnews@mountsinai.org

