

Brooklyn College Cancer Center

**ANNUAL REPORT
2024-2025**



Brooklyn College
Cancer Center

**Brooklyn
College**





MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

I am honored to have been appointed by the academic leadership of Brooklyn College to serve as the new director of the Brooklyn College Cancer Center (BCCC). It is a privilege to lead this dynamic and mission-driven initiative at such a critical time in its development.

Fiscal Year 2025 marked a period of transition and renewed momentum for the center. Over the past year, we have taken meaningful steps to strengthen our research infrastructure, expand community engagement, and align our strategic goals with the evolving landscape of cancer prevention, treatment, and education.

The center invested in key initiatives, including the recruitment of new faculty researchers, the launch of interdisciplinary pilot projects, and the expansion

of student training programs in cancer biology and public health. These efforts reflect our commitment to fostering innovation and cultivating the next generation of cancer researchers and advocates.

BCCC continued to build impactful collaborations with local hospitals, community organizations, and academic institutions, enhancing both translational research and outreach efforts. Notably, the center hosted its inaugural Cancer Equity Symposium, drawing participants from across the borough to address disparities in cancer outcomes and access to care.

As we look ahead to FY26, our priorities include securing new grant funding, deepening community partnerships, and advancing innovative research with a focus on the borough of Brooklyn.

A special note of gratitude is extended to the founding directors, Professors **Maria Contel** and **Jennifer Basil**, who concluded their five-year tenure this year. Their visionary leadership and unwavering dedication laid the foundation for the center's growth and impact. We are deeply grateful for their service and legacy.

As we reflect on the past year's achievements and challenges, we remain steadfast in our mission: to reduce the burden of cancer through inclusive research, education, and service.

Alexander Greer, Ph.D.
Director

“It is with great enthusiasm that I welcome Professor Alexander Greer as the new director of the Brooklyn College Cancer Center. His leadership and vision will undoubtedly build upon the strong foundation laid by the founding directors, Professors Maria Contel and Jennifer Basil. I extend my deepest gratitude to them for their tireless dedication, groundbreaking work, and unwavering commitment to advancing cancer research and education. Their legacy continues to inspire our campus and community as we enter an exciting new chapter in the center’s journey.”

—Michelle J. Anderson, President, Brooklyn College



MISSION

The Brooklyn College Cancer Center (BCCC) is a campus-based initiative dedicated to advancing cancer research, education, and community outreach. Through interdisciplinary collaboration with faculty and students, BCCC translates scientific discoveries into real-world applications while supporting academic and professional development.

INTEGRATION

Core research areas include computational drug design, anticancer therapeutics, epigenetics, nanotechnology, inflammation, and photomedicine—targeting such cancers as ovarian, breast, head and neck, prostate, glioma, and mesothelioma. BCCC actively engages funders across foundation, government, and corporate sectors, aligning with Brooklyn College’s capital projects to create mutual benefits for the center and the broader campus.

THREE-PRONGED APPROACH

1. College

BCCC fosters interdisciplinary research and education, preparing students for careers in science and health care while advancing impactful cancer research.

2. Community

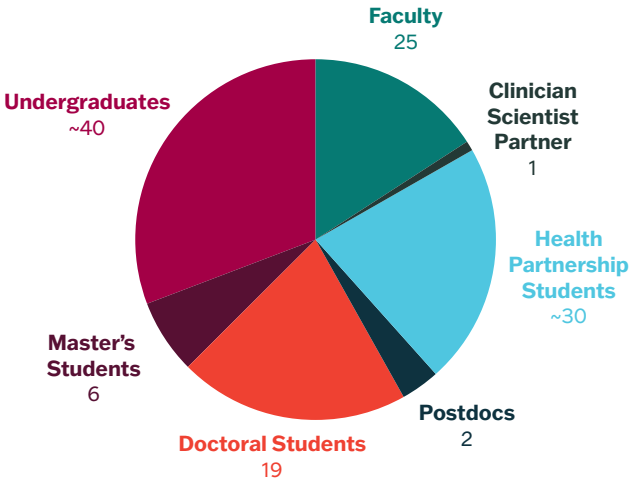
Rooted in Brooklyn’s diverse neighborhoods, BCCC promotes cancer education, early detection, and career pathways in advocacy and care.

3. Business

BCCC supports innovation through technology transfer, entrepreneurship, and small business development in areas like medical devices, computational tools, and drug discovery.

AT A GLANCE

In FY25, BCCC achieved major milestones in operations, partnerships, research, and outreach. Highlights included launching promotional videos, redesigning systems, planning new facilities, securing American Cancer Society and Gray Foundation grants, and hosting major events like the Cancer Health Disparities Symposium and AI & Stem Cell Training Workshop. Education efforts included career readiness training and the Cancer Prevention Volunteer cohort. Outreach expanded through screenings, advocacy, and community events.



Looking ahead, BCCC will focus on leadership transition, expanding disparities research, strengthening advisory efforts, and pursuing new funding.

RESEARCH AND COMMUNITY INTEGRATION

As of June 2025, BCCC includes 25 faculty (16 cancer-focused), one clinician scientist partner (Memorial Sloan Kettering), two postdocs, 19 doctoral students, six master's students, two research associates, one assistant, and more than 40 undergraduates. Around 30 students annually participate in health education and outreach through partnerships with medical institutions.

RESEARCH SPANS THREE AREAS:

1. Cancer Biology and Biochemistry
2. Drug Development and Delivery
3. Patient-Oriented Research

Faculty come from the departments of Chemistry and Biochemistry, Biology, Health and Nutrition Sciences, Psychology, and Computer Science. Key partners include Brooklyn College School of Natural and Behavioral Sciences Dean Peter Tolia, CUNY Graduate Center Dean for the Sciences Brian Gibney, and community collaborator Associate Professor Michael Menser. BCCC works closely with Brooklyn College's Immigrant Student Success Office, Haitian Studies Institute, Caribbean Studies Program, Health Services, and Health Clinic, co-hosting events and initiatives across departments.

GENERAL FUNCTIONING OF THE CENTER

BCCC streamlined administrative operations, including processing reassigned time, managing grant sub-awards, and overseeing research foundation accounts for interns, scholars, and events. Promotional efforts included flyer design, social media management, and production of outreach and fundraising videos.

Operational enhancements involved updating accounting systems, onboarding materials, and impact tracking tools. The team held weekly meetings, supported recruitment events, and organized lectures. Plans are in progress for permanent office space and a teaching lab. The center supervised six interns.

PARTNERSHIPS, FUNDRAISING, AND GRANT SUBMISSIONS

BCCC maintains active partnerships with such institutions as Maimonides, SUNY Downstate, Memorial Sloan Kettering, Mount Sinai, Weill Cornell, and CUNY centers, along with outreach collaborations with Janssen and Genentech. The American Cancer Society DICR IDG Grant (\$2.7 million over four years) supports pilot grants, postdocs, master's scholars, and summer internships. In 2024–25, four pilot projects, one master's scholar, and two postdocs were selected, along with six underrepresented undergraduate interns.

Additional funding includes a renewed \$100,000 Gray Foundation grant and funds raised via Giving Tuesday. Grant proposals were submitted focusing on workforce diversity and community engagement.

BRIDGING SCIENCE AND SOCIETY: RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND COMMUNITY ACTION

RESEARCH

BCCC continued its American Cancer Society–supported Molecular Modeling Lab and issued 2025 sub-award calls. Quarterly meetings with American Cancer Society mentors and officers guided mentoring and capacity-building. Four pilot grants were awarded across biology, health, and chemistry. Six undergraduates and one master's scholar received funded research training.

Grant support enabled internships for undergraduates and high school students, mentoring grants for doctoral students, and travel awards for conference participation. Faculty initiatives included a monthly research group, Cancer Health Disparities Symposium, and planning for a Community Advisory Board. The center hosted 12 seminars, AI and stem-cell training sessions, and participated in American Cancer Society CAN's Policy Forum. Research output included 15 federal grant submissions, two awards, 10 internal grants, 37 publications, 13 abstracts, and two patents. Two doctoral students successfully defended their dissertations.



EDUCATION

BCCC provided educational opportunities through information sessions, training programs, and internships. Students participated in stem-cell workshops; shadowing at Maimonides, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, and Mount Sinai; and volunteer roles with the American Cancer Society and Red Door. The Memorial Sloan Kettering COOL program remained active, with one student selected for summer training.

The center coordinated with Brooklyn College's Pre-Health Services to share opportunities via digital platforms. Summer internships were supported by grants, alongside an eight-week career readiness program led by CUNY's dean of sciences. In summer 2025, BCCC launched its first Cancer Prevention Volunteer cohort in partnership with Tisch Cancer Center and Brooklyn College.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

BCCC collaborates with community organizations and medical partners across Brooklyn and New York City, including Maimonides, Memorial Sloan Kettering, Mount Sinai, SUNY Downstate, and the American Cancer Society. The center coordinated with Brooklyn College's pre-health professions office. The center actively participates in coalitions like the New York State American Cancer Society HPV Coalition and Cancer Equity Accelerator Cabinet.

Outreach efforts included cancer prevention sessions, major awareness events like the American Cancer Society Making Strides Walk, and educational programs with partners such as the Leukemia & Lymphoma

Society and Kings County Hospital. BCCC also joined advocacy days in Albany, New York, and Washington, D.C., co-sponsored health fairs, and supported screenings and expert panels—engaging hundreds of students, staff, and community members.

OPPORTUNITIES

By 2028, the program aims to increase cancer-focused grant submissions, support career transitions, and enhance mentoring for junior faculty. Contributed income is expected to benefit 13 principal investigators, two postdocs, six master's students, and 22 undergraduates, while supporting research assistants and organizing seminars to foster interdisciplinary cancer research in drug development, disparities, and prevention.

FY2026 GOALS

- Refine and communicate BCCC's mission
- Develop fundraising materials
- Strengthen the advisory board
- Profile faculty engaged in cancer research
- Host outreach events, seminars, and symposia
- Redesign the website
- Maintain financial stewardship



SUPPORTERS

On behalf of the Brooklyn College Cancer Center and the communities we serve, it is my great pleasure to recognize and thank each of the generous donors who have supported our mission. From local businesses and health care partners to government agencies, foundations, and individual contributors, every gift has played a vital role in advancing our research, outreach, and education initiatives. Your commitment has meant a great deal to us to make meaningful strides in cancer prevention, treatment, and advocacy—right here in Brooklyn and beyond.

**—Alexander Greer, Director,
Brooklyn College Cancer Center**

MAJOR SUPPORTERS

The American Cancer Society

The Brooklyn College Foundation, Inc.

Bernard Garil '62

The Gray Foundation

PROGRAM PARTNERS

Brooklyn College Haitian Studies Institute

Brooklyn College Immigrant Student Success Office

HPV Cancers Alliance

Maimonides Health

Memorial Sloan Kettering

Mount Sinai Tisch Cancer Center

Red Door Therapeutic Services

SHARE Cancer Support

SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University

LEADERSHIP AND TEAM



Alexander Greer
Director



Ana Bartolomé
Operations and Outreach



Sheena Philogene
Science Librarian

ADVISORY BOARD

Dr. Patrick Borgen, M.D.

Chairman of Surgery, Maimonides Medical Center;
Founder and Director, Brooklyn Breast Cancer Program;
Clinical Professor

Dr. Carol Brown, M.D., FACOG, FACS

Senior Vice President, Chief Health Equity Officer,
and Nicholls-Biondi Chair for Health Equity, Memorial
Sloan Kettering Cancer Center; Director, MSK's Office
of Diversity Programs in Clinical Care

Dr. Marilyn Fraser

Chief Executive Officer, Arthur Ashe Institute for
Urban Health; Research Associate Professor,
Department of Medicine and the SUNY Downstate
School of Public Health

Bernard Garil '62

Philanthropist; Co-founder, cancer research internship
programs, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and Johns
Hopkins University for Brooklyn College students

Jason Lewis, Ph.D.

Emily Tow Jackson Chair in Oncology; Vice Chair
for Research, Department of Radiology; Chief of
Radiochemistry and Imaging Sciences Service,
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

Dr. Moro Salifu, M.D., M.P.H., M.B.A., FACP

Chair, Department of Medicine at SUNY Downstate;
Director, Brooklyn Health Disparities Center; Chief,
Division of Nephrology

Dr. Joanne Waldstreicher, M.D.

Chief Medical Officer, Johnson & Johnson; oversight
of pharmaceuticals, medical devices, and consumer
products



BROOKLYN COLLEGE CANCER CENTER MISSION

The Brooklyn College Cancer Center serves as a dynamic hub that connects Brooklyn College with the broader community and business sectors, fostering collaboration, innovation, and impactful cancer-related initiatives.

CONTACT INFORMATION

BCCC-CURE@brooklyn.cuny.edu
718.951.5000



Brooklyn College
Cancer Center

**Brooklyn
College**