

2026 RNA Institute Annual Symposium
Sunday, March 15th 2026

Venue: Campus Center Ballroom

3:00 PM – 3:50 PM	Registration & Coffee
Opening Session Moderator: Kate Leamy, PhD Siena University	
4:00 PM – 4:10 PM	Day 1: Welcome Remarks Andy Berglund (Director, The RNA Institute) Jeanette Altarriba (Dean CAS, UAlbany) –
4:10 PM – 4:15 PM	Keynote Introduction: Kate Leamy, PhD, Siena University
4:15 PM – 5:00 PM	Keynote Speaker 1: Philip Bevilacqua, PhD, Penn State University <i>Computational Approaches to Uncover Insights into RNA Biology</i>
5:05 PM – 5:20 PM	Selected Speaker 1: Dylan Ehrbar, The University at Albany <i>Aging is Characterized by Significant Shifts in tRNA Modifications and Codon Usage Bias and Altered Translation</i>
5:20 PM – 5:35 PM	Selected Speaker 2: Abby Manning, The University of Rochester <i>Characterization and Function of a Novel Integrator-associated Complex</i>
5:40 PM – 6:00 PM	Invited Speaker 1: Zhangli Su, PhD, University of Alabama at Birmingham <i>Friend or Foe: TRMT6/61A in Cellular Stress and Human Disease</i>
6:05 PM – 6:30 PM	Poster Lightning Talks (10 x 2 minutes)
6:30 PM – 8:00 PM	Reception

Each keynote speaker has 45 minutes = 40 min plus 5 for questions
 With 20 minutes for invited speakers = 18 min plus 2 for questions
 With 15 minutes for all other speakers = 13 min plus 2 for questions



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**RNA RESEARCH
 & THERAPEUTICS**

2026 RNA Institute Annual Symposium

Monday, March 16th 2026

Venue: Campus Center Ballroom

8:00 AM – 8:50 AM	Breakfast & Registration
Session 1	
Moderator: Cara Pager, PhD, The University at Albany	
8:50 AM – 9:00 AM	Day 2: Welcome Remarks
9:00 AM – 9:05 AM	Keynote Speaker Introduction: Cara Pager, PhD, The University at Albany
9:05 AM – 9:50 AM	Keynote Speaker 2: Brenda Bass, PhD, University of Utah <i>Discriminating Self and Nonself dsRNA During Antiviral Defense</i>
9:50 AM – 10:10 AM	Invited speaker 2: Hachung Chung, PhD, Columbia University Medical Center <i>Self-RNA Sensing by Our Immune System in Health and Disease.</i>
10:10 AM – 10:30 AM	Coffee Break
10:30 AM – 10:50 AM	Invited Speaker 3: Steve Bonilla, PhD, The Rockefeller University <i>Quantitative Dissection of Dynamic RNA 3D Ensembles in Viral Replication</i>
10:50 AM – 11:10 AM	Invited Speaker 4: Melinda Larsen, PhD, The University at Albany
11:10 AM – 11:25 AM	Selected Speaker 3: Andrew Munoz Gamba, The University at Albany <i>Phenotypic and Genotypic Signatures of Adaptation of Zika Virus After Serial Passaging in Mosquito and Mammalian Hosts</i>
11:30 AM – 12:00 PM	Poster Lightning Talks (10 x 2 minutes)
12:00 PM – 1:30 PM	Mentoring and Networking Lunch
Session 2	
Moderator:	
1:30 PM - 1:50 PM	Invited Speaker 5: Diana Dou, PhD, Duke University <i>A Complex Issue: When 2 X's need to XIST</i>
1:55 PM - 2:15 PM	Invited Speaker 6: Michael Breen, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai <i>Dynamic RNA Editing in the Human Brain: Disease, Development, and Therapeutic Opportunity</i>
2:20 PM – 2:35 PM	Selected Speaker 4: Jacen Emerson, University of Michigan <i>Alternative Splicing as a Mechanism of Oligodendrocyte Impairments in Spinocerebellar Ataxia Type 3</i>
2:40 PM – 3:00 PM	Invited Speaker 7: Young Mee Jung, PhD, Korea Institute of Science and Technology <i>Deep-UV Resonance Raman and Two-Dimensional Correlation Spectroscopic Analysis of mRNA Encapsulation in Lipid Nanoparticle Therapeutics</i>
3:00 PM – 4:00 PM	Transition to Poster Session/Dinner at NY State Museum
Session 3	
Poster Session and Dinner	
4:00 PM – 5:15 PM	Poster Session 1 Location: NY State Museum
5:15 PM - 6:30 PM	Poster Session 2 Location: NY State Museum
4:30 PM - 6:30 PM	Cocktail Hour Location: NY State Museum
6:30 PM – 8:00 PM	Dinner at NY State Museum

2026 RNA Institute Annual Symposium

Tuesday, March 17th 2026

Venue: Campus Center Ballroom

8:00 AM – 8:50 AM	Registration & Breakfast
Session 4	
Moderator: Eric Wagner, PhD, University of Rochester	
9:00 AM – 9:05 AM	Keynote Speaker 3 Introduction – Eric Wagner, PhD, University of Rochester
09:05 AM – 9:50 AM	Keynote Speaker 3: Doug Anderson, PhD, University of Rochester <i>The Science and Therapeutics of RNA Stitching</i>
9:55 AM – 10:15 AM	Invited Speaker 8: Monica Pillon, PhD, University of Buffalo <i>Eukaryotic Ribonucleases in Gene Regulation</i>
10:15 AM – 10:35 AM	Invited Speaker 9: Nicole Martinez, PhD, Stanford University <i>Regulatory Features Driving Pseudouridine Synthase Activity</i>
10:35 AM – 10:55 AM	Coffee Break
Session 5	
Moderator:	
11:00 AM – 11:20 AM	Invited Speaker 10: Sezen Meydan, PhD, Vanderbilt University <i>Landscape of Ribosome Collisions During Chemotherapeutic Stress</i>
11:20 AM – 11:35 PM	Selected Speaker 5: Kerry Brown, PhD, Department of Health, Wadsworth Center <i>Use your SCULL! Short ORFs Deliver Ribosomes to Downstream Genes in Mycobacteria.</i>
11:35 AM – 11:50 PM	Selected Speaker 6: Xuhang Liu, PhD, Roswell Park <i>Machine Learning-based Small-RNA Liquid Biopsy Enables Accurate Classification of Benign, Malignant, and Metastatic Breast Diseases.</i>
12:00 PM – 01:15 PM	Networking Lunch
Session 6	
Moderator: Long Zhang, PhD, The University at Albany	
01:20 PM – 01:25 PM	Keynote Speaker Introduction: Long Zhang, PhD, The University at Albany
01:25 PM – 02:10 PM	Keynote Speaker 4: Samie Jaffrey, PhD, Weill Cornell Medicine <i>New modifications of mRNA heads and tails</i>
02:10 PM – 02:25 PM	Selected Speaker 7: Jack Schwartz, University of Rochester <i>Regulation of Insulin Receptor Translation by a Conserved uORF</i>
02:25 PM – 02:45 PM	Invited Speaker 11: Lluís Ribas, PhD, Institute for Research in Biomedicine (IRB) <i>Highly Transcribed Human tRNA Genes are Hotspots for Somatic Mutations That Corrupt the Genetic Code in Cancer and Aging</i>
02:45 PM – 03:05 PM	Coffee Break
03:05 PM – 03:20 PM	Selected Speaker 8: Jack Dowling, The University of Pennsylvania <i>The Adenovirus Splicing Regulator L4-33K Coordinates Viral Splicing With Genome Replication</i>
03:20 PM – 03:35 PM	Selected Speaker 9: Soneya Majumdar, Department of Health, Wadsworth Center <i>A Novel Actinobacteria-Specific Ribosome Hibernation Factor in Mycobacterium tuberculosis</i>
03:35 PM – 03:55 PM	Invited Speaker 12: Mehmet Yigit, PhD, The University at Albany