



Donald P. Lombardi, MD
STSI KL2 Scholar

Dr. Donald Lombardi majored in biochemistry at Bowdoin and did research at Harvard Medical School during the summers of his undergraduate and medical school years (M.D., University of Rochester School of Medicine). He was trained in Internal Medicine at the University of Michigan when Eric Topol, M.D. was on the faculty in the cardiology division and went to complete a Medical Oncology Fellowship at the National Cancer Institute (NCI). He also completed post-doctoral research in molecular genetics at the NCI and in molecular biology at the NIEHS. His most recent faculty position was at Washington University School of Medicine and Barnes-Jewish Hospital in St. Louis.

When asked why he specialized in medical oncology, the answer was simple: “For me, cancer is personal. My mother, sister and paternal grandmother had breast cancer, while my father had testicular cancer. When I see a cancer patient, I bring a personal sense of duty and passion that comes from my own experience with close family members.” As to why he enrolled in the Master's Program at STSI/TSRI, Dr. Lombardi has a ‘best of breed’ philosophy with education, research training, and patient care. He came to STSI/TSRI in order to “work with the most talented and creative researchers who are discovering the next generation of treatments in cancer medicine.”

Dr. Lombardi’s current project, mentored by Benjamin F. Cravatt, Ph.D. at TSRI, focuses on the role of metabolism in cancer progression. With the obesity and diabetes reaching epidemic proportions in the United States, there is a need to understand why some tumors, such as breast and prostate cancers, are more common and more aggressive in patients with obesity, diabetes and other aspects of the metabolic syndrome. The Cravatt laboratory uses state-of-the-art activity-based proteomics and metabolomics to address the most important questions in the field. Dr. Lombardi plans to eventually write his own investigator-initiated translational protocols to bridge the basic science and clinic worlds to bring the revolution in biology and medicine to his patients in the clinic.