
RSNA Press Release

RSNA Announces Plenary Program for 2021 Annual Meeting

Released: June 24, 2021

OAK BROOK, Ill. (June 24, 2021) — The Radiological Society of North America (RSNA) has announced its plenary session lineup for *RSNA 2021: Redefining Radiology*.

The opening session will be held in Arie Crown Theater at McCormick Place on Sunday, Nov. 28, at 4 p.m. Central time (CT). Other meeting activities will begin Sunday morning, including science and education sessions and the Technical Exhibits.

In her President's Address during the opening session, Mary C. Mahoney, M.D., will outline what redefining radiology means to her.

“The pandemic has uncovered myriad issues in our profession, from inequities in patient access to care to inefficiencies in our workflows,” Dr. Mahoney said. “It would be a wasted opportunity to revert to previous operations unreflectively. Rather, we need innovative ways to conduct our work more effectively and empathically.”

Dr. Mahoney will discuss new ideas and technologies that are redefining what it means to be a radiologist today. It is especially critical to engage in discovering global solutions to challenges facing the medical imaging community while maintaining quality-based and patient-focused care, according to Dr. Mahoney. Equally important, she says, is moving forward with a mindset of collaboration, civility, inclusiveness and diversity.

Dr. Mahoney is RSNA president and the Benjamin Felson Endowed Chair and Professor of Radiology at the University of Cincinnati (UC) College of Medicine. Since 2016, Dr. Mahoney has been chief of imaging services at UC Health in Cincinnati and is on the medical staff of several Cincinnati area institutions, including UC Medical Center, University Pointe Surgical Hospital, and West Chester Hospital in West Chester, Ohio.

A nationally recognized proponent and staunch advocate of patient-centered radiology, Dr. Mahoney has been involved in numerous initiatives campaigning to encourage and facilitate radiologists' meaningful engagement in the patient experience.

James Merlino, M.D., will continue the conversation during the opening session and discuss the strategies employed at Cleveland Clinic to create a state-of-the-art patient experience, and how those methods can be adopted by radiologists everywhere. Chief clinical transformation officer at Cleveland Clinic and a renowned expert in improving the patient experience, Dr. Merlino oversees the Office of Patient Experience, Enterprise Safety and Quality and the Office of Continuous Improvement. He is the author of *Service Fanatics: How to Build Superior Patient Experience the Cleveland Clinic Way*, published in 2014.

The COVID-19 pandemic has heightened the need for quality health care at an affordable cost that is accessible to all, according to James A. Brink, M.D., radiologist-in-chief at the Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) and the Juan M. Taveras Professor of Radiology at Harvard Medical School. At his Monday plenary, he will discuss the importance of highlighting the impact of radiology services on patient outcomes and quality of life while demonstrating a professional responsibility for appropriate use of medical imaging and image-guided services based on evidence-based guidelines.

“If we choose to enter this arena wholeheartedly,” Dr. Brink said, “our future state is one in which health care stakeholders worldwide understand the critical role that radiology plays in advancing quality care at an affordable cost for disease prevention, detection, management, therapy and monitoring.”

RSNA’s popular Image Interpretation Session will be held Monday afternoon. This cross-disciplinary session gives attendees the opportunity to test their knowledge beyond their areas of expertise, as they follow along with a panel of experts identifying abnormal findings critical to making accurate diagnoses.

Radiologists are increasingly aware of the importance of diversity and inclusivity in the workplace in order to create a welcoming environment for both professionals and patients. Tuesday’s plenary session features Michele Johnson, M.D., professor of radiology and biomedical imaging, professor of neurosurgery and director of interventional neuroradiology at Yale Medicine, and Christine Porath, Ph.D., tenured professor at Georgetown University’s McDonough School of Business, author of *Mastering Community* (forthcoming) and *Mastering Civility*, and co-author of *The Cost of Bad Behavior*. Drs. Johnson and Porath will share actionable ways in which radiologists can help to ensure professional, equitable patient care and a thriving work environment.

RSNA will also debut a new interactive plenary session on Wednesday featuring a team-based competition in an exciting game show format.

Radiation oncology continues to rank among the least diverse specialties by gender and race/ethnicity and trends in Black radiation oncology faculty representation show steady declines since 2006, according to plenary speaker Iris C. Gibbs, M.D., professor of radiation oncology and neurosurgery and associate dean of M.D. admissions at Stanford Medicine.

“These trends are not likely to improve until strategies to confront structural racism, provide access to early exposure to the field, improve opportunities for leadership and eliminate other barriers to entry are addressed,” Dr. Gibbs said. She will discuss strategies to eliminate these barriers during her Wednesday afternoon presentation.

Thursday’s RSNA/AAPM Symposium will highlight the successful collaboration between radiologists and physicists toward technical developments and clinical translations in medical imaging. In the session moderated by Guang-Hong Chen, Ph.D., speakers Cynthia McCollough, Ph.D., and Joel G. Fletcher, M.D., will discuss the importance of imaging technology innovation to today’s radiology practice and providing optimum patient care.

“With the ever increasing technological complexity in medical imaging including the advent of artificial intelligence in radiology, the partnership between radiology and medical physics/engineering is even more important and it needs to be further cultivated and enhanced in next generation of radiologists and medical physicists,” Dr. Chen said.

Dr. Chen is a tenured professor of medical physics and radiology at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, chair of the RSNA Physics Sub-Specialty Committee and deputy editor of *Medical Physics*. Dr. McCollough is a professor of biomedical engineering and medical physics at Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Science in Rochester, Minnesota, and a past president of the American Association of Physicists in Medicine (AAPM). Dr. Fletcher is a professor of radiology at Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Science in Rochester, Minnesota, where he serves as co-founder and medical director of the CT Clinical Innovation Center.

[RSNA 2021](#) will be held November 28 to December 2, at McCormick Place in Chicago. Registration opens July 21.

###

RSNA is an association of radiologists, radiation oncologists, medical physicists and related scientists promoting excellence in patient care and health care delivery through education, research and technologic innovation. The Society is based in Oak Brook, Illinois. ([RSNA.org](#))