SABCS HONORS EA VICE CHAIR JOSEPH A. SPARANO, MD

Joseph A. Sparano, MD, will receive the William L. McGuire Memorial Lecture Award at the 2019 San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium (SABCS), to be held Dec. 10-14. Joe is being recognized for a career distinguished by leadership, collaboration, and practice-changing achievements in clinical and translational breast cancer research that have improved the lives of patients.

The McGuire Award was established in 1992 to honor the late William L. McGuire, MD, who, along with Charles A. Coltman, MD, founded SABCS in 1977.

A member of EA since 1991, and currently our Vice Chair, Joe is Associate Director for Clinical Research at the Albert Einstein Cancer Center, Associate Chairman in the Department of Oncology at Montefiore Medical Center, and Professor of Medicine and Women's Health at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, a main member institution of EA since 1972. He has been Co-Principal Investigator and contact PI for the Montefiore Minority Underserved NCORP since 2014.

Joe has played a key role in the design and implementation of numerous EA clinical trials. Notably, he served as study chair for the recently reported TAILORx trial. This NCI-sponsored, multi-center trial of 10,273 patients with early-stage breast cancer found that most do not benefit from chemotherapy. The data confirmed that using the 21-gene expression test to assess the risk of cancer recurrence can spare many women unnecessary treatment. The findings, publicized around the world, immediately changed clinical practice.

Joe also led an EA effort funded by the Komen Foundation and Breast Cancer Research Foundation to demonstrate use of a simple blood test to detect circulating tumor cells. This test may potentially identify women at high risk for having a recurrence of breast cancer five or more years after their initial treatment. The data encouraged the NCI Breast Cancer Steering Committee to undertake further study.

Over the course of his career, Joe's research on biomarkers of recurrence and prognosis has moved the field forward and led to more effective, personalized treatments for cancer patients. Among his peers, he is lauded for his organizational skills and recognized as a committed mentor. In 2001, for example, he initiated the Young Investigator Symposium, now an annual event, that has introduced more than 200 young clinical, translational, and basic cancer research scientists to EA.

Joe's award lecture, "What Would Bill Think?", will be a major event at SABCS. The lecture takes place on Wednesday, December 11th at 11:15 AM Central Time. Joe plans to review progress made in breast cancer management over his career, and outline remaining challenges.