



Publications of the Week

Purine Bias in Bacterial Genes Is Driven by Runaway Transcription

First Author: K. Julia Dierksheide | Senior Author: Gene-Wei Li (*pictured*)
Nature Microbiology | Harvard Medical School, Howard Hughes Medical Institute, and MIT



Genes in many bacteria are rich in purine nucleotides (A and G), but the origin of this preference is unclear. Here, using a large-scale reporter assay in *Bacillus subtilis*, researchers show that this purine bias is critical for gene expression. It prevents premature transcription termination in species that exhibit runaway transcription, in which RNA polymerases outpace ribosomes, leaving nascent mRNA exposed to the termination factor Rho. [Abstract](#) | [Press Release](#)

Pharmacological Targeting of IRF4 as a Therapeutic Strategy for Multiple Myeloma

First Authors: Michael Agius and Chen Song | Senior Authors: Irene Ghobrial and Jun Qi (*pictured*)
Nature Chemical Biology | Harvard Medical School, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Massachusetts General Hospital, and the Broad Institute



Interferon regulatory factor 4 (IRF4) is an oncogenic transcription factor (TF) in several hematological malignancies. To date, no pharmacological agents have been developed specifically for IRF4 due to the challenging nature of targeting TFs. Here, researchers first identified (S)-H1, a binder of IRF4, by targeting the SPI1–IRF4 interaction on IRF4’s interferon association domain via high-throughput screening. [Abstract](#) | [Press Release](#)

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Awards

Awards & Recognitions: June 2026

Harvard Medical School



The honors received by Harvard Medical School (HMS) faculty, postdocs, staff, and students have been compiled for June 2026. Dr. Rochelle Walensky (*pictured*), an HMS Professor of Medicine, is one of the many standout awardees. She was given the 2026 Tzedakah Lifetime Achievement Award by the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center. [Read More](#)

Fellowship Award Highlights Melanie Barbini’s Mastery in Research, Clinical Studies

UMass Chan Medical School



Melanie Barbini (*pictured, left*), an MD/PhD student at UMass Chan Medical School, is navigating the intersection of medicine and research with the assistance of her mentors, Chancellor David McManus and Dr. Dorothy Schafer (*right*). Barbini is the recent recipient of a three-year predoctoral fellowship award from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. [Read More](#)

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Local News

Dana-Farber Investigators Report Promising Results from Phase 2 Study of Targeted Therapy for Rare Bile Duct Cancer

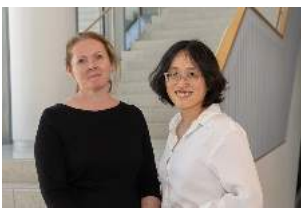
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute



Results of the ongoing eNRGy trial, a single-arm, multicenter, global phase 2 clinical trial evaluating zenocutuzumab in solid tumors positive for *Neuregulin 1* (*NRG1*) gene fusions, reported manageable side effects and clinically meaningful efficacy in previously treated patients with advanced NRG1-positive cholangiocarcinoma. Dr. James Cleary (*pictured*) led the eNRGy trial. [Read More](#)

UMass Chan Research Shows Exciting Step Forward in Innate Immune Stimulation and Vaccine Platform Development

UMass Chan Medical School



Research by Dr. Katherine Fitzgerald (*pictured, left*) and Wei Zhan (*right*) in collaboration with Elicio Therapeutics shows potential for increasing vaccine efficacy. The findings, published in *Science Advances*, have the potential to transform otherwise weak vaccine adjuvants into powerful innate immune system stimulators, opening new avenues for treatment of infections and cancer. [Read More](#)

Dr. Naoshige Uchida to Lead MCB as New Department Chair

Harvard University Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology (MCB)



After nearly two decades at Harvard, neuroscientist Dr. Naoshige Uchida (*pictured*) is preparing to take on a new role: Chair of MCB. Dr. Uchida, whose research has helped illuminate how the brain learns from experience through dopamine-based neural circuits, will assume leadership of one of Harvard’s largest and most diverse life sciences departments at a time of both opportunity and challenge for academic research. [Read More](#)

Idris Lab Welcomes HGHI Visiting Scholar Dr. Bartholomew Ondigo

Ragon Institute



In May, the Idris Lab welcomed Dr. Bartholomew Ondigo (*pictured, right*), a visiting scholar from Kenya, to assist in Dr. Azza Idris’s (*left*) ongoing research regarding the effects of malaria on pregnant women. Dr. Ondigo, a Senior Lecturer and Principal Investigator at Egerton University in Kenya, was selected as the Harvard Global Health Institute (HGHI) 2025–2026 Visiting Research Scholar. [Read More](#)

Dana-Farber Research Supports FDA Approval of New Therapy for “Double-Positive” Metastatic Breast Cancer

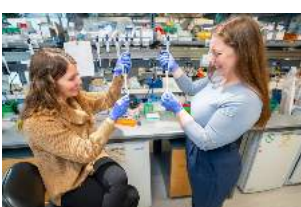
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute



The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved a new therapy regimen for patients with “double-positive” metastatic breast cancer based on results of the phase 3 PATINA study led by Dr. Otto Metzger (*pictured*). The PATINA trial demonstrated that the addition of the CDK 4/6 inhibitor palbociclib to standard therapy in patients with metastatic breast cancer resulted in a more than 15-month improvement in progression-free survival. [Read More](#)

The Wyss Institute’s 2026-2027 Validation Projects

Wyss Institute



Each year, the Wyss Institute’s Validation Project program identifies technologies that are ready to move beyond the discovery and into the validation phase. Through dedicated funding, technical resources, business development support, market research, and engagement with clinicians, investors, industry experts, and key opinion leaders, the program helps research teams de-risk high-impact innovations on their path to launching them out of the lab. [Read More](#)

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📅 Upcoming Events in Boston

July 15 7:00 PM	Mass Innovation Nights Museum of Science
July 23 8:00 AM	MALSI Day 2026 The Engine
August 13 7:00 PM	Poetry Night – Where Science Speaks in Verse Museum of Science
October 6 - 7 9:00 AM	FASI 10: Catalyst for a Cure – The Food Allergy Science Innovation Summit Broad Institute
October 18 - 21 8:00 AM	The Medtech Conference 2026 Boston Convention and Exhibition Center

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📁 Science Jobs in Boston

- Research Associate II**
Sanofi
- Pathology Research Scientist**
Vertex Pharmaceuticals
- Research Tech II**
Mass General Brigham
- Research Technician, Majzner Lab**
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute
- Research Assistant II, Chatila Lab**
Boston Children’s Hospital

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