Hackensack Meridian Health and Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center Become Associate Members of the New York Genome Center

NEW YORK, NY (December 19, 2019) – The New York Genome Center (NYGC) announced today that Hackensack Meridian Health and the Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center have become the two newest institutional associate members of the NYGC.

Hackensack Meridian Health is New Jersey’s largest health care network. Its Center for Discovery and Innovation (CDI) and John Theurer Cancer Center at Hackensack University Medical Center, a member of the Georgetown Lombardi consortium, are key components of the network’s strategy to develop and employ the latest genomic medicine for patients. Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center is Washington, D.C.’s only National Cancer Institute (NCI)-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center and NCI-approved consortium.

“We are excited to have these leading institutions with distinguished physician-scientists and researchers join the New York Genome Center community,” said Tom Maniatis, PhD, Evnin Family Scientific Director and Chief Executive Officer, NYGC. “We look forward to working with their teams to further our collaborative efforts to accelerate genomics research.”

“The Center for Discovery and Innovation is a key element of our mission to transform health care and lead toward the future,” said Robert C. Garrett, FACHE, Chief Executive Officer, Hackensack Meridian Health. “The John Theurer Cancer Center continues to provide the most advanced care currently available. Through our new partnerships at the New York Genome Center, patients in New Jersey and beyond will benefit from the latest technologies for personalized medicine.”

“The New York Genome Center is a unique and critical nexus for research collaboration in the genomics community, and the Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center consortium is pleased to join NYGC’s member institutions to partner in cancer genomics research,” said Louis M. Weiner, MD, Director, Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center and the MedStar Georgetown Cancer Institute.

The new members are joining the NYGC through two separate partnerships with distinct collaborative research objectives. The first partnership, to be led by Hackensack Meridian Health’s CDI, is focused on exploring the genetics underlying the risk factors for behavioral disorders and identifying genetic markers that help physicians predict and manage these disorders more effectively. The second partnership is focused on cancer genomics and led by Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center, which includes investigators from Georgetown University Medical Center, along with the Hackensack Meridian Health’s John Theurer Cancer Center and CDI. This partnership will seek to use advanced genetic analyses to better understand risk factors for
emergence of certain aggressive cancers, such as pediatric brain tumors; why certain cancers fail to respond to immunotherapy; and identify genetic markers or cellular factors that can improve patient outcomes.

“This is a leap forward for the CDI and its mission to translate scientific innovation from the laboratory to treatments for patients,” said David S. Perlin, PhD, Chief Scientific Officer and Senior Vice President of the CDI. “Our world-class scientists will benefit from connecting and collaborating with colleagues at leading New York-region institutions.”

Given their areas of research focus, Hackensack Meridian Health and Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center will be participants in the Genome Center Cancer Group (GCCG), NYGC’s founding scientific working group, which is composed of clinicians and cancer researchers from NYGC’s member institutions. With the addition of these new members, the GCCG now includes seven NCI-designated Comprehensive Cancer Centers. The GCCG is led by Nobel Laureate Harold Varmus, MD, Senior Associate Core Member, NYGC, and Lewis Thomas University Professor of Medicine, Weill Cornell Medicine, and Charles Sawyers, MD, Chair, Human Oncology and Pathogenesis Program, Marie-Josée and Henry R. Kravis Chair, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, and Affiliate Member, NYGC. The GCCG recently launched Polyethnic-1000, a project to study cancer in ethnically diverse, underserved patient populations, and is also spearheading the multi-institutional Very Rare Cancer Consortium, a research cohort focused on understanding the genetic causes for rare, understudied cancers. In addition, the NYGC is utilizing the application of novel statistical approaches and population-level analyses to major cohorts in cancer genomics.

Researchers from Hackensack Meridian Health’s CDI also are expected to engage in NYGC’s Neuropsychiatric Disease Scientific Working Group. It is led by Dr. Maniatis; Michael Zody, PhD, Scientific Director, Computational Biology; and Thomas Lehner, PhD, MPH, formerly of the National Institute of Mental Health of the National Institutes of Health, who arrives to the NYGC in January in the new position of Scientific Director of Neuropsychiatric Disease Genomics. Reporting to Dr. Maniatis, Dr. Lehner will lead the expansion of the NYGC’s innovative, large-scale whole genome autism research into other neuropsychiatric disease areas, including schizophrenia and bipolar disorder.

Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center and Hackensack Meridian Health join NYGC’s institutional associate members, which include American Museum of Natural History, Hospital for Special Surgery, The New York Stem Cell Foundation, Princeton University, and Roswell Park Cancer Institute, and its 12 institutional founding members: Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, Columbia University, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, The Jackson Laboratory, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New York-Presbyterian Hospital, New York University, Northwell Health, The Rockefeller University, Stony Brook University, and Weill Cornell Medicine.
About the New York Genome Center

The New York Genome Center (NYGC) is an independent, nonprofit academic research institution focused on furthering genomic research that leads to scientific advances and new insights and therapies for patients with neurodegenerative disease, neuropsychiatric disease, and cancer. Leveraging our strengths in whole genome sequencing, genomic analysis, and development of new genomic tools, the NYGC serves as a nexus for collaboration in disease-focused genomic research for the New York medical and academic communities and beyond.

NYGC harnesses the expertise and builds on the combined strengths of our faculty, staff scientists, member institutions, scientific working groups, affiliate members, and industry partners to advance genomic discovery. Central to our scientific mission is an outstanding faculty who lead independent research labs based at the NYGC, and hold joint tenure-track appointments with one of our member institutions.

Institutional founding members of the NYGC are: Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, Columbia University, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, The Jackson Laboratory, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New York-Presbyterian Hospital, New York University, Northwell Health, The Rockefeller University, Stony Brook University, and Weill Cornell Medicine. Institutional associate members are: American Museum of Natural History, Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center, Hackensack Meridian Health, Hospital for Special Surgery, The New York Stem Cell Foundation, Princeton University, and Roswell Park Cancer Institute.

For more information on the NYGC, please visit: http://www.nygenome.org.

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