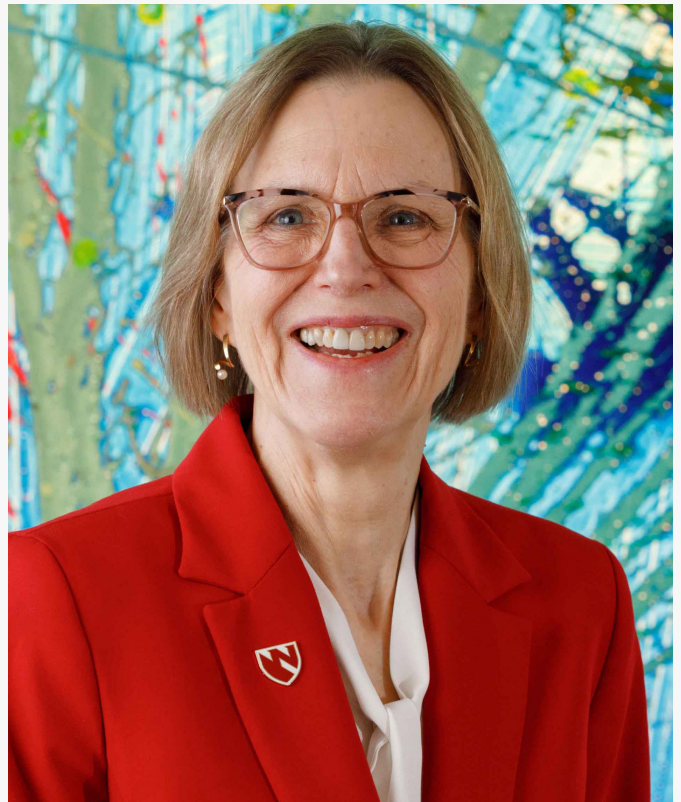


Dr. Sweasy to lead national effort tackling rural cancer as new AACI president

Joann Sweasy, PhD, became president of the Association of American Cancer Institutes on Oct. 21.

OMAHA, NE, UNITED STATES, October 22, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Joann Sweasy, PhD, director of the National Cancer Institute-designated [Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center](#), will begin her two-year term as president of the [Association of American Cancer Institutes](#) (AACI) with a bold vision to confront one of the nation's most pressing health disparities: rural cancer care. The Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center is Nebraska's only NCI-designated center and one of only 73 in the nation.

In her first major initiative, Dr. Sweasy will spearhead a nationwide campaign to address the alarming rates of cancer morbidity and mortality in rural and frontier communities.



Joann Sweasy, PhD, director, Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center

"While only 14–20% of Americans live in rural areas, these populations face significantly higher cancer death rates due to limited access to prevention, treatment and clinical trials," Dr. Sweasy said, speaking at the AACI/Cancer Center Administrators Forum annual meeting on Oct. 20. She began her term as president on Oct. 21.

Her plan calls for a collaborative, data-driven approach that will unite AACI's more than 100 member institutions across the U.S. and Canada. Key goals include:

- Mapping cancer service access and outcomes nationwide
- Creating a national profile of rural cancer burden
- Analyzing social determinants of health in rural cancer care
- Hosting a 2027 Rural Cancer Summit to share best practices
- Establishing a permanent oversight committee with rural community voices

"As part of the national team working to lower cancer rates and improve treatments, every

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This initiative will empower institutions to break down barriers and bring life-saving care to underserved regions.”

Dr. Joann Sweasy

cancer center has a role to play,” Dr. Sweasy said. “This initiative will empower institutions to break down barriers and bring life-saving care to underserved regions.”

Dr. Sweasy is a globally recognized expert in DNA repair and cancer genetics, with over 25 years of NIH-funded research. Prior to joining UNMC, Dr. Sweasy led the University of Arizona Cancer Center to renewal of its prestigious National Cancer Institute comprehensive

designation.

She also serves as director of the Eppley Institute for Research in Cancer and Allied Diseases at UNMC.

AACI represents over 100 premier academic and freestanding cancer centers in the United States and Canada, advancing cancer care through advocacy, collaboration and education.

As Breast Cancer Awareness Month ends and Lung Cancer Awareness Month begins, Dr. Sweasy is available to speak to media about the effects of these and other cancers on rural populations and steps that must be taken to address them.

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