



## A Tribute to Cancer Treatment in San Antonio

### Speaker Bios

#### Luncheon Keynote

**Jeff Flowers, MBA, FACHE, Chief Executive Officer, UT Health San Antonio Multispecialty & Research Hospital**

Jeff is leading one of the most transformative healthcare projects in South Texas—a state-of-the-art hospital that’s redefining how we deliver complex care across the region. He will highlight the hospital’s innovative integration of clinical care, technology and research, and how it advances UT Health San Antonio’s mission to serve South Texas. With decades of executive leadership and a bold vision for the future, Jeff will share what this milestone means for San Antonio and beyond. Don’t miss this rare opportunity to hear from a leader shaping the future of health care in our region.

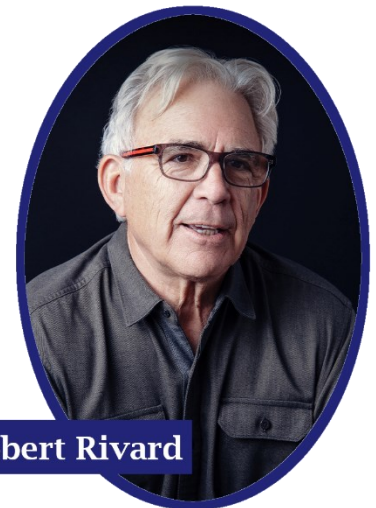


**Jeff Flowers**

#### **Robert Rivard, Host, bigcitysmalltown**

Robert “Bob” Rivard is a veteran American journalist whose 46-year career has taken him across Texas, Latin America, and beyond. He co-founded the Rivard Report (later named the San Antonio Report) with his wife, Monika Maeckle, in 2012, building it into the city’s leading nonprofit news organization before retiring in 2022.

Bob has worked for five Texas newspapers, beginning his career on the border at the Brownsville Herald, then moving to the Corpus Christi Caller, the Dallas Times-Herald, and later serving as a foreign correspondent and chief of correspondents for Newsweek. He



**Robert Rivard**

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returned to Texas as senior editor of the San Antonio Light before becoming executive editor of the San Antonio Express-News (1997–2011).

His journalism has earned widespread recognition, including being named Editor & Publisher’s “Editor of the Year” in 2000 and receiving the prestigious Maria Moors Cabot Award from Columbia University for his reporting on Latin America and the U.S.-Mexico border.

He is the author of *Trail of Feathers*, a nonfiction book chronicling the disappearance and murder of journalist Philip True in Mexico’s Sierra Madre. The book, published by Public Affairs in 2005, was widely reviewed, excerpted in *Esquire*, and selected by *People* magazine as one of five recommended nonfiction works that year.

Bob now hosts *bigcitysmalltown*, a podcast featuring the people shaping San Antonio’s future. He and Monika live in Southtown, where she runs the Texas Butterfly Ranch blog and previously founded the annual San Antonio Monarch Butterfly and Pollinator Festival. They have two adult children, Nicolas, a designer and artist, and Alexander, director of education for the Alamo Trust.

### Afternoon Program

#### **Anand B Karnad, MD, Professor, Castella Endowed Professor in Aging, Karen Lee and David Zachry Endowed Chair in Women’s Cancer**

Dr. Anand Karnad received his medical degree from Madras Medical College at the University of Madras (Chennai), in India. Dr. Karnad is Chief, Division of Hematology-Oncology at the Department of Medicine, and UT Health San Antonio MD Anderson Cancer Center and has been Professor of Medicine here since 2004. He has been an active investigator for the National Cancer Institute Clinical Trials for two decades, including trials designed to prevent and treat a range of cancers. He is principal investigator for the National Clinical Trials System (NCTN) SWOG trials at the Cancer Center. He is Program Director of the Hematology-Oncology Fellowship Training Program and has trained fellows since 1989. His



**Anand Karnad**

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clinical research interests include sarcoma, hematological disorders, and geriatric hematology-oncology. He holds the Castella endowed chair in aging. His career goal is to improve the care of patients with blood disorders and cancer through accelerating the completion of clinical trials and in helping to train the next generation of hematologists and oncologists.

## Afternoon Panel

### Adrienne Mendoza, SVP of BioBridge Global and COO of BBG Advanced Therapies

Adrienne is an accomplished operations and quality leader in the healthcare and life sciences industry, with more than two decades of experience driving process improvement, regulatory compliance, and innovation in blood, tissue, and cell therapy organizations.

Adrienne began her career at the American Red Cross in San Diego, where she worked in hospital services before moving into quality assurance. Later, Adrienne joined StemCyte, one of the largest umbilical cord blood banks with global operations where she helped develop industry standards. Adrienne later served in a quality leadership role at Bachem, a global pharmaceutical contract



Adrienne Mendoza

manufacturer. There, she led quality initiatives and strengthened collaboration between teams, further refining her approach to organizational design and executive leadership.

In 2016, Adrienne joined BioBridge Global in San Antonio as Director of Quality Assurance at QualTex Laboratories. She went on to form the Global Quality team as Vice President, fostering the adoption of best practices across the organization. In 2022, she was named Chief Operating Officer of South Texas Blood & Tissue, one of BioBridge Global's key subsidiaries.

Under her leadership, the organization continues to expand its role in supporting advanced therapies and delivering high-quality blood, tissue, and cellular products to patients across Texas and beyond. Adrienne brings to her role a deep commitment to continuous learning, innovation, and mission-driven service in healthcare.

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**Kate Lathrop, MD**

**Associate Professor, UT Health San Antonio Breast Oncology, Mays Cancer Center**

Dr. Kate Lathrop is a breast medical oncologist at the Mays Cancer Center at UT Health San Antonio. She is deeply involved in the clinical care of patients with breast cancer, as well as translational research focused on early-stage breast cancer therapeutics. In addition to her research and clinical work, Dr. Lathrop holds multiple teaching and educational roles at UT Health San Antonio. She also serves as the program director for the San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium—the world’s largest annual international conference dedicated to breast cancer research, treatment and patient care.



**Kate Lathrop**

**Dhiresha Kudithipudi**

**Founding Director | [MATRIX](#) AI Consortium & [NUAI](#) Research Lab  
Professor | McDermott Endowed Chair | ECE/CS | UTSA Dr.**

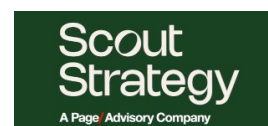
**Dhiresha Kudithipudi** is a leading researcher in neuromorphic computing and energy-efficient artificial intelligence systems. She earned her Ph.D. in Electrical and Computer Engineering from **The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA)** in 2006, becoming the first graduate of the program and recipient of its Outstanding Ph.D. Research Award. She also holds an M.S. in Computer Engineering from **Wright State University**, where she was first introduced to neural networks.

Dr. Kudithipudi directs the **Matrix: AI Consortium for Human Well-Being** at UTSA, bringing together researchers from UTSA, UT Health San Antonio, Southwest Research Institute, and



**Dhiresha Kudithipudi**

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Texas Biomedical Research Institute. The consortium's mission is to advance transformative, interdisciplinary AI research focused on improving human life.

Her research spans **neuromorphic computing, bio-inspired algorithms, AI accelerators, and novel computing substrates** like memristors. Her team's work in brain-inspired AI has been featured in the *IEEE Signal Processing Magazine*, and she frequently contributes to national discussions through **DOD and AFOSR roundtables**, technical workshops, and policy briefings on AI and workforce development.

A strong advocate for diversity in tech, Dr. Kudithipudi led the **Google CS4HS** program for three years and currently heads **Project Lovelace**, sponsored by the Xilinx WIT Foundation, which supports women pursuing careers in AI.

She has consulted for AI startups and worked with **New York state policymakers** and **Capitol Hill roundtables** to shape bipartisan AI R&D strategies. Most recently, Matrix has partnered with **MISI Dreamport** and **BigBear.ai** to explore the intersection of AI and quantum computing.

Dr. Kudithipudi's work is paving the way for AI systems that think more like humans—efficiently, responsibly, and with a focus on real-world impact.

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