美东华美化学与化工学会

Chinese American Chemical Society – East Chapter

# E-CACS News Letter

January 2026

## New Year Greeting From The President Of E-CACS (2026)

As we welcome the New Year of 2026, I extend my sincere greetings and best wishes to all members, partners, and supporters of E-CACS. This year marks the 45th Anniversary of E-CACS, a significant milestone in the history of our society.

Over the past 45 years, E-CACS has served as a respected platform for professional exchange and collaboration within the chemistry and chemical sciences community. These accomplishments reflect the collective dedication and continued engagement of our members.

In 2026, we are committed to re-identifying E-CACS as a comprehensive chemistry and chemical society encompassing chemistry, chemical sciences, materials science, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, consumer products, and other fields rooted in chemical science. Through this effort, we seek to strengthen connections across disciplines, foster the exchange of ideas, and support the professional success of our members.

As we honor our history and look toward the future, we thank you for your continued support and commitment. I look forward to working together to advance E-CACS and to building a strong, inclusive, and forward-looking community in the year ahead.

Best wishes for a healthy, productive, and successful New Year.

Mingwen (Kevin) Wang, Ph.D.
President, E-CACS
Founder & CEO, ACS Scientific Inc.


# Academic & Translational Research Highlights

*Contributor: Xiaozhou Feng*

## Emerging Molecular and Therapeutic Insights at the Intersection of Neuropathy, Cancer Progression, and Therapeutic Resistance

Neuropathic pain remains a major unmet clinical challenge in oncology, affecting patient quality of life and treatment outcomes. Despite its prevalence, current therapies provide limited and often transient relief. Two recent studies provide complementary insights into the molecular mechanisms driving cancer-associated neuropathic pain and highlight emerging therapeutic strategies that may reshape pain management.

Yu Zhang et al. (https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cell.2025.09.029) uncover a distinct but complementary neuroimmune mechanism by which cancer cells evade immune surveillance. Tumors have been shown to co-opt an inter-organ neural circuit that links peripheral sensory neurons, the central nervous system, and immune organs. Activation of this circuit suppresses antitumor immunity by dampening cytotoxic immune responses, thereby facilitating tumor growth and immune escape. Importantly, neural signaling was not merely permissive but instructive, actively reshaping immune cell function in favor of tumor survival.

Jin Xu et al. (https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-025-09896-x) demonstrate that satellite glial cells (SGCs) in dorsal root ganglia actively transfer mitochondria to sensory neurons through tunneling nanotube–like structures in a myosin-dependent manner. This glial-to-neuronal mitochondrial transfer preserves neuronal bioenergetic capacity, limits axonal degeneration, and suppresses neuropathic pain. Disruption of this mechanism observed in diabetes and chemotherapy-induced peripheral neuropathy results in neuronal metabolic failure and persistent pain. These findings position glial mitochondrial transfer as a critical homeostatic mechanism that preserves neuronal integrity, suggesting that failure of local energy support is a key driver of chronic neuropathic pain.

Together, these studies highlight a unifying concept: neural circuits act as integrators of metabolic and immune signals that critically influence disease outcomes. In peripheral neuropathy, loss of glial metabolic support destabilizes sensory neurons and drives pain. In cancer, aberrant activation of neuroimmune pathways enables immune escape. Clinically, these insights suggest new therapeutic opportunities, including restoring glial–neuronal metabolic coupling to prevent neuropathy and targeting neural regulation of immunity to enhance cancer immunotherapy. Integrating neuroscience, immunology, and

metabolism may therefore be essential for developing durable, mechanism-based interventions in both pain management and oncology.

# Industry News

# Food & Beverage / Packaged Food Industry

*Contributors:* Yanpeng Hou

### GLP-1 Medications Are Reshaping the Food Industry

The surge in GLP-1 medication use—drugs like Ozempic, Wegovy, and Mounjaro—has triggered a major shift in packaged food trends. With nearly 12% of U.S. adults reporting GLP-1 use, brands are innovating to meet evolving nutritional needs. Companies such as Danone, Conagra, Nestlé, and Smoothie King are introducing high-protein, low-sugar, and fiber-rich products, alongside smaller portion sizes to support appetite changes and muscle maintenance. Greek yogurt consumption, for example, is nearly three times higher among GLP-1 users, driving rapid growth in the category. Industry leaders anticipate continued momentum, with GLP-1-related spending projected to reach $200 billion by 2029, signaling long-term implications for health-focused food innovation.

Read more →

### FDA Proposes Front-of-Package Labeling to Highlight Saturated Fat

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is advancing a proposal to require front-of-package labeling for saturated fat, alongside sodium, added sugar, and total calories. This initiative aims to boost consumer awareness and encourage healthier choices, as excessive saturated fat intake is linked to elevated LDL cholesterol and heart disease risk. Food manufacturers are responding by reformulating products, particularly plant-based and baked goods, using innovative oil blends and enzymatic interesterification to reduce saturated fat without compromising texture or mouthfeel. While replacing coconut and palm oils remains challenging, strategies such as blending solid and liquid fats are gaining traction. These changes could reshape formulation practices across the food industry.

Read more→

# Pharma

*Contributors: Chongsong Xu*

### December 29th, 2025: Johnson & Johnson Completes $3.05B Acquisition of Halda Therapeutics

- Johnson & Johnson has finalized its acquisition of Halda Therapeutics, a clinical-stage biotech firm with a novel cancer therapy platform, for $3.05 billion in cash.

- Strategic oncology expansion: The deal brings Halda's proprietary RIPTAC™ platform into J&J's portfolio, designed to enable next-generation oral targeted therapies for solid tumors.
- Lead asset addition: J&J gains HLD-0915, a once-daily oral therapy in clinical development for prostate cancer that uses a precision mechanism to overcome treatment resistance, enhancing its existing oncology pipeline.
- Broader pipeline potential: In addition to prostate cancer, Halda's earlier-stage candidates target breast, lung, and other tumor types, with RIPTAC technology potentially applicable beyond oncology.
- Integration and financial outlook: The acquisition will be accounted for as a business combination, with modest expected dilution to earnings per share in Q4 2025 and 2026 due to integration and related costs.

Why this matters: This acquisition strengthens J&J's position in targeted cancer treatments and underscores its commitment to advancing innovative oral therapies that could improve outcomes for patients with resistant and hard-to-treat tumors.

Read more→

## January 8th, 2026: Johnson & Johnson Reaches Drug Pricing Deal with White House

- Johnson & Johnson has agreed to a drug pricing arrangement with the Trump administration, becoming the latest major pharma company to participate in the White House's effort to lower U.S. prescription drug costs.
- The agreement includes offering select branded medicines to U.S. patients at prices aligned with those paid in other developed countries, including through a planned government-backed direct purchasing platform.
- In return, J&J will receive temporary relief from proposed pharmaceutical import tariffs, provided it continues to meet pricing and supply commitments.
- The company also announced plans to expand U.S.-based manufacturing, reinforcing domestic supply chains and supporting long-term production capacity.

Why it matters: The deal advances the administration's most-favored-nation pricing strategy, increasing pressure on drugmakers to align U.S. prices with global benchmarks while tying pricing concessions to domestic manufacturing investment.

Read more→

## 2026 Outlook: The China–Us Innovation Corridor Enters Its Defining Decade

## From A Breakout Year To A Structural Future

*Contributor*: *Scarlett Liu*

This outlook argues that the surge in cross-border biopharma licensing between China and United States marks the beginning of a durable structural shift, rather than a short-term rebound, in how global drug innovation is sourced and scaled. China has emerged as a primary originator of globally competitive assets—particularly in areas such as antibody–drug conjugates, bispecifics, and engineered biologics—supported by faster development timelines, early clinical data generation, and increasing AI adoption, while the U.S. remains the central hub for commercialization, regulatory strategy, and value realization. Looking ahead to 2026, persistent patent cliffs, earlier licensing entry points, growing platform-level partnerships, and AI-enabled discovery are expected to further institutionalize this China–U.S. innovation corridor as a core operating model shaping pipeline strategy, deal structures, and capital allocation across the biopharma industry.

Read more→

Full text is at the end. Please publish it separately and insert link above

# Personal Care & Cosmetics

*Contributor: Guangru Mao*

### UV-Induced Immune Inflammation and Implications for Suncare

Research highlighted by *Cosmetics & Toiletries*, based on findings published in *Nature Communications*, identifies a UV-sensitive regulatory protein (YTHDF2) involved in modulating inflammatory responses following sun exposure. UV radiation promotes degradation of this protein, leading to altered immune signaling that may contribute to skin cancer risk beyond direct DNA damage. These findings suggest one potential direction for future sunscreen and suncare research could include complementary approaches—such as supporting skin immune balance or inflammatory control—alongside established UV protection strategies.

Read more→

### AI-Driven Transformation in Beauty

*Cosmetics & Toiletries* reports that AI is reshaping beauty across formulation, personalization, and consumer discovery, with AI-driven search increasingly influencing how products are found and evaluated. As search shifts from keywords to AI-generated recommendations, brands must be AI-ready with structured data, substantiated claims, and digital infrastructure to remain visible and credible. Competitive advantage will favor brands that pair AI-enabled efficiency with human expertise to preserve trust and differentiation.

Read more→

### Private Labels, Dupe Culture, and the Shift Toward Performance-Driven Beauty

*Happi* published an expert analysis on how dupe culture is influencing the future of beauty, particularly accelerating the rise of private-label products. The trend reflects a shift in consumer value assessment

toward functional performance, formulation parity, and cost efficiency, reducing the relative impact of branding-driven marketing cycles. This dynamic favors private labels with agile development capabilities while increasing pressure on established and premium brands to demonstrate substantiated differentiation beyond brand equity

Read more→


# Member highlight

### Guangru Mao, Principal Scientist, Colgate Palmolive Company

I am a chemist in the cosmetics and personal care industry with experience at Johnson & Johnson, L'Oréal USA, and Colgate-Palmolive, with a background spanning measurement science, clinical research, and skincare technology innovation. I hold a B.S. in Chemistry from Peking University and a Ph.D. from Rutgers University–Newark, and I am also actively involved in community service through volunteering and professional organizations. Within E-CACS, I serve as a Candidate Executive Committee member, contributing to the Budget & Finance team and the relaunched newsletter editorial board while expanding my engagement with the broader chemistry community.

Read more→

Full text is at the end. Please publish it separately and insert link above


## E-CACS greatly appreciates JK.COM's generous Diamond sponsorship!

**JK.COM Inc.** is the U.S. subsidiary of **Jointown Pharmaceutical Group**, one of China's largest pharmaceutical distribution companies and leading private healthcare enterprises. Headquartered in New York, JK.COM provides one-stop wholesale distribution services for medical devices, medical supplies, and pharmaceutical products to physician offices, clinics, hospitals, and laboratories across the New York region. The company also supports Chinese pharmaceutical and medical firms entering the U.S. market through end-to-end localization services, including regulatory compliance, warehousing, logistics, and fulfillment. Through its e-commerce subsidiary USHE and an integrated online-offline distribution platform, JK.COM enables scalable market access across major U.S. sales channels. Looking ahead, JK.COM aims to facilitate two-way market entry by introducing competitively differentiated healthcare products between the U.S. and China through Jointown's nationwide supply-chain network.

JK.COM

Link to Dec 2025 Issue for reference

https://medium.com/@guangrumao/e-cacs-member-highlight-bc2fe302b93f

Please publish the article on the website separately and insert its link to “Read more” in the Pharma Section

## 2026 Outlook: The China–Us Innovation Corridor Enters Its Defining Decade

## From A Breakout Year To A Structural Future

*Contributor*: *Scarlett Liu*

As we enter 2026, it is clear that the events of 2025 were not a rebound cycle or a one-year anomaly. They marked the beginning of a structural reconfiguration of global biopharma innovation. Cross-border licensing between China and the United States did more than surge in volume—it reshaped how innovation is sourced, developed, and scaled globally.

The industry now stands at an inflection point. What was experimental five years ago is becoming standard operating practice. What was optional is becoming essential. And what was regionally siloed is becoming globally integrated from day one.

2026 will be the year this new model is tested, refined, and institutionalized.

A new baseline for global innovation

The defining shift is this: innovation is now global at inception.

China has firmly established itself as a primary source of novel, globally competitive assets rather than a downstream extension of Western pipelines. At the same time, the United States remains the gravity center for commercialization, regulatory leadership, and value realization. The result is a durable innovation corridor that aligns incentives on both sides.

Looking ahead, the question is no longer whether China-origin innovation will remain relevant to global pharma. The question is how deeply this cross-border model will be embedded into pipeline strategy, organizational design, and capital allocation.

Why momentum will persist in 2026

Several structural forces ensure that China–US licensing momentum will continue into 2026 and beyond.

First, the patent cliff is no longer theoretical. Between 2026 and 2029, major blockbusters across oncology, immunology, and metabolic disease will lose exclusivity. Internal discovery alone cannot replace this revenue base at the required speed. External innovation sourcing is now a strategic necessity, not a tactical choice.

Second, deal entry points are moving earlier. Boards and investors increasingly favor preclinical and early clinical programs where differentiation is clearer and capital efficiency is higher. This shift plays directly to China’s strengths: rapid execution, early data generation, and global trial readiness.

Third, China’s innovation quality has crossed a permanent threshold. A growing share of outbound assets are first-in-class or best-in-class, supported by real advances in target biology, medicinal chemistry, and translational science. In modalities such as antibody–drug conjugates, bispecific antibodies, and engineered biologics, China is no longer catching up—it is shaping global pipelines.

## Speed as a strategic advantage, not a tactical benefit

In 2026, speed will increasingly be recognized as a priced asset.

China's ability to move from discovery to first-in-human in compressed timelines, supported by scalable clinical infrastructure, a large patient base, and a mature CRO/CDMO ecosystem, translates into earlier inflection points and faster risk reduction. For global licensors, this is not just operational convenience—it is a direct response to looming revenue gaps.

As a result, execution velocity will be increasingly reflected in deal structure, valuation, and partnership depth.

## AI moves from differentiation to infrastructure

Artificial intelligence will be another defining force in 2026, but with a different character than in prior years. AI is no longer a differentiator; it is becoming infrastructure.

Generative chemistry, multi-omics modeling, and predictive development tools are shortening discovery and IND-enabling cycles across the industry. China's dense AI talent pool and fast adoption curve have made it a particularly fertile environment for AI-native biotech companies.

In transactions, this will further accelerate the shift from single-asset licensing toward platform and engine-based partnerships. Global pharma is increasingly buying repeatability, not one-off success.

## Capital markets reinforce the cycle

Capital access will remain a quiet but powerful enabler in 2026. Hong Kong's 18A framework continues to provide a viable public pathway for pre-revenue biotech companies, supporting sustained early-stage innovation and reducing dependence on late-stage monetization.

This reinforces a stable operating loop: early capital enables innovation, early data enables licensing, and licensing proceeds fund the next cycle of discovery. Licensing is no longer a fallback strategy—it is becoming a core business model.

## What to watch in 2026

Several themes are likely to define deal activity and strategic focus over the coming year:

- Oncology remains dominant, with continued momentum in ADCs, bispecifics, and next-generation biologics
- Immunology and metabolic disease attract sustained interest due to clear clinical and commercial pathways
- AI-native discovery platforms gain premium valuations and deeper partnerships
- CNS and neurodegeneration re-emerge as areas of renewed deal interest

- Global rights deals become the norm, with fewer regional carve-outs
- Earlier entry points—often preclinical or Phase I—become standard

## The organizational challenge ahead

The real challenge in 2026 will not be access to innovation. It will be organizational readiness.

Winning companies will be those that can:

- Design programs for global regulators from day one
- Integrate AI across discovery and development rather than as a bolt-on
- Execute cross-border partnerships with speed, trust, and operational clarity
- Treat global collaboration as default, not exceptional

## Looking forward

The surge in China–US licensing was not the end of a cycle. It was the beginning of a new architecture for drug discovery and development.

As we begin 2026, the industry is moving toward a faster, more distributed, and more interconnected innovation system. The China–US corridor sits at the center of this transformation—not as a temporary trend, but as a defining feature of the next decade.

The companies that adapt early will shape this future. Those that hesitate may find that the innovation highway has already moved on.

Welcome to 2026. The global innovation era has begun.

Please publish the article on the website separately and insert its link to “Read more” in the “Member Highlight” section

# E-CACS Member Highlight

## Guangru Mao, Principal Scientist, Colgate Palmolive Company

Brief introduction (including background, activities outside ECACS).

I am a chemist working in the Cosmetics & Personal Care industry, with experience at Johnson & Johnson Consumer Inc., L’Oréal USA, and Colgate-Palmolive Company. I began my career in measurement science, applying biophysical methods to better understand product–skin interactions, and later expanded into clinical research and platform-based skincare technology innovation.

I earned my B.S. in Chemistry from Peking University and my Ph.D. in Chemistry from Rutgers University–Newark. Outside of work, I am a parent to two elementary school–aged children. Much of my time is spent learning and growing alongside them, and as they grow, I’ve enjoyed exploring new interests myself—such as snowboarding and oil painting.

I have also been actively involved in the Chinese community through volunteering. I previously taught Chinese at Huaxia Chinese School and have served on the Board of Directors of the Chinese American Cosmetic Professional Association (CACPA). Through these experiences, I’ve had opportunities to stretch myself, develop leadership skills, and build a strong sense of connection within the community.

**Q&A:**

**1) How long have you been an ECACS member?**

Two years

**2) What role (s) are you currently active in?**

Candidate Executive Committee member

**3) Please list 2–3 key contributions you’ve led or supported within ECACS.**

A member of the Budget & Finance team, supporting sponsorships and collaborations through invoicing and friendly follow-ups.

On the editorial board for the newly relaunched E-CACS newsletter, working together to build a community forum for E-CACS members

**4) What achievement or moment within ECACS are you most proud of, and why?**

One of my proudest moments so far has been working with our dedicated and dependable editorial board to bring together the first issue of the relaunched newsletter. It was rewarding to collaborate with such a great team and see everything come together so smoothly. I look forward to creating many more proud moments with society.

**5) How has being part of ECACS impacted your professional or community work?**

My career has been rooted in cosmetics and personal care, and E-CACS has given me the opportunity to learn from chemists working in other areas. Those interactions have expanded my perspective on chemistry and deepened my connection to the broader scientific community.

**6) What advice would you give to new ECACS members?**

I would encourage new members to get involved and connect with the community. For me, the Chinese professional community offers a strong sense of belonging, meaningful connections, and opportunities to grow beyond our day-to-day roles—especially in developing leadership skills. E-CACS also provides a valuable network for professional friendships and mentorship, with resources that can support our work, our lives, and even the next generation.

Please publish the article on the website separately and insert its link to “Read more” in the Sponsor Highlight” section

# JK.COM Introduction

JK.COM Inc. is the U.S. subsidiary of Jointown Pharmaceutical Group, one of China’s largest pharmaceutical distribution companies and the country’s leading private healthcare enterprise, with annual revenue exceeding USD 200 billion.

Headquartered in New York, JK.COM serves the North American healthcare market by providing one-stop wholesale distribution and delivery services for medical devices, medical supplies, and pharmaceutical products. Our customers include physician offices, clinics, hospitals, and laboratories across New York and surrounding regions.

We also help Chinese pharmaceutical and medical companies enter and grow in the U.S. market. JK.COM provides end-to-end localization services, including regulatory compliance support, warehousing, logistics, and order fulfillment, enabling high-quality Chinese products to reach U.S. customers efficiently and at scale.

In e-commerce, our subsidiary USHE operates on major online platforms such as Amazon. Together with JK.COM’s offline distribution network, this creates a fully integrated online-and-offline overseas business platform.

On the retail side, JK operates Starside Drug, a pharmacy chain with four locations in Flushing, New York, serving the local Chinese-American community. Starside Drug has over 200,000 customers and members and a 45-year history of compliant operation. The pharmacies accept all major insurance plans and provide a wide range of services, including OTC products, prescription drugs, DME medical equipment, WIC, lottery services, and community convenience services, earning a strong reputation in the community.

Looking ahead, JK will leverage Jointown’s strong supply-chain network in China to bring competitively differentiated APIs, OTC products, and healthcare products into the U.S. market in full regulatory compliance. We are actively seeking partnerships with established U.S. distributors. At the same time, JK plans to introduce selected U.S. pharmaceuticals, health products, and medical devices into China through Jointown’s nationwide distribution network, and welcomes cooperation with manufacturers that have strong product portfolios.

**U.S. market business contact:** MAX, Tel: 929-720-3097