

Leigh Ellis, Ph.D.

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BIOSKETCH: I am an Assistant Professor of Pathology at the Brigham & Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School, Boston MA. I am a Principle Investigator within the Department of Oncologic Pathology at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and an Associate Member of the Broad Institute of MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) and Harvard. I received my Ph.D. from the Australian National University and the Peter MacCallum Cancer Center under the supervision of Dr. Ricky Johnstone. I conducted my Postdoctoral studies at Johns Hopkins University and Roswell Park Cancer Center under the mentorship of Dr. Roberto Pili. In 2012, I received a promotion to Assistant Professor of Oncology at Roswell Park and in 2017 was recruited to the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, to conduct prostate cancer research.

SBUR SERVICE: I am an active, dues-paying member of SBUR and currently serve as a member of the SBUR Nominating Committee. In 2015, I served as a session chair at the SBUR annual meeting in Fort Lauderdale, '*Sex, Race and Ethnicity: Impact on Urologic Disease*'. I have been honored to receive a SBUR travel award (2014) and the SBUR Young Investigator Award (2018).

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Work within my laboratory focuses on dissecting underlying genetic/epigenetic mechanisms of aggressive prostate cancer. For this work, we utilize *in vitro* genetically modified human and mouse cell lines and 3D organoid cultures as well as *in vivo* genetically engineered mouse models coupled with innovative technology including next generation sequencing approaches. Our overall goal is to identify novel genomic/epigenomic mechanisms which will lead to discovery of biomarkers and therapeutic targets for clinical testing, with a specific focus on aggressive variant prostate cancer (AVPC). More recently, our research regarding epigenetic therapy in prostate cancer has expanded its focus to clear cell Renal Cell Carcinoma (ccRCC). Our work in prostate cancer has been published in such journals as *Clinical Cancer Research* and *Science*. Most importantly, a major focus of my lab is to also train the next generation of junior scientists that will lead the future of urologic research.

VISION STATEMENT: I attended my first SBUR meeting in 2014 and was extremely impressed by the diverse range of researchers and topics covered. Also, I was immensely inspired by the support for junior investigators. It is very important to never box ourselves in and limit our vision of the full potential of our research. This diversity is crucial – as a prostate cancer researcher, I learn an immense amount from developmental research through to clinical research from within and outside the prostate cancer circle. Maintaining and improving the high caliber of diversity and inclusion of junior investigators will be my major focus. It is very important for junior investigators to feel welcomed to engage with senior investigators so that they can absorb vital information and feel free to ask questions they otherwise may not. The recruitment of new members is also a critical focus – by this not only do we expand our community, but also increase our potential for innovation and provocative thinking – by initiating new conversations and collaborations. Being from another country, I also envision great potential for SBUR to expand on its engagement of international leaders in the field from other countries. Another focus will be on increasing our philanthropic fundraising – to provide more fellowships, travel awards for junior investigators. Overall, by continuing to grow on these focus points, SBUR will further cement a place on the scientific map as a community that fosters the next generation of leaders in urological research around the world.