



24th Annual Research Matters Conference
A Conference of the State Academic Centers
Supported by the Maryland Cigarette Restitution Fund

May 7, 2026

Johns Hopkins University
Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center
Owens Auditorium, 1st Floor Breezeway
1551 Jefferson Street, Baltimore, MD 21205

9:00-9:30am Morning Coffee

9:30-9:40am WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Bill Nelson, MD, PhD, DSc (mfounta3@jhmi.edu)

Professor of Oncology, Johns Hopkins (JH) School of Medicine (SOM)

Director, Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center (SKCCC) at Johns Hopkins University

Taofeek Owonikoko, MD, PhD (areinhard@som.umaryland.edu)

Professor of Medicine, University of Maryland (UM) SOM

Director, Marlene and Stewart Greenebaum Comprehensive Cancer Center (UMGCCC)

9:40-9:45am REMARKS FROM THE MD DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH ON THE CRF PARTNERSHIP AMONG THE STATE AND THE ACADEMIC MEDICAL CENTERS

Ken Lin Tai, MD, MPH

Director & Medical Director

Center for Cancer Prevention & Control

9:45-10:15am 25 YEARS OF MARYLAND CRF: REMEMBERING THE JOURNEY, SHAPING THE FUTURE

John Groopman, PhD

Edyth H. Schoenrich Professor of Preventive Medicine & Interim Chair Department of Environmental Health and Engineering

Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and Whiting School of Engineering

10:15-11:00am TOBACCO LITIGATION AND THE MASTER SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT: A LOOK BACK

Jon Samet, MD, MS

Professor of Epidemiology and Environmental & Occupational Health

University of Colorado School of Public Health

11:00-12:15pm CATALYZING BREAKTHROUGH LUNG CANCER RESEARCH AND EXCEPTIONAL CAREERS

Clement A. Adebamowo, BM, ChB, ScD, FWACS, FACS

Professor, Epidemiology & Public Health
University of Maryland School of Medicine

Niharika Khanna, MBBS, MD, DGO

Professor, Family and Community Medicine
University of Maryland School of Medicine

Victor Velculescu, MD, PhD

Co-Leader of Cancer Genetics & Epigenetics Program, SKCCC
Professor of Oncology, Pathology, Medicine, and Genetic Medicine
Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

Julie Brahmer, MD

The Marilyn Meyerhoff Professor of Thoracic Oncology
Co-Leader of Cancer Immunology Program, SKCCC
Co-Director of the Upper Aerodigestive Cancers Disease Program
Chair, Department of Oncology at JH Bayview Campus
Director, SKCCC at JH Bayview Campus

12:15-1:00pm LUNCH

1:00-2:15pm ADVANCING TOBACCO CONTROL RESEARCH AND LAUNCHING CAREERS

Ana Rule, PhD

Associate Professor, Department of Environmental Health and Engineering
Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health

Johannes Thrul, MS, PhD

Associate Professor, Department of Mental Health
Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health
Joint Appointment in Oncology

Melanie Bennett, PhD

Professor of Psychology, Division Director for the Division of Psychiatric Research Services (DPSR)
Co-leader of the Population Science Research Program
University of Maryland School of Medicine

Craig S. Fryer, DrPH

Associate Professor, Behavioral and Community Health
Brain and Behavior Institute
University of Maryland School of Public Health

2:20-2:30pm WRAP UP

Bill Nelson, MD, PhD, DSc and Taofeek Owonikoko, MD, PhD