



Weill Cornell Medicine
Joan and Sanford I. Weill
Department of Medicine



Tenth Annual Weill Department of Medicine Research Retreat

Friday, November 14th, 2025 | 9:00 am–1:30 pm

Zoom Link: <https://weillcornell.zoom.us/j/97868885391>

Keynote Speaker

Ravi Thadhani, MD, MPH

Executive Vice President for Clinical Affairs
Chief Medical Officer, Ceders-Sinai Health System

Organizers

Kyu Rhee, MD, PhD

Professor and Vice Chairman of Research

Gregory Sonnenberg, PhD

Professor and Associate Vice Chairman of Research

Myles Wolf, MD

Professor and Weill Chairman of Medicine

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Professor of Medicine

Martin Shapiro, MD, PhD

Professor of Medicine

Scott T. Tagawa, MD

Professor of Medicine

Jonathan W. Weinsaft, MD

Professor of Medicine

Meeting Description

The Tenth Annual Department of Medicine Research Retreat will provide a distinct forum to bring together a diverse range of established and emerging faculty and trainees and experts in complimentary fields to foster and expand our research efforts. The conference will feature a broad range of faculty with talks reflecting different career stages and research fields.

Participation by young investigators, trainees and residents is strongly encouraged. The central goals of the conference are to:

1) Highlight the various research programs within the Department—specifically to promote interaction between young and senior investigators and exchange of ideas which will shape the future direction of research within the Department

2) Foster the development of the next generation of researchers by encouraging participation of residents and post-doctoral trainees

3) Promote interactions and collaborations amongst our research faculty.

The conference will provide time for formal and informal discussions allowing for widespread participation of conference attendees at various career stages.

The full program and speaker bios are listed in the following pages below.

weillcornell.org

Program

Friday, November 14th, 2025

9:00 am

Introduction | Weill Greenberg 2nd Floor

Dr. Kyu Rhee, MD, PhD

Dr. Gregory Sonnenberg, PhD

Dr. Myles Wolf, MD

9:10 am

Junior Faculty Presentations | Weill Greenberg 2nd Floor

Puja Chebrolu, MD

Assistant Professor of Medicine, Division of General Internal Medicine

"Diabetes without obesity: the understudied risk that affects 74 million people"

9:25 am

Senior Faculty Presentation | Weill Greenberg 2nd Floor

Thangamani Muthukumar, MD

Associate Professor of Medicine, Division of Nephrology and Hypertension

"Kidney Transplant Rejection: Beyond What the Eye Perceives"

Vered Stearns, MD

Professor of Medicine, Division of Hematology and Oncology

"The Preoperative Setting for Systemic Treatment Optimization in Breast Cancer"

10:00 am

Abstract Oral Presentations | Weill Greenberg 2nd Floor

Zainab Motiwala, MBBS

Research Assistant, Division of General Internal Medicine

"Uptake of gestational and postpartum diabetes screening with a community health worker delivered intervention in urban slums in Pune, India"

Jesse Platt, MD, PhD

Assistant Professor of Medicine, Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology

"Proteolethargy is a pathogenic mechanism in chronic disease"

Franco Castillo Tokumori, MD

Instructor in Medicine, Division of Hematology and Oncology

"Functional Annotation of Myeloproliferative Neoplasm Clones Reveals Mutation-Specific Fitness and Differentiation Bias"

10:30 am

Poster Session | Griffis Faculty Club

12:00 pm

Break

12:30 pm

Keynote Lecture | Uris Auditorium

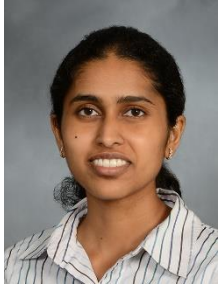
Ravi Thadhani, MD, MPH

Executive Vice President for Clinical Affairs; Chief Medical Officer, Ceders-Sinai Health System

"Diagnostic and Therapeutic Solutions for Preeclampsia: The End of the Beginning"

Our Speakers

Puja Chebrolu, MD is an Assistant Professor of Medicine and Global Health at Weill Cornell Medical College. She completed her MD in Medicine from the Medical College of Georgia, and her Internal Medicine Residency from Washington University in St Louis, MO. She then joined Weill Cornell Medicine as a Hospitalist and Global Health Research Fellow. She also completed a MSc in



Epidemiology from the London School of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene. She is a member of the American Diabetes Association and the American Public Health Association. At WCM, she is a recipient of the Weill Cornell Fund for the Future Award, the Cornell Center for Health Equity Research grant, and the Ritu Banga Healthcare Disparities Research Award. Dr. Chebrolu's research centers around the prevention and treatment of diabetes in pregnant and postpartum Asian women and investigation of novel risk factors for diabetes. She enrolls and studies pregnant and postpartum women in Pune, India and in Queens, NY. She also mentors research trainees at WCM and Cornell University.

Thangamani Muthukumar, MD is an Associate Professor of Medicine at Weill Cornell Medical College. Muthu completed his medical training in India, earning his MBBS from Madras Medical College in Chennai, his MD in Internal Medicine from Stanley Medical College in Chennai, and his DM in Nephrology from the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research in Chandigarh. He served as a faculty member at Madras Medical



College before joining the Suthanthiran Laboratory at Cornell as a research fellow. He subsequently completed his internal medicine residency and nephrology fellowship at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center. He also holds a master's degree in Clinical and Translational Investigation from Cornell University. Dr. Muthukumar's research centers on the molecular mechanisms of kidney transplant rejection and the development of biomarkers. He has published extensively in this field. He is a fellow of the American Society of Nephrology and the American Society of Transplantation. He is an elected member of the American Society for Clinical Investigation. Dr. Muthukumar serves as an Associate Attending Physician at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital. He is also the Associate Director of the Nephrology Fellowship Program and the Associate Chief of the Division of Nephrology at Weill Cornell Medicine.

Vered Stearns, MD joined Weill Cornell Medicine, New York Presbyterian as Professor of Medicine in the Division of Hematology and Oncology in November 2023 after 21 years as a faculty member and leader at the Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins. She is currently the Interim Chief of Breast Medical Oncology and Director of Translational Breast Cancer Research at the Department of Medicine, and



Associate Director for Clinical Research at the Meyer Cancer Center. Dr. Stearns completed a BS equivalent degree at the Tel Aviv University, Sackler Faculty of Medicine. After relocating to the United States, Dr. Stearns transferred to and graduated from the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, Robert Wood Johnson Medical School where she received her MD. She completed a residency in Internal Medicine and clinical and research fellowships in Medical Oncology and translational breast cancer at the Lombardi Cancer Center at the Georgetown University. She was a member of the faculty at Georgetown University and the University of Michigan before her recruitment to Johns Hopkins. Dr. Stearns's long-term goal is to improve individual approaches for the treatment and prevention of breast cancer, and to enhance the wellness of those living with and beyond a cancer diagnosis. She has received numerous grants and awards to support her innovative research. Her work has been presented and published extensively and has already had a positive impact on the lives of many women.

Zainab Motiwala, MBBS is a graduate of Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College, Aligarh Muslim University, India. She is currently a research volunteer at the Deep Griha Society in affiliation with the Weill Cornell Center for Global Health. During her clinical training, she witnessed first-hand the impact of health inequities on mothers and families, which shaped her interest in women's health. These experiences



inspired her to pursue research that bridges clinical practice with public health. At Deep Griha Society, Zainab works on improving access to diabetes screening and follow-up for women in underrepresented urban communities. In addition to her research, she conducts training sessions for community health workers on maternal and reproductive health topics, aiming to strengthen local capacity for women-centered care. Zainab is passionate about advancing global women's health. She aspires to pursue a career in Obstetrics and Gynecology, where she hopes to integrate clinical care, research, and

Our Speakers (continued)

advocacy to improve health outcomes for women worldwide.

Jesse Platt, MD, PhD is an Assistant Professor of Medicine in the Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology and the Joan & Sanford I. Weill Center for Metabolic Health at Weill Cornell Medicine, and a physician-scientist at New York-Presbyterian Hospital. His laboratory asks how changes in cellular compartmentalization reshape the biology of human disease. By studying biomolecular condensates (dynamic,

membraneless organelles that organize key reactions) and the mobility of proteins that move through the cell to execute essential biochemical functions, his group seeks to uncover how these physical processes maintain cellular health and how their disruption drives pathology. Dr. Platt's laboratory has identified two fundamental mechanisms that reveal how cellular compartmentalization is disrupted in disease. First, they defined *condensate dysfunction*, in which membraneless compartments lose integrity and fail to coordinate molecular processes. Second, they discovered *proteolethargy*, a distinct pathology of protein mobility that prevents proteins from reaching their targets, reduces protein function, and undermines cellular organization. Together, these concepts demonstrate that both the integrity of compartments and the mobility of proteins are fundamental to cellular compartmentalization, providing a new framework for explaining long-standing mysteries in cell biology and human disease. His work has been published in *Nature*, *Science*, and *Cell*. Dr. Platt graduated summa cum laude from Princeton University and earned his MD and PhD from the University of Pennsylvania. He completed residency at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania and fellowship at Massachusetts General Hospital, followed by postdoctoral research at the Whitehead Institute. His research has been recognized with awards from the Doris Duke Foundation, Harvard Catalyst, and the NIDDK.

Franco Castillo Tokumori, MD is an Instructor in Medicine within the Division of Hematology and Medical Oncology at Weill Cornell Medicine and Assistant Attending physician at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital. Dr. Castillo Tokumori treats patients with various blood conditions, with a special interest in caring for those with myeloproliferative neoplasms (MPNs), which has been the primary focus of his research. Dr.

Castillo Tokumori received his M.D. from Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia in 2016. After graduating, he worked in his home university's Pediatric Infectious Diseases Laboratory. He then completed his residency

training in Internal Medicine (2022) at the University of South Florida, where he also served as chief resident. He completed his fellowship in Hematology and Medical Oncology (2025) at Weill Cornell Medicine and NewYork-Presbyterian (WCM/NYP). He is a physician-scientist working closely with the Richard T. Silver MD Myeloproliferative Neoplasm (MPN) Center and the Dr. Joseph Scandura Laboratory at Weill Cornell Medicine. Dr. Castillo Tokumori's laboratory and clinical research is focused on developing new methods to measure disease activity in MPNs. His work in single-cell techniques to assess clonal dynamics in MPNs has been recognized by the American Society of Hematology (ASH) in the form of a career development grant.



Keynote Speaker: Ravi Thadhani, MD, PhD serves as the Executive Vice President for Clinical Affairs and Chief Medical Officer for Ceders-Sinai Health System. Prior to this he oversaw Emory University's renowned academic health sciences enterprise which included 11 hospitals and top-tier schools of medicine, nursing, and public health. At Emory, he led a fiscal turn-around of the health system, markedly improving operating margins, and ensuring the delivery of high-quality, patient-centered care focused on supporting the health and well-being of patients around the state. Thadhani came to Emory from Mass General Brigham where he served as chief academic officer and professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School. Thadhani has extensive experience in clinical and translational research. His academic focus has been developing diagnostics and therapeutics for patients with preeclampsia. He and his colleagues developed the first FDA approved test for preeclampsia (May 2023), and they are now working on therapies for this devastating condition. Dr. Thadhani was elected to the National Academy of Medicine in 2025.