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Margaret Gardel is a Professor of Physics at the University of Chicago. She is the Director of the University of Chicago MRSEC. Her research aims to understand how protein assemblies within eukaryotic cells that control their adhesion, shape and migration. In addition, her labs uses these building blocks to construct novel forms of active matter. She joined the Department of Physics at the University of Chicago in 2007 after earning her Ph.D. from Harvard University and completing postdoctoral research as a Pappalardo Fellow at MIT and at Scripps Research Institute. Her awards include a Packard Fellowship, Sloan Fellowship and the NIH Pioneer Award. In 2013 she was named a Fellow of the American Physical Society.