

CASEY DESANTIS CANCER RESEARCH PROGRAM
Florida Cancer Innovation Fund Awardees
Fiscal Year 2024-25, Round 2

Institution	Principal Investigator Information	Budget Requested	Project Title	Cancer Type	Research Type
Heart of Florida Health Center, Inc.	Nicholas Dorsey, Chief Medical Officer	\$968,544.00	Heart of Florida Health Center, Cancer Screening and Access to Care Project (CSACP)	Breast Cancer, Colon Cancer, Skin Cancer, Other Specify (Cervical Cancer)	Clinical/Treatment
Mount Sinai Medical Center	Steven Hochwald, Director Cancer Center, Chief of Surgical Oncology	\$1,467,160.00	Utilizing navigation and education to improve NCCN guideline-driven care quality for patients with gastric and gastroesophageal (GEJ) junction malignancy in regions of Florida.	Other Specify (Gastric and gastroesophageal junction cancer)	Clinical/Treatment
University of Central Florida	Michael Rovito, Associate Professor	\$238,919.00	Feasibility of the Physical Activity and Connectivity for Testicular Cancer Survivors (PACT) program	Other Specify (testicular)	Implementation
Cleveland Clinic Florida	Diego Sadler, MD FACC	\$625,822.00	Cardio-Oncology Consortium to evaluate and improve the cardiovascular care of cancer patients in Florida utilizing the Global Cardio-Oncology Registry (G-COR) platform.	Breast Cancer	Clinical/Treatment
H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center & Research Institute, Inc.	Jun Yin, Associate Member	\$375,875.00	Novel master protocol designs for precision oncology trials in pediatric and rare cancers	Pediatric/Rare Cancers	Clinical/Treatment
University of Miami	Shanta Dhar, Associate Professor	\$506,478.00	Metabolic Modulation of Glioblastoma Stem Cells by Diet and Brain Accumulating Combinatory Nanotherapeutics for Addressing Invasion and Recurrence	Other Specify (Glioblastoma and diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma (DIPG))	Clinical/Treatment
The University of Central Florida Board of Trustees	Dexter Hadley, Chief of Artificial intelligence	\$1,998,935.00	MammoChat: An AI-Driven Platform for Personalized Breast Cancer Patient Support	Breast Cancer	Data/AI

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Mayo Clinic Florida	Roxana Dronca, Professor of Oncology	\$1,867,284.00	Cancer CARE Beyond Walls – A Pilot Clinical Trial to Evaluate Administration of Cancer Directed Therapy in the Home Versus in Clinic for Patients Residing in the Florida Panhandle and Surrounding Areas	Lung Cancer,Breast Cancer,Colon Cancer,Prostate,Skin Cancer	Clinical/Treatment
University of South Florida	Usha Menon, Dean and Distinguished University Health Professor	\$729,391.00	Promoting HPV Self-Testing in Primary Care	Other Specify (cervical cancer)	Implementation
Florida Cancer Specialists and Research Institute	David Wenk, MD	\$2,000,000.00	Scaling Remote Temperature Monitoring in Community Oncology: Establishing a New Standard of Care for Early Infection Detection	Other Specify (Specific cancers are not targeted in this study; all patients receiving chemotherapy at participating clinics are potentially eligible. We expect to enroll patients with all the cancers indicated in the list above.)	Clinical/Treatment
Florida International University	Christian Poellabauer, Professor	\$842,236.00	Digital Biomarkers of Stress Response During and After Breast Cancer Treatment	Breast Cancer	Clinical/Treatment
Florida Atlantic University	Ashley Artese, Assistant Professor of Exercise Science and Health Promotion	\$159,626.00	Exploring the feasibility of an exercise and noninvasive brain stimulation intervention in breast cancer survivors	Breast Cancer	Clinical/Treatment
Mount Sinai Medical Center	Stuart Kaplan, MD	\$600,000.00	Comparison of Cone Beam Breast CT with digital breast Tomosynthesis and contrast-enhanced breast MRI	Breast Cancer	Clinical/Treatment
TGH Cancer Institute	Gustavo Rivero, MD	\$96,800.00	Investigating the efficacy of Dexamethasone plus conventional hypomethylating agent plus BCL-2 inhibitor in the treatment of acute myelogenous leukemia (AML).	Other Specify (Acute myeloid leukemia)	Bench/Lab

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Cleveland Clinic Florida	Zeina Nahleh, Medical Oncologist, Chair and Director	\$142,784.00	Artificial Intelligence-Driven Support for Distress Management in Patients with Cancer	Other Specify (All types of cancer on stage I, II and III, currently undergoing treatment at Maroon Cancer Center, Cleveland Clinic Florida.)	Data/AI
Cleveland Clinic Florida Research and Innovation Center	Jun Zhao, Assistant Professor	\$571,582.00	Targeting Lipid Signaling in Refractory and Aggressive Cancers	Other Specify (Refractory non-Hodgkin lymphoma, triple-negative breast cancer, diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma)	Bench/Lab
University of Florida	Catherine Flores, Associate Professor	\$421,819.00	Developmentally regulated antigens for targeting pediatric high grade glioma	Other Specify (Pediatric Brain Cancer)	Bench/Lab
Florida Atlantic University	Anna Knapinska, Associate Director of Cancer Center of Excellence	\$561,276.00	MBLAC1: A Novel Target for the Treatment of Glioblastoma	Other Specify (Glioblastoma)	Bench/Lab
Florida Atlantic University	Michael Lu, Associate Professor	\$274,558.00	Targeting actin-microtubule network to enhance taxane efficacy in advanced prostate cancer	Prostate Cancer	Bench/Lab
Vanquish Bio, Inc.	Bryan Allinson, Chief Executive Officer	\$1,996,312.00	PANDA: Advanced AI-Driven Diagnostic Tool for Early Detection and Improved Outcomes in Pancreatic Cancer	Other Specify (Pancreas)	Data/AI
Jupiter Medical Center, Anderson Family Cancer Institute	Jon DuBois, Director of Oncology	\$266,766.00	Cancer Disease and Clinical Trials Education	Lung Cancer,Breast Cancer,Colon Cancer,Prostate,Other Specify (GYN Cancers)	Clinical/Treatment
University of Florida	Jennifer LeLaurin, Assistant Professor	\$326,326.00	Implementation of electronic patient-reported outcomes for symptom management in cancer patients	Other Specify (All Cancers)	Data/AI
Memorial Regional Hospital South	Paul Hakimata, Specialist, Molecular Genomics	\$1,664,255.00	Maximizing Patient Inclusion In Genetic Biomarker Testing While Minimizing Time To Receive Results In Lung Cancer	Lung Cancer	Clinical/Treatment
Mote Marine Laboratory	Kirstie Francis, Postdoctoral Research Fellow	\$230,578.00	Discovery of marine natural product antagonists of Ewing	Other Specify (Ewing Sarcoma)	Bench/Lab

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			Sarcoma target as novel therapies		
Nicklaus Children's Health System	David Seo, SVP Chief Digital/Info Officer	\$1,957,615.00	Advancing Precision Medicine for Pediatric Oncology with Whole Genome Sequencing (WGS) and Clinical Trials Matching	Other Specify (The type of cancer this study will address are sarcomas, such as osteosarcoma and rhabdomyosarcoma, because of the lower 5-year survival rates of 66 – 67% (Cancer Statistics, 2024). WGS could make an impact of discovering additional mutations and biomarkers that could be evaluated for precision medicine treatments or clinical trials. These discoveries could make a big impact on these cancers with lower 5-year survival rates.)	Clinical/Treatment
Mount Sinai Medical Center	Kenneth Chu, Chief Medical Physicist	\$130,000.00	Minimizing motion in SPECT-CT images of liver patients	Other Specify (Liver Cancer)	Clinical/Treatment