

KAI International Meeting 2020 Virtual

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Name	Benjamin Youngblood	Photo 
Affiliation	St Jude Children's Research Hospital	
Official Position	Associate Member	
Education	Biochemistry PhD , Immunology Postdoctoral Fellowship	
Major Career (less than 5 items)	2006-2012 Post-Doctoral Research Fellow, Microbiology and Immunology, Emory University 2012-2014 Assistant Professor (Research Track), Microbiology and Immunology, Emory University 2014-2016 Assistant Professor (Research Track), Microbiology and Immunology, Emory University 2014-2018 Assistant Member (Tenure Track), Immunology, St Jude Children's Research Hospital 2018-present Associate Member (Tenure Track), Immunology, St Jude Children's Research Hospital	
<p>Over the course of my scientific career my studies have broadly centered on the role DNA methylation plays in cellular differentiation. This focus started with my initial doctoral studies examining the enzymological determinates of DNA methyltransferase specificity, and gradually transitioned to studying specific changes in DNA methylation programming during in vivo T cell differentiation. To examine epigenetic programming during in vivo T cell differentiation I developed an expertise for profiling epigenetic modifications on small numbers of cells. As an independent investigator at St Jude Children's Research Hospital I have applied this skill to assessing transcriptional regulation of genes that are critical in the development of functional and exhausted T cells generated in response to acute and chronic viral infections and tumors. My lab has previously reported that the development of functional versus exhausted antigen-specific CD8 T cells is coupled to the acquisition of distinct DNA methylation programs. My lab continues to investigate fundamental molecular mechanism(s) critical for development of long-lived memory CD4 and CD8 T cell functions and how these programs affect the efficacy of T cell-based immunotherapy.</p>		

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