

## IACA Dinner Meeting at ASCO 2017

IACA Annual Meeting alongside ASCO 2017 was held on Saturday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> 2017 at the Westin Michigan Avenue. We welcomed over 90 guests to an evening of networking and education. Thank you to each and every one of you who took time out of your busy ASCO conference schedules to attend IACA's annual meeting. We would also like to thank all our new members for coming on board to help us build a stronger organization committed to advancing cancer care in India.

We were honored to present Dr. Ravi Salgia with the IACA Award for Outstanding Contribution to Oncology.

Dr. Salgia has over 25 years of experience in translational research and the development of targeted therapies to improve the quality of life and survival of cancer patients, especially as related to small cell lung cancer. Dr. Salgia was the first to clone the focal adhesion protein paxillin and also localize the gene to 12q24. His laboratory also identified the gain-of-function mutations of paxillin in lung cancer.

He went on to define receptor tyrosine kinases and have identified unique targets in lung cancer such as MET/RON and EPHB4 receptor tyrosine kinases. In fact his laboratory elucidated the exon 14 skipping of MET in small cell lung cancer and non-small cell lung cancer that has treatment implications in EGFR mutation lung cancer. He and his group have also developed a large bioinformatics database for thoracic oncology. He is internationally known for his scientific accomplishments, and serves as a chartered member of NIH/NCI's Clinical Oncology Study Section, was elected as the Translational Science Representative on the Thoracic Malignancy Steering Committee of the NCI, and previously served on the NIH Tumor Progression and Metastasis Study Section. At the City of Hope he has developed a large informatics database in thoracic malignancies that is available on the iBridge network. Dr. Salgia graciously shared his story in a fascinating presentation.

We also presented the IACA Rising Star Award for Outstanding Contributions to Oncology to Dr. Rachna Shroff.

Dr. Rachna Shroff is an Assistant Professor in Gastrointestinal Medical Oncology at MD Anderson Cancer Center and she has been part of faculty since completing her fellowship in 2010. Since then, she has developed a niche as a clinical researcher who specializes in treating pancreatic and biliary tract cancers. In her short tenure on faculty, Dr. Shroff has established herself as an expert in the field of biliary cancers and has been the Principal Investigator on a number of national trials in this area. Dr. Shroff has played a pivotal role in designing studies for novel therapies in this orphan disease, including an ongoing phase II trial of nab-paclitaxel with gemcitabine and cisplatin for newly diagnosed biliary cancers. This study has demonstrated impressive early results and she is currently leading the next phase of the study through SWOG. Dr. Shroff is also leading studies investigating the potential role for immunotherapy in biliary cancers. She is



working with collaborators in MD Anderson's Department of Translational and Molecular Pathology to immunoprofile over 100 resected surgical specimens of cholangiocarcinoma to characterize the immune milieu of these cancers. This will dovetail well into a study that she is leading which combines pembrolizumab and T-VEC in cholangiocarcinoma.



The education program for the evening included a panel discussion on the Landscape of Cancer Prevention Studies in India. The panelists included Dr. Ravi Mehrotra (Director, National Institute of Cancer Prevention and Research), Ambassador Sally Cowal (Senior Vice President, Global Cancer Control, ACS), and Dr. Kirti Jain (Past President, IACA). Dr. Mehrotra shared interesting insights and his experiences of cancer prevention studies in India, and Ambassador Cowal also shared her experiences in India earlier in her career. Dr. Jain shared updates from IACA Project Life and the next steps, and potential collaborations.

Dr. Swaminathan Iyer presented IACA Vision and Mission and IACA programs, especially the successful progress of the IACA Project Life, a cervical cancer and NCD screening study launched in the beginning of 2017. Dr. Suresh Reddy also presented an update on the very successful IACA Palliative Care programs. We also had mesmerizing Odissi dance and Carnatic music performances by Neha Reddy, Karthik Vasan, and Sandeep Bharadwaj.



