

Spring 2025

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Researcher Highlight: Sharon Antonucci, PhD



We meet the remarkable Dr. Sharon M. Antonucci. (In her words) a Jersey girl, Dr. Antonucci grew up in Westfield, New Jersey and attended Connecticut College. Dr. Antonucci then received a master's degree at Teachers College, Columbia University, and obtained her PhD at the University of Arizona, with a background in Speech and Hearing Sciences. When asked, 'Why aphasia?' Dr. Antonucci replied: "I've always been interested in languages. We were given an assignment in one of my college linguistics classes that wouldn't be covered in class. It was during my research for that assignment I learned about aphasia, which was a mix of my interests in language and how the brain works."

Dr. Antonucci is married and has four dogs (Hulk, Bill, Hank and foster dog Betsie) living in Upper Bucks county. Dr. Antonucci met her husband while living in New York City. Later, "while in Massachusetts, I learned the founding Directors of the Aphasia Center were both retiring, and so I jumped at the opportunity to apply for the role of Director of the Aphasia Center, having supported people with aphasia and their families for almost 30 years! I think one of the biggest challenges for people with aphasia is that so few people are aware of it while realizing that language can be impaired, but the person's intelligence is preserved resulting in social isolation and difficulty forming or maintaining relationships. In over 30 years we've seen more interventions not only targeting language but also supporting people in staying engaged in their community through our 'Life Participation' approach to aphasia intervention. It's not just supporting people in their language skills but also supporting them in using skills to meet their own life goals."

Dr. Antonucci shared other aphasia efforts: "a recent project was an NIH-funded study of animal-assisted therapy. We looked at the impact of training people with chronic aphasia to use positive reinforcement techniques to train dogs. It occurred to me much of the positive reinforcement we do working with dogs plays into the strengths people with aphasia develop. Using skills people with aphasia develop - for example using tone of voice and communicative use of gestures - people with aphasia become experts working with these skills. I experienced many benefits from interacting with dogs, while research in animal-assisted interventions grows".

Another area of focus for the Aphasia Center is "work not only with people with chronic aphasia (resulting from strokes and other types of brain lesions) but also progressive aphasia. Primary progressive aphasia can result from frontal-temporal degeneration, the most common cause of dementia for people under the age of 60, or a less typical, language-led, presentation of Alzheimer's disease. It can take up to 3 years for people to receive an accurate diagnosis, delaying access to treatment and resources, so it is crucial to provide education and outreach, as well as direct services."

Thanks Dr. Antonucci for being able to spend this brief time with you!

Research Recognition Day 2025:

Keynote Speaker:

Dorry L. Segev, MD, PhD New York University – Langone



Jefferson Einstein welcomes Dr. Segev to this year's Research Recognition Day as the Keynote Speaker. Dr. Segev's presentation will be "From Bench to Bill: How to Change Health Policy". Dr. Segev's presentation objectives are:

1. *To understand the organ transplant policy landscape in the United States*
2. *To explore scientific methods for policy research*
3. *To describe successful policy changes in organ transplantation*

Dorry L. Segev, MD, PhD, whose global efforts have helped advance transplantation medicine, heads the new Center for Surgical and Transplant Applied Research at NYU Langone Health. The center facilitates a broad range of clinical research in the Department of Surgery at NYU Grossman School of Medicine, the NYU Langone Transplant Institute, and throughout the entire health system to bridge gaps between clinical practice and scientific research. Among other research objectives, it aims to innovate protocols that expand eligibility among patients previously deemed ineligible for transplants.

A leading expert in transplantation, Dr. Segev is a professor of surgery and population health at NYU Grossman School of Medicine, and serves as vice chair of research in the Department of Surgery. In addition to his doctorates in medicine and clinical investigations, he holds degrees in electrical engineering, computer science, and biostatistics, and has completed fellowships in transplant surgery and molecular biology. Dr. Segev's proficiency in numerous fields makes him a true polymath—a person with wide-ranging knowledge who can draw on their expertise in multiple complex subjects to solve specific problems. Here, he describes the journey that led him to acquire such diverse skills, and how he integrates his broad knowledge to advance medicine and patient care.

Dr. Segev's professional background includes:

MD, Johns Hopkins University
Residency, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, General Surgery
Fellowship, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Transplant Surgery
PhD, Johns Hopkins University
American board of Surgery – General Surgery
Professor, Department of Population Health at NYU Grossman School of Medicine
Professor, Department of Surgery at NYU Grossman School of Medicine
Vice Chair, Department of Surgery and the Surgical Sciences
Director, Center for Surgical and Transplant Applied Research (C-STAR)

Dr. Segev's presentation will take place on May 21st at 11:45 am and can be viewed via the following Zoom address: <https://zoom.us/j/98156595120?pwd=95al8EcQb53SOWWEBe0CQNXyCj7qzW.1&from=addon>

Research Recognition Day 2025:

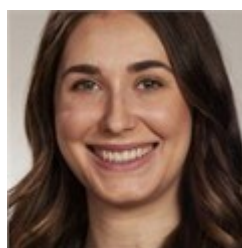
Abstract Research Competition—Results

The competition was very close and the research performed was outstanding!

The residents with the top five scores are:



Keenan Sobol
Orthopaedic
Surgery



Molly Dickinson
OB/GYN



Hannah Higgins
Pharmacy



Shikhar Khurana
Neurology



Rafal Ali
Rheumatology

Presentations will be **May 21 beginning at 7 am**. Each person will have 12 minutes total for both the presentation (8 minutes) and questions (4 minutes)> The Zoom link for this event can clicked here: <https://zoom.us/j/96319277600>

Special thanks for the judges who volunteered their time and focus, and a special thanks to those who submitted their abstracts for consideration!

Meet the Team at JCRI:

Jason Salvatore



Today we're talking with Jason Salvatore, Associate Director, Business Operations—Contracts JCRI.

Born and raised in southern New Jersey, Jason grew up in Voorhees and during COVID Jason and his wife Amanda bought their dream home in Elk Township. "We moved in just a couple of days before Thanksgiving, but yet hosted our family's Thanksgiving at our new home!"

Jason has been married to Amanda for 16 years; Amanda is a nurse practitioner for a cardiologist in South Jersey. They have two kids, a daughter and son, Lillianna and Vincenzo along with two dogs, French

bulldog Stella and Nola (a two-year old boxer). Jason's son Vincenzo is 9 years old, enjoys playing soccer and is an avid video gamer and shares his birthday with his father. Lillianna is 14 years old, participates as a cheerleader and plays volleyball.

As Jason shared, "I love being a dad; my kids have taught me so much about myself and helped me to grow - and I love it! I enjoy my time with my family. When I'm not working, you'll catch me with my family doing something!"

After graduating from Rowan University with a degree in Communications, Jason worked in and out of a number of jobs, working primarily in sales dealing with mortgages. IT and car sales, and when an opportunity arose at Jefferson he made the jump: "I enjoy negotiating. When I first started here, I initially didn't fully understand medical research, but once I got immersed in it, the negotiating part was easy: I eventually learned - which set the groundwork for my time here at Jefferson. I've been here for 15 years. I couldn't have done it without Ron Polizzi and other mentors. It's gotten me far and now I'm the Associate Director of Contracts in ORSS. Pushing me to learn and understanding the legal jargon, as well as gathering the experience first hand so that I was able to experience matters under Ron's guidance helped me to train well!"

Jason also shared some of his hobbies: "I'm a car guy; I own three classic cars. I have a 1984 Monte Carlo SS, 1987 Buick Regal Grand National and a '98 Chevy Camaro Z28 convertible: my wife loves driving that during the summertime with the top down! Its really her car! But we also have a 2012 Cadillac CTS-V; that is my most powerful car. I can race it on the weekends and take it out for a nice dinner!"

(more)

Jason Salvatore Interview (cont.)



Jason also enjoys cooking for family and friends: “I love to cook! I love to smoke meat. I like to use the Komodo Joe (the ‘egg’ smoker). I use it to BBQ and make pizzas as well. I love to see people smile when they eat my food. My favorite dish I like to make is chicken cutlets or a nice ribeye steak; both are my go-tos. But I keep it simple: nothing too fancy. I’m a meat and potatoes guy.”

Another hobby Jason enjoys is collecting watches: “I love watches! I’m big into mechanical watches. I collect them and don’t sell them. I like to wear different watches for different occasions. I love different styles and knowing the Horology behind the watch brands. Ever since I was a young adult, I’ve loved watches. I started with quartz (battery operated) Fossil watches and diversified my collection since. I have at least 3 dozen now. The collection only grows as I get older. After all, watches reflect who you are over time.”

Jason added, “lastly, I enjoy poker, especially Texas hold ‘em.”

As Jason stated, “I work for one of the greatest contract teams in the research world! Comparing the quality of our contract work with anyone else, a lot of my success is because of my team! It’s not about me: it’s about us and our partnership with everyone within Jefferson! The quality of the work we do benefits us and everyone else!”

- end -

Albert Einstein Society Winners



Congratulations goes out to Dr. Amanda Rabinowitz of Jefferson Moss Magee Rehabilitation for their award winning grant, **“Daily Life After TBI: Examining Time Allocation, Social Participation, and Affect Using Ecological Momentary Assessment (EMA)”**.



The primary aim of the study is to examine time use with regards to participation in activities outside the home, social contact, and affect, with the goal of understanding the impact of traumatic brain injury (TBI) on social and community activity. By identifying patterns and contextual factors associated with participation and emotional states, this study will also aim to identify potentially modifiable characteristics that could inform future interventions to improve functioning and quality of life in this population.

TBI is a significant public health concern, with moderate to severe injuries often resulting in long-term challenges that affect daily functioning, social participation, and emotional well-being. These individuals frequently experience diminished productive activity, strained family and social relationships, and reduced community engagement. Fewer than half of those with moderate to severe TBI regain employment in the years following injury, and avocational pursuits are similarly disrupted. “Ecological Momentary As-

essment (EMA)” has emerged as a promising tool for this purpose. Using smartphone-based applications, EMA allows researchers to collect real-time data on target symptoms, behaviors, and contexts as individuals navigate their daily lives. Respondents receive periodic prompts to answer brief, preprogrammed questions about their current activity, social setting, and emotional state. EMA data provide insights into diurnal variations, the influence of environmental and social contexts, and moment-to-moment interactions between activity and mood. Studies in rehabilitation populations have demonstrated the utility of EMA for investigating pain, mood fluctuations, and other health-related variables in naturalistic settings.

Tuesday, May 16, 8am-3pm

Connelly Auditorium, Hamilton Building

This event is mandatory for Jefferson's faculty and staff conducting federally sponsored research.

Join us for the First Annual Research Compliance Symposium

This educational day for the research community will explore components of Jefferson's Research Security Program. Speakers will cover topics such as research integrity, foreign influence, and cybersecurity and how these elements impact our research security. The symposium will foster discussion as we listen and learn from speakers on how we can enhance our research practices.

Registration is required and accessible via QR Code



Featuring:

Michael Lauer, MD

Keynote Speaker, Deputy Director for Extramural Research, Office of the Director, National Institutes of Health

SA Dan Sherry

Private Sector Coordinator, Philadelphia Division, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Nelson Dong, Esq.

Of Counsel, Dorsey & Whitney LLP, Seattle, WA

Keith Prewitt

Vice President, Enterprise Public Safety & Security, Thomas Jefferson University

Mark Odom

Vice President, CISO, Thomas Jefferson University

Organized by the Office of Research Conduct & Compliance
Questions: Contact Alisha Clark, Project Manager, ORCC, Alisha.Clark@jefferson.edu

Thomas Jefferson University and Jefferson Health

Corporate and Foundational Resources



Have a project or program that you want funded? Here's how to access new opportunities!

First, [linked here](#) is the information to create an account on Pivot to receive instant updates on relevant funding opportunities. Once you've created your account, you're on your first steps to access a wide variety of opportunities!

Additionally, here is the [research funding calendar](#) the Thomas Jefferson University and Jefferson Health Corporate and Foundational Resources publishes on a monthly basis; those who are interested can bookmark the link and check for new updates each month to see and access potentially viable sources of funding.

Calendars and institutionally limited awards are also distributed through listservs from the OIAfundingopportunities@jefferson.edu e-mail. Staff who would like to be added to the list should email my colleagues Melissa.Elgendy@jefferson.edu and Catherine.Valentine@jefferson.edu, as they manage this process.

In terms of other internal funding opportunities, they are listed [here](#) under “**Types of Grants - Intramural**”.

If any researcher members are interested in meeting to discuss their particular research interests and funding needs, I am happy to speak with them: anyone can feel free to reach out.

Hope this helps! Don't hesitate to contact me or my colleagues if we can be of help or assistance!



- Casey

Casey Burkard (she/her/hers)

Assistant Director of Corporate & Foundation Relations

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CLINICAL TRIALS DAY 2025



Celebrate International Clinical Trials Day with us, recognizing the **outstanding research professionals** at Jefferson.

James Lind's 1747 trial wasn't just a historical footnote—it was the prologue to a continuing story. This observance, presented by the SKCC Clinical Trials Office and JCRI, calls us to recognize the present-day heroes of that story: the Clinical Research Professionals, whose vital work propels medicine forward.

Event includes:

- Presentations by **patients**, research leadership and colleagues
- **Poster presentations** will showcase the exemplary research conducted by our team!
- And **lunch provided!**



TUESDAY, MAY 20, 2025

11:30AM - 2:00PM

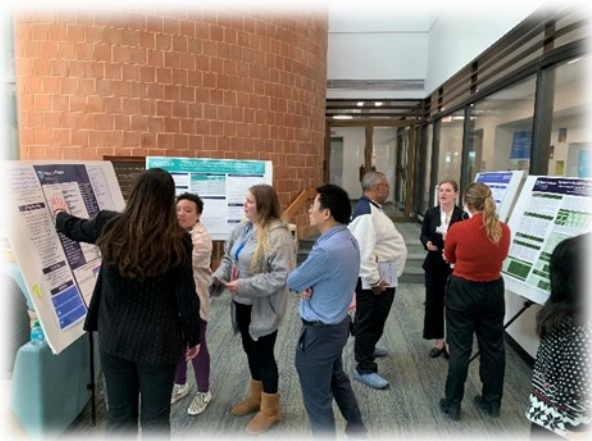
DORRANCE H. HAMILTON BUILDING
1st floor lobby

RSVP by May 06, 2025

We are pleased to invite Clinical Research Professionals to submit a poster for display and presentation. If you are interested in participating in the poster presentation part of the program, please contact Dana O'Neil by April 30th at Dana.O'Neill@jefferson.edu.

Thomas Jefferson University and Nemours Children's Health Collaborative Research Program

Thomas Jefferson University and Nemours Children's Health continue to strengthen our partnership in research & education through multiple avenues. Our successful Collaborative Symposium Series continued in Wilmington, Delaware in December 2024. "Obesity and Diabetes Prevention and Care: Opportunities for Collaboration" featured faculty and students researchers from our institutions presenting their impressive work alongside participation from community stakeholders. Amy Cunningham, PhD, MPH provided the event's keynote address. Amy and her team have just launched a four-year study funded by the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI), aimed at examining the effectiveness of clinician-run virtual and in-person group sessions to help patients lose weight. The team is aiming to enroll 5,000 patients, and if the group sessions prove effective, she suggested the sessions could be a model for implementation science.



*Left: Students share their work with symposium attendees during the afternoon poster session;
Right: Families in Nemours' Health Weight & Wellness Clinic share their perspectives*

The afternoon session featured a lively poster session, highlighting the work of nearly two dozen Nemours and TJU graduate students. Winners are listed below. An excellent family panel of parents and teen participants in the Healthy Weight and Wellness Clinic at Nemours Children's Hospital followed in the program. The four families shared details of their weight-loss journey, how the clinic has positively affected their lives and other valuable perspectives about the intervention. Collaborative research relationships continue to grow from the symposium, as research teams prepare their applications for our upcoming Pediatric Award for Clinical Research.

(more)

Graduate Poster Session, First Place Winner:

"The Impact of the Jefferson Weight Loss Program on Weight and Diet Risk Score in Adults with Obesity" - Olivia Ackley, BS, Alexandra DeMichele, BS, Cynthia Cheng, MD, PhD

Second place Winners:

"High-intensity Interval Training is Equivalent to Moderate Intensity Continuous Training for Controlling Metabolic Syndrome Health Indicators in Overweight Nondiabetic Adults: A Meta-Analysis" - Jay Pendyala, Joseph Gorman, Nicholas Tewell, Christian McCormick, Philip Skiba MD

"Utilizing the Electronic Health Record to Facilitate Psychology Referrals in a Tertiary Care Pediatric Obesity Clinic: A Quality Improvement Project" - Linhda Nguyen, PA-C, MS, Jason Boye, PhD, Megan Cohen, PhD, Corey Glass, Garima Midha, Thao-Ly Phan, MD, MPH

Popular vote favorite:

"Clinical Training Impact of Student-Delivered Patient Nutrition Education" - Nicholas DeMario, BS, Michael Fleming, BS, Cynthia Cheng, MD, PhD

Looking forward, the collaborative program's Basic Science Committee will be hosting an upcoming visit to Nemours' laboratories and industry partners located in the DuPont Experimental Station in Wilmington. We will feature opportunities for Jefferson graduate and postdoctoral students to engage with Nemours' researchers and explore the impressive facilities. Please keep an eye out for more information soon about this event!

The program is busy at work with a re-invigorated committee aimed at supporting Population Health research, headed by Dr. Billy Oglesby, PhD, MBA, MSPH, FACHE. A pilot award in this topic area will be announced in the coming weeks and the upcoming Population Health Colloquium will feature a number of committee members and speakers from Nemours. Ongoing initiatives in outcomes research, data science, and further institutional integration will provide research opportunity in the coming months for those in the Population Health fields.

(more)

Featured JEMS Scholar: Kavita Vinkear, MD, MPH

Over the past 5 years, The Jefferson Emerging Medical Scholars program has supported promising young faculty to further their professional research careers. The two-year award protects research time and fosters valuable research mentor relationships throughout our institution. The program would like to recognize the achievements of one of our current JEMS scholars, Kavita Vinkear, and her mentor Kristin Rising on their project, *A Patient-Centered Approach to Managing Pregnancies of Unknown Location*. Kavita has not only achieved the aims set forth in her proposal, but has expanded her work to address management of ectopic pregnancies, resulting in a recent conference presentation (*Society of Family Planning, October 2024*) and a publication in *Contraception*. This but scratches the surface of Kavita's output as her JEMS period - starting June 2023 - has produced eleven publications in high-impact journals, with a number directly resulting from this work.



Her JEMS work informed the development of a bundled intervention called Pregnancy Resources, Imaging, Support and Management (PRISM). PRISM provides newly pregnant women with patient-centered care in the form of dedicated health navigators to confirm pregnancy, schedule appointments and understand the EHR. PRISM was recently awarded a City of Philadelphia Health Department Grant for up to 18-months of support – these funds will support the PRISM navigators and effort for investigators. Additionally, Kavita and her team applied for a 4-year, \$2 million AHRQ R18 grant in January 2025 to fund the implementation science of the PRISM intervention.

We'd like to congratulate Kavita, Kristin and their group for an outstanding award period that exemplifies the professional development and research output from our JEMS awardees. Their research is directly addressing gaps in healthcare for women in our region and we look forward to the development and implementation of PRISM in the coming months.



-Tyler Kmiec, MPH

Program Manager

Collaborative Research Program Manager

Research Q &A: What's your question?



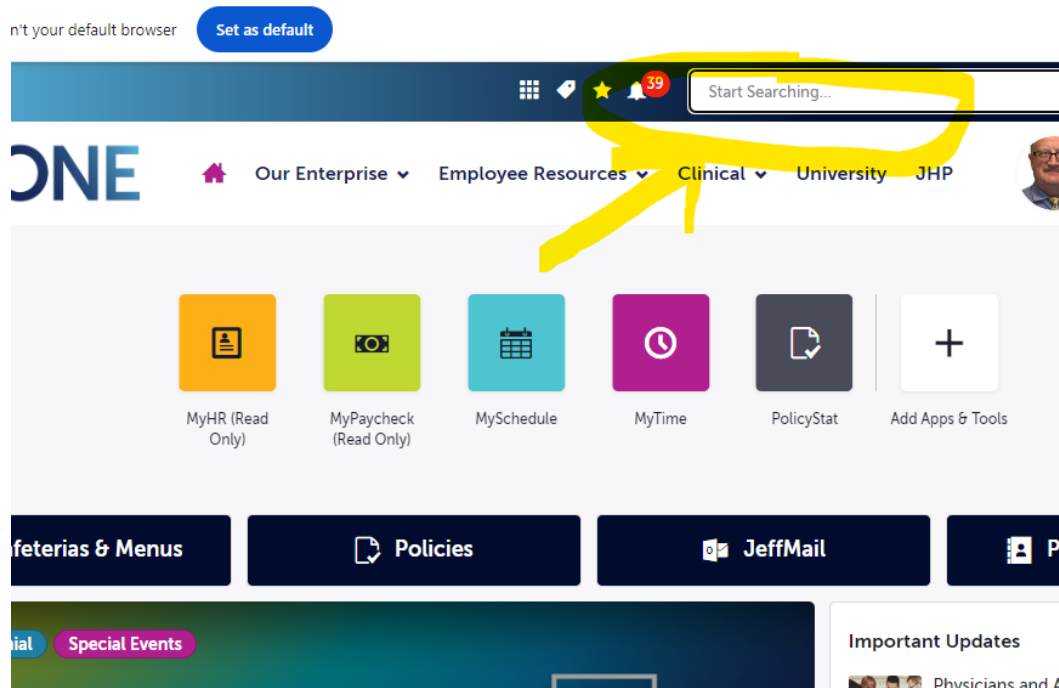
Today's question is: *"How do I access clinical study policies and services now that the old Jefferson link is no longer there?"*

Here's the answer:

1) Go to *Jefferson One* (on your browser, type "one.jefferson.edu"):

A screenshot of a web browser's address bar. It shows the URL 'one.jefferson.edu' with standard navigation icons (back, forward, home, search) to the left.

2) In *Jefferson One*, go to the "Search" box, type "Research":

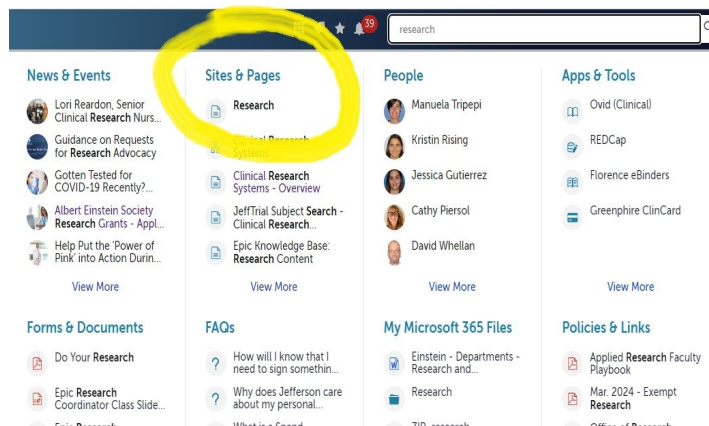


(more)

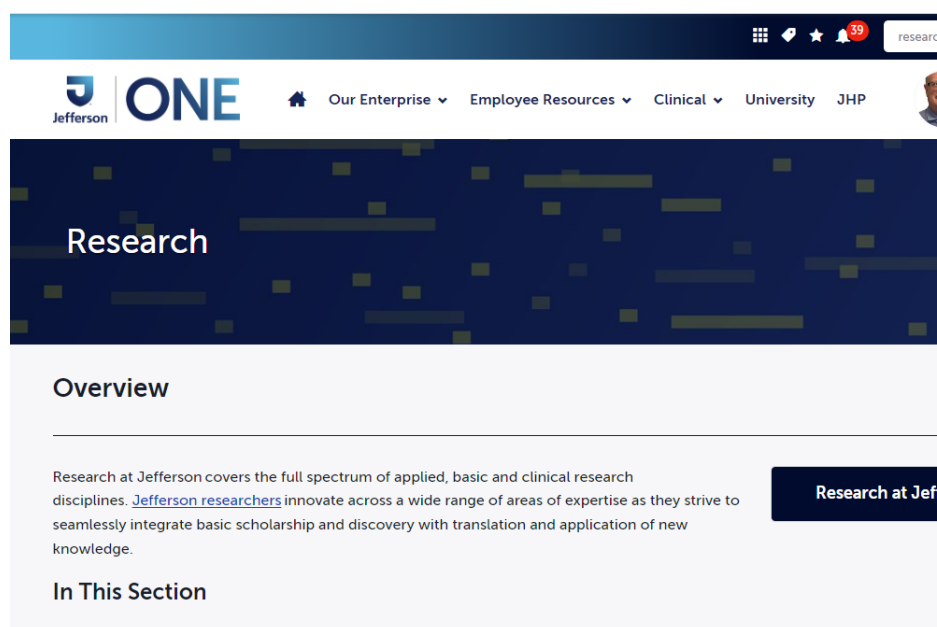
Research Q &A: What's your question? (cont.)

3) A series of sections with their respective links will then appear.

Under “Sites and Pages” (located toward the top of the middle of the page) click on the [Research](#) link.



4) Here, you will see a variety of links relating to JCRI, Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center (CKCCC), Clinical Research Policies, Jefferson Office of Human Research Protection (JOHRP) along with links to other supportive services and operations.



Special thanks to Christiana Carns for this helpful tip!



Securing the Future: *Navigating Research Security & Integrity*



Keynote Speaker:
Rebecca Keiser, PhD
Chief of Research Security Strategy and Policy,
U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF)

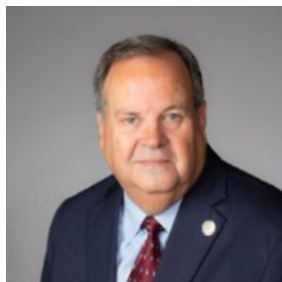
Securing the Future:

Navigating Research Security and Integrity

May 13, 2025 09:00 AM in Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Jefferson's Office of Research Integrity, Conduct and Compliance on behalf of Thomas Jefferson University is hosting its annual Symposium on Research Integrity from 9 AM to 12:30 PM on May 13 of 2025. With a commitment to integrity across the research continuum, we aspire to educate, inform, and inspire our research community. Our 2025 symposium will focus on "Securing the Future: Navigating Research Security and Integrity". The landscape of scientific research faces unprecedented challenges at the intersection of security and integrity. Recent high-profile cases of research misconduct—encompassing fabrication, falsification, and plagiarism—have emerged against a backdrop of diminishing public trust in scientific institutions. While these challenges aren't new, the modern research environment presents unique complexities: advanced detection tools, widespread digital platforms for discussing concerns, and growing tensions. **Please register by May 2, 2025 | For questions, please contact alisha.clark@jefferson.edu**

GUEST SPEAKERS:



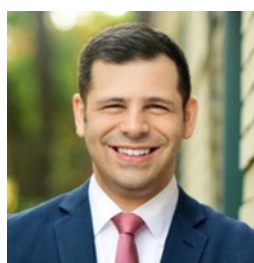
Dr. Kevin Gamache
Associate Vice Chancellor and
Chief Research Security Officer for
The Texas A&M University System



Elizabeth (Missy) Peloso, MBA
Sr. Associate Vice Provost and Sr.
Associate Vice President for Research
Officer of Research Services, Univer-
sity of Pennsylvania



Brian Young, MS, MBA
Director, Enterprise Investigations
and Intelligence
Thomas Jefferson University –
Health



Dr. Michael J. Jabbour
Microsoft AI Innovation Officer
Office of the CTO—Microsoft

Albert Einstein Society Research Awards

2026 - 1st Cycle



Get Research Grant funding up to \$35,000!

Applications are due **Tuesday, July1, 2025**

Applications and Instructions are available on Einstein Connect

Go to Einstein Connect (click below):

[Albert Einstein Society Research Grants](#)

Go to the “***How Do I Apply?***” section located at the bottom of the page.

Here, you’ll find the guidelines, all required forms and additional items you’ll need to include as part of your application.

Contact **Bill Lutz** at extension 6-7218 or email at:

William.Lutz@Jefferson.edu

...if you have any questions.

Don’t delay: apply today!

“Make everything as simple as possible, but not simpler.”

Albert Einstein

Please note that all questions regarding IRB and iRIS should be directed to the **Jefferson Office of Human Research Protection** at [Jefferson Office of Human Research Protection](#) .

Got an award received, a program you want to share or an announcement you want to make? Let us know and we'll get the word out!

Looking for something previously discussed or reported on, and/or anyone interviewed in past issues of “The Researcher”? Go to the EinsteinConnect Archive (soon to be found at the Jefferson One web service!) and utilize the search options for previous issues or to search for individuals, programs or events reported by The Researcher, go here: [The Researcher Newsletter - Einstein Health Network](#)

The Researcher
Office of Research and Technology Development

Edited by the Staff of the Office of Research and Technology Development

Mary Klein, PhD, Roberta Stoute, Christiana Carns, Jada Houston, Vibha Ahuja, PhD, Bill Lutz

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