

# TARConnections...

## 3rd Annual TARC Research Day

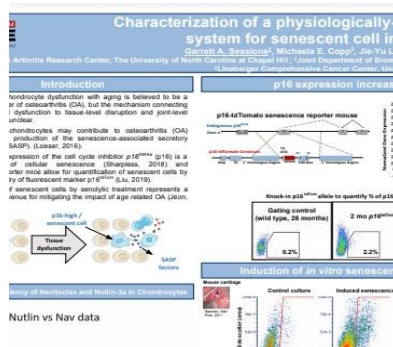
Approximately 100 researchers, clinicians, research staff and trainees joined forces remotely this year to discuss how their latest scientific findings can yield innovative advances in arthritis, allergy, and autoimmune diseases. There were a total of approximately 30 presentations.

Keynote speaker, Dr. Jane Salmon, the Collette Kean Research Chair at the Hospital For Special Surgery, shared new findings in her presentation: *"Can We Predict and Prevent Pregnancy Complications in Patients with Lupus Antiphospholipid Syndrome?"*



Here are a few examples of the types of presentations made during TARC Research Day:

- Disparities in healthcare access, utilization, and outcomes.
- Cartilage explant model for senescent cell induction & clearance.
- Penicillin allergy testing — insights and updates.
- Molecular immune profiling in alpha-gal syndrome.
- Assessment of Walk With Ease patient portal in rural & urban areas.
- Cost considerations of MRI, EMG, and muscle biopsy for patients with inflammatory muscle disease.



## Upcoming Thurston Presentations & Events



### Mark your calendars...

- 11/13: TARC Research Seminar. Dr. Andrea Johnstone; "Leveraging Epigenetics for Biomarker Discovery in Auto Immune Diseases." [LINK](#)
- 11/18: TARC CCCR Speaker Series: Dr. Jonathan Berg; "Overview of Precision Medicine at UNC." [LINK](#)
- 11/20: Collaborative CCCR Speaker Series: Dr. Robert Coghill; "Distributed Nociceptive System: A Framework for Understanding Pain." [LINK](#)
- Additional Upcoming Events: [LINK](#)

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## TARC Provides Leadership & Insights at ACR “Convergence” 2020

“Team TARC” played a particularly active role at this year’s ACR meeting -- with 20 experts presenting research findings; Dr. Joanne Jordan receiving a prestigious award; and Drs. Beth Jonas, Richard Loeser, and Saira Sheikh serving in key leadership roles.

Their efforts helped make the first “virtual” ACR conference a resounding success.



Learn more about the role TARC representatives played, research that was presented, and the award received by Dr. Joanne Jordan [via this link](#).



*Support “TAR Heal Tuesday!” It’s time to go “all in” on December 1st and support the UNC Thurston Arthritis Research Center. [Visit our website page today to learn more!](#)*

## Dr. Onyinye Iweala, UNC Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) “Champion,” Leads TARC Initiatives

“Our nation is at a crossroads regarding (DEI) issues, and there’s an urgent need for all of us to lead — by educating ourselves and taking the first steps to dismantle systems that generate and perpetuate inequities,” said Dr. Onyinye Iweala. “As a first step, we’re working within our Division to ensure everyone feels welcome in our organization and empowered to contribute to our DEI initiatives.”

One of the strengths of the TARC DEI Workgroup Dr. Iweala leads is the fact that it is not operating in a silo. Instead, it’s an active part of a larger ecosystem working within UNC School of Medicine, UNC Health, and UNC as a whole to bring DEI issues to the forefront.



Be sure to check out the [School of Medicine’s Office of Inclusive Excellence](#), and the UNC [Department of Medicine’s Diversity and Inclusion website](#).

To volunteer or learn more, contact Dr. Iweala: [Onyinye.Iweala@med.unc.edu](mailto:Onyinye.Iweala@med.unc.edu). To access TARC’s DEI Teams Page & Resource Library, contact: [Emma.Thomas@med.unc.edu](mailto:Emma.Thomas@med.unc.edu).



## TARC Spotlights & Highlights (Grants, Awards, Mtgs., Etc.)



**The ACR presents its Distinguished Clinical Investigator award for 2020 to Dr. Joanne Jordan.**

The award is presented to one outstanding clinical scientist yearly, in recognition of their contributions to the field of Rheumatology.

Congrats to Dr. Jordan! Learn more by reading the update on our [website](#).



**Dr. Leigh Callahan voted President-Elect of U.S. Bone & Joint Initiative.**

Dr. Callahan has been a vital part of the USBJI for more than twenty years, and has served in a wide variety of capacities on numerous committees and task forces.

Read more about Dr. Callahan's involvement with USBJI [here](#).

### More Great News to Share...

- [Dr. Richard Loeser](#) named as recipient of the Joseph P. Archie, Jr. Eminent Professorship in Medicine.
- [Dr. Onyinye Iweala](#) receives \$1 million NIH K08 to study alpha gal syndrome.
- [Dr. Leigh Callahan](#) Joins a *Lancet* Commission focused on changing the way we think about OA.
- [Drs. Pietrosimone & Spang](#) receive Arthritis Foundation funding to study biomechanical changes following ACL injuries that influence post-traumatic osteoarthritis.
- [Dr. Brian Diekman & 2019 UNC MSTAR student Kayla Harris](#), with Univ. of Arizona received the 2019 "Best Abstract" award from the American Geriatrics Society.

## A Warm "TARC" Welcome To Our New Team Members

- [Dr. Nicole Orzochowski, DO](#) — Associate Professor of Medicine
- [Matt Fisher, PhD](#) — Adjunct Professor, Orthopedics
- [Maya Styner, MD](#) — Associate Professor, Division of Endocrinology and Metabolism
- [Morika Williams DVM, PhD](#) — Clinical Fellow, Division of Comparative Medicine
- [Council Mintz](#) — Thurston Arthritis Research Center Administrator

