



Aune, Gregory

Gregory J. Aune, MD, PhD is the Stephanie Edlund Distinguished Professor of Pediatric Cancer Research and a St. Baldrick's Foundation Scholar. His experience in pediatric cancer spans over 29 years and encompasses his own patient experiences, research in experimental therapeutics, clinical care of pediatric oncology patients, and childhood cancer advocacy. His interest in pediatric oncology began at age 16, when he was diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma. While fortunate to survive, the experiences he encountered as a patient initiated a path towards a research and clinical career aimed at developing less toxic chemotherapy regimens. His experience as a long-term survivor included open-heart surgery at age 35 to replace his aortic valve and bypass three blocked coronary arteries that were damaged by his teenage cancer therapies. This life-changing event initiated his research interest in cardiac disease. His training to become a successful physician scientist and pediatric oncologist has included time spent at some of the most well-respected oncology institutions in the United States including, M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, the National Cancer Institute, and Johns Hopkins Hospital.

In the laboratory setting, Dr. Aune has a wide range of experience in the laboratory approaches to investigate tumor biology and experimental therapeutics. Most recently he has applied this existing knowledge to both the in vitro and in vivo studies of the cardiovascular system from the level of the cardiac fibroblast to global cardiac function. His laboratory has successfully developed a novel pediatric mouse model of anthracycline-induced cardiac toxicity. Dr. Aune directs the Greehey Children's Cancer Research Institute Shared Resource for Cardiac Function Assessment. He and his laboratory team are experts in the evaluation of cardiac function in mice by echocardiography, including advanced methods of analysis, such as ventricular strain. Collectively, expertise in these areas is supported by recent publications and the receipt of over half a million dollars annually in extramural funding from the St. Baldrick's Foundation, Hyundai Corporation, the Pablove Foundation, the National Cancer Institute, and the National Institute on Aging.

Dr. Aune is the director of survivorship research for the South Texas Pediatric Cancer Survivorship program at University Hospital, San Antonio, Texas. In this role, he has established a cohort of long-term survivors of pediatric cancer. He serves as Co-principal investigator and clinical director of the first investigator-initiated survivorship study in the South Texas region. This study is assessing the utility of using cardiac MRI to detect subclinical cardiac disease in survivors and is funded by the San Antonio Clinical and Translational Science Award. To date, 32 patients have been enrolled and MRI evaluation is ongoing. His expertise in the clinical arena is further supported by active participation in national task forces focusing on the cardiac effects of chemotherapy and radiation. (National Cancer Institute Community Cardiotoxicity Task Force and the Children's Oncology Cardiometabolic Task Force).

Finally, Dr. Aune is a national leader in childhood cancer advocacy efforts. In San Antonio, he has been a leader in local fundraising and awareness efforts. Since 2010, he has spearheaded efforts by the St. Baldrick's Foundation and For the Kids Dance Marathon at the University of Texas San Antonio that have raised over \$1 million for childhood cancer patients and research efforts. In September 2014, his appointment to the National Cancer Institute Council of Research Advocates (NCRA) was announced by NCI Director Dr. Harold Varmus at a White House briefing on childhood cancer. <http://childhoodcancer-mccaul.house.gov/press-release/caucus-applauds-nci-naming-pediatric-oncologist-itscouncil-research-advocates>

In addition, Dr. Aune is a policy advisor for the National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship, serves on the Board of Directors of the American Childhood Cancer Organization, is a member of the St. Baldrick's Foundation National Advocacy Committee, and serves on the scientific advisory board for the Canines-N-Kids foundation.

In May 2015, Dr. Aune addressed the 68th World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland and called on the World Health Organization to make childhood cancer a top global health priority.