

MEDICINEMATTERS

APRIL 2025

NEWSLETTER

Medicine Matters is a monthly newsletter published by the University of Virginia, Department of Medicine. Inquires may be sent to the editor, Kim Kelley-Wagner, at kak2cj@uvahealth.org

 **UVA Health** DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE

MISSION

We are dedicated to preventing disease and treating illness, educating and inspiring future leaders in the field of Internal medicine, and supporting innovative biomedical research.

VALUES

We strive for a sense of community, connection, and synergy among all faculty, staff, and trainees.

PLEDGE

We will conform to the highest ethical standards, uphold the values of our partner organizations, and give back to our community through public service.

Message from the Acting Chair



Dear Friends and Colleagues,

It's been a little over a month since I started my role as acting chair for the Department of Medicine, and this newsletter is the first time I've had a chance to sit and reflect on the past few weeks. Every day, I see firsthand the dedication, innovation, and compassion that define the Department of Medicine. Of course, I already knew and understood these aspects of the Department. But the last few weeks have given me an even deeper understanding of the impact of our work.

This month, I want to recognize several of our colleagues for their outstanding achievements, from prestigious awards to new grants and promotions. We also take a moment to celebrate new additions to our department family, as several of our team members have welcomed little Hoos into the world. You'll find these highlights below—please take a moment to congratulate and support your colleagues!

While we navigate this transition period, my focus remains on strengthening our Department and ensuring you have the resources and support you need to thrive. We are working on addressing a few key priorities, including clinical funds flow, federal indirect funding challenges, optimizing space for clinical and research needs, and recruiting. Your insights are invaluable as we tackle these challenges, and I encourage you to share your thoughts.

Thank you for all you do—your work and dedication are the DOM's foundation.

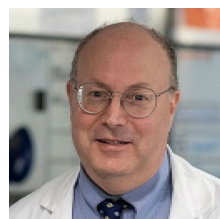
Best,
Taison Bell, MD, MBA
Acting Chair, Department of Medicine



“I've had the opportunity to be on the cutting edge in the development

of treatments in pulmonary fibrosis, and diagnosis of categorization.”

~Karen Ballen, MD



Recent Message from Dr. Mitch Rosner - Moving Forward

First, I'd like to express my sincere appreciation to all of you who have reached out, providing your support, asking thoughtful questions, and suggesting ideas. It is with open dialogue and collaboration that we will continue to move forward together and please keep the thoughts and ideas coming! Read more...



UVA Health

DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE

DOM Financial Update

Department of Medicine Summary of Consolidated Financials February 2025

FY25 as of

	Budget YTD	Actual YTD	\$ Variance YTD
Work RVUs	906,145	879,045	(27,101)
Clinical Receipts (NPSR)	60,582,323	56,944,895	(3,637,429)
Total Revenues	165,237,727	166,842,460	1,604,733
Total Expenditures	166,419,050	167,238,249	(819,199)
Net Income	(1,181,323)	(395,789)	785,534

Summary Explanation of Variance:

1. For the fiscal year through February 28, 2025, DOM reported a consolidated net loss of \$396K and a favorable variance to YTD net income budget of \$786k.
2. Clinical receipts underperformed budget by \$3.6M primarily due to impact of lower conversion factor, changes in third party agreements, unrealized budgeted revenue cycle efficiency, budgeted risk withhold for transplant posted to miscellaneous revenue, lower MIPS payments, accrual model adjustments and CrowdStrike software outage, inclement weather interruptions and Community Oncology transitioning to Community Health.
3. Total revenue includes \$3.5M MC clinical deficit and APP gap coverage revenue accrual, \$3.6M unbudgeted internal research support, \$2.0M unbudgeted gifts and \$1.7M endowment revenue for the remainder of the fiscal year.
4. Total expenditures are impacted by unbudgeted hires, extra clinic shifts, unbudgeted merit increases unbudgeted sign on bonuses and unrealized budgeted personnel reduction contingencies.

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kak2cj@uvahealth.org or 434.328.0680

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Antonio Abbate MD PhD



Zhenqi Liu MD



Karen Warburton MD



Jie Sun PhD



Amber Inofuentes MD



Neeral Shah MD



William Petri MD PhD



Mayuresh Abhyankar PhD



Christopher Kramer MD FACC

AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Congratulations to **Dr. Antonio Abbate** (Division of Cardiovascular Medicine) and collaborators on the publication of their papers [“Effects of anti-inflammatory therapy in acute heart failure: a systematic review and meta-analysis”](#) and [“An Attomolar-Level Optical Device for Monitoring Receptor-Analyte Interactions Without Functionalization Steps: A Case Study of Cytokine Detection.”](#)

Congratulations to **Dr. Zhenqi Liu** (Division of Endocrinology) and collaborators on the publication of their paper [“Exercise Intolerance in Type 2 Diabetes: A Systematic Review and Meta Analysis”](#) in the Journal of the American Heart Association (JAHA).

Congratulations to **Dr. Karen Warburton** (Division of Nephrology), who was celebrated for her distinction in research and education at the Center for Excellence in Education’s Innovation in Education Week 2025. [Read more...](#)

Congratulations to **Dr. Jie Sun** (Division of Infectious Diseases) and collaborators on the publication of their paper [“Macrophage peroxisomes guide alveolar regeneration and limit SARS-CoV-2 tissue sequelae”](#) in the journal Science.

Congratulations to **Dr. Amber Inofuentes** (Division of Hospital Medicine), who has been accepted as a member of the 2025-2026 Executive Leadership in Academic Health Care (ELH) Program, a track of the Hedwig van Ameringen Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine® (ELAM) program. Her selection places her among the very best and brightest leaders in healthcare.

Congratulations to **Dr. Neeral Shah** (Division of Gastroenterology), one of five University of Virginia faculty members honored with the 2025 Excellence in Teaching Awards presented by the Jefferson Scholars Foundation. Dr. Shah received Awards for Excellence in Teaching. “These professors do more than teach. They inspire,” Ben Skipper, vice president and director of the foundation’s undergraduate programs, said. “Their impact extends beyond the classroom through groundbreaking research and meaningful outreach, embodying the scholarship, leadership, and citizenship that define our mission.” [Read more...](#)

Congratulations to **Dr. William Petri** (Division of Infectious Diseases) and his lab who have been awarded a \$1.7 million grant by the Gates Foundation to develop a new polio vaccine, based on a mucosal adjuvant vaccine formulation developed here under the lead of **Dr. Mayuresh Abhyankar** (Division of Infectious Diseases) in our group.

Congratulations to **Dr. Christopher M. Kramer** (Division of Cardiovascular Medicine), who has become the new President of the American College of Cardiology (ACC) - an almost 60,000-member, global cardiovascular organization dedicated to “transforming cardiovascular care for all.” Dr. Kramer previously served as ACC’s Vice President and Treasurer – and as Chair of the organization’s Imaging Council.

Are You a UVA Researcher? An Innovator?



Licensing & Ventures Group

Where research gets *real*

We partner with faculty, researchers, and investors to bring innovations discovered at UVA to the marketplace.

IN **DEPARTMENT** MEDIA

Taison Bell MD, Appointed Acting Chair of the Department of Medicine

The School of Medicine is pleased to announce that Taison Bell, MD, MBA, has been appointed as the acting chair of the Department of Medicine, effective February 27, 2025.

Dr. Bell brings a wealth of experience and leadership to this role. He joined the Department of Medicine's Divisions of Pulmonary and Critical Care and Infectious Diseases and International Health in 2017. He has held several leadership positions, including vice chair for faculty affairs in the Department of Medicine, co-chair of the University Physicians Group Investment Subcommittee, co-chair of the President's Council on UVA-Community Partnerships, and director of the UVA Summer Medical Leadership Program.

[READ MORE](#)



UVA Health's Dr. Laurie Archbald-Pennone Offers Strategies for Boosting Vaccination Rates in Older Adults.

Knowing which vaccines older adults should get and hearing a clear recommendation from their health care provider about why a particular vaccine is important strongly motivated them to get vaccinated. That's a key finding in a recent study I co-authored in the journal *Open Forum Infectious Diseases*.

Adults over 65 have a higher risk of severe infections, but they receive routine vaccinations at lower rates than do other groups. My colleagues and I collaborated with six primary care clinics across the U.S. to test two approaches for increasing vaccination rates for older adults.

[READ MORE](#)

Dr. Costi Sifri Reflecting on the COVID-19 Pandemic Five Years Later

It has now been five years since the start of the coronavirus pandemic that disrupted lives for months.

"Clearly, everything has changed," said Dr. Costi Sifri, an epidemiologist at the University of Virginia.

He was the face of COVID-19 for the Charlottesville community. Everyone looked to him for answers as to what was happening on the local level.

"It was quite a sobering time and a lot of fear of the unknown, and as an infectious disease physician and epidemiologist, I was also trying to understand the virus, what we could do to prevent its spread, and how to approach things moving forward," said Sifri.

[WATCH/READ ON CBS19](#)





Dr. Chad Hoyt: Simple ways you can protect your heart health

February may have been Heart Month, but it's always a good time to discuss what you can do to maintain good heart health and what heart health-related numbers you should monitor to make sure you're on the right track.

While some risk factors for heart disease, such as aging, genetics, and a family history of heart disease, can't be changed, making healthy lifestyle choices can significantly reduce your risk.

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Research in Motion



Laurie Archbald-Pannone MD

Measles Reported in 9 States: Here's What You Need To Know

More than 160 measles cases have been reported across nine states this year, with one death and more than 30 patients needing hospitalization, according to a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention tracker.

What's worrying is that "outbreaks are happening in the context of increased rates of vaccine hesitancy and decreased rates of immunity," said Dr. Patrick Jackson, specializing in infectious diseases.

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Committee on Women in Medicine and Science Honors Amy Mathers MD, as March's Woman of the Month

The Committee on Women in Medicine and Science (COWIMS) is proud to celebrate the work of Amy Mathers, MD, as March's Woman of the Month, for her outstanding contributions to the field of infectious disease. Dr. Mathers is the Mandell Professor of Internal Medicine and Pathology, with a primary appointment in the Department of Medicine.

"Dr. Mathers is so deserving of this honor. She is a master clinician and researcher who has made seminal contributions to the area of prevention of nosocomial infections. Her work in the microbiology hospital lab has been critical to UVA's success in managing numerous threats to our community such as the COVID-19 pandemic. She is a regional and national leader and we are fortunate to have her as a colleague and role model," remarks, Dr. Mitch Rosner, Interim Executive Vice President for Health Affairs and Henry B. Mulholland Professor and Chair of the Department of Medicine.

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Women In Internal Medicine Network would love to hear from you!



Please share your ideas with us here.

New-Onset Seasonal Allergies in Adults - Why some don't start in childhood, who's at risk, and practical management

"When we have that patient walk in the door and say, 'Look, I've been fine. And then up until 2 years ago I started having these symptoms,' there's a laundry list of things we go through," said Michael Nelson, MD, PhD. "One of them is asking, 'Did you have allergies as a kid?' Because that would increase the likelihood that there's an allergic component to it.

[READ MORE](#)



Seasonal Allergies on the Rise?

Seasonal allergies affect a large number of adults and children alike, with an apparent upward trend, although estimates are imprecise. Prevalence numbers vary widely across studies, influenced by age, criteria for inclusion, and methodology.

And it's only going to get worse, noted Michael R. Nelson, MD, PhD, chief of the Asthma, Allergy, and Immunology Division at the University of Virginia School of Medicine in Charlottesville.

[READ MORE](#)

The New Treatment Landscape in Seasonal Allergies

Recent developments in allergen immunotherapy, improvements in primary care, and the emergence of a new treatment for other allergic conditions have improved the quality of care for seasonal allergies.

Nasal steroids are a mainstay of treatment for seasonal allergic rhinitis, but patients often don't start them as soon as they should, noted Michael R. Nelson, MD, PhD, chief of the asthma, allergy, and immunology division at the University of Virginia School of Medicine in Charlottesville.

[READ MORE](#)

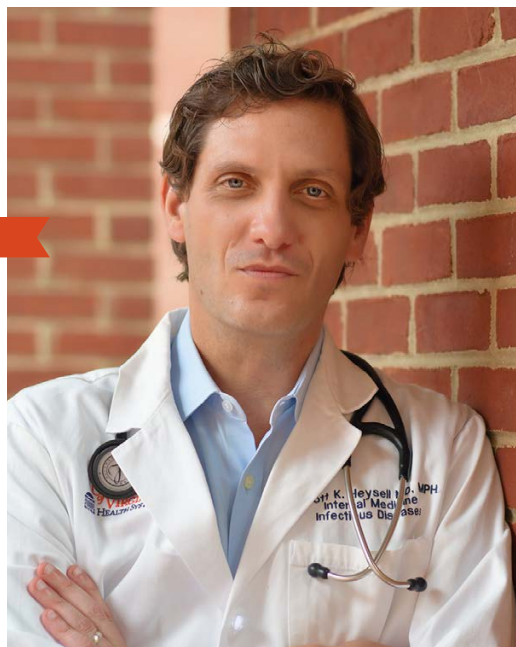


UVA Health Joins the Care Center Network to Enhance Bronchiectasis and Non-Tuberculous Mycobacteria Care

UVA Health has been designated as a care center by the Bronchiectasis and NTM Care Center Network, making it one of only 33 nationwide and the only center in Virginia.

The core medical team at UVA Health consists of co-directors Lindsay Somerville MD, and Scott Heysell MD MPH, along with bronchiectasis and NTM experts Dana Albon MD, and Eric Houpt MD.

[READ MORE](#)



Milad Memari, MD, Featured in International Medical Education Podcast

In a recent episode of the KeyLIME+ (Key Lessons and Innovations in Medical Education) podcast, Milad Memari, MD, an assistant professor of internal medicine at UVA, and his colleague Katie Gavinski, MD, of the Medical College of Wisconsin, share their perspective on growth mindset and risks of misapplying mindset theory to trainees in medical education. Their recent manuscript published in the journal Academic Medicine serves as the launching point for discussion.

[LISTEN TO PODCAST](#)

The Asthma and Allergic Diseases Center
in association with
The Asthma and Allergy Society of Virginia
is pleased to present the

THE 63rd ANNUAL
Swineford Allergy
CONFERENCE

April 11-12, 2025

Pinn Hall Conference Center
UVA Health



UVA Health talks new discovery on COVID-19 anniversary

Five years ago on March 11, the World Health Organization officially declared COVID-19 a pandemic. Scientists at the University of Virginia's School of Medicine did new research that could help patients with long-COVID. Jie Sun led the researchers in finding that COVID-19 can damage the body's immune system, making it harder for a person's lungs to heal. That is why many long-COVID patients experience breathing problems after they are no longer sick.

[READ MORE](#) [WATCH](#)



Jonathan Lindner, MD, works towards improved gene therapies

Robert M. Berne Cardiovascular Research Center Resident Member and Frances Myers Ball Endowed Professor of Medicine, and Cardiovascular Division Vice-Chief for Research, Jonathan Lindner, MD, was recently awarded a \$2,869,442 grant from the NIH's National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) to study how ultrasound can be used to improve gene therapy delivery.

[READ MORE](#)

Research
in Motion



Patrick Jackson MD

Long COVID: Have US scientists found a cure?

In May 2023, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the COVID-19 global health emergency over.

Yet millions of people still experience fatigue, breathlessness and pain, years after having a COVID-19 infection. By some estimates, 400 million people had or still have post-COVID-19 syndrome, a condition better known as 'long COVID'.

Scientists have struggled to find the causes of long COVID since the first cases of chronic symptoms emerged in late 2020. Clinicians still lack the tools to treat the disease.

Now, a new study published in the journal Science has discovered lung inflammation is a major cause. Data in mice and humans found infection with the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which causes COVID-19, impairs the ability of immune cells to repair lung damage.

The study gives hope in treating long COVID, although further testing is required for the treatment to reach clinics.

"We demonstrated that an FDA-approved drug can enhance lung recovery and reduce long COVID-related tissue damage," said study lead author Dr. Jie Sun.

[READ MORE](#)



UVA SCHOOL OF MEDICINE MATCH DAY 2025



Community Conversation: Dr. David Callender with UVA Health

Dr. Callender speaks with NBC29 about the importance of colorectal cancer screening. Early screening is essential for determining any presymptomatic issues. Several screening options are available depending on the age and history of the patient.

WATCH ON NEWS29



Drug Can Reduce COVID-19 Spread Within Households, Major Trial Finds

An international clinical trial has identified a medication that can help prevent symptomatic COVID-19 in people exposed within households. The results could be particularly important for families where someone is at high risk of serious complications from the illness.

“This study is the first where this strategy [to prevent COVID-19] was documented to succeed,” says Dr. Frederick Hayden, professor emeritus of medicine at University of Virginia School of Medicine.

“In addition to vaccination, post-exposure prophylaxis with timely use of an oral antiviral would be a valuable way to help prevent COVID-19 illness in people who have been exposed, especially people at high risk for severe disease,” said Dr. Hayden, who helped design the trial and presented the trial results recently at the Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI) in San Francisco.

WATCH ON NBC29

READ MORE IN TIME

READ MORE ON MEDSCAPE

Dr. Taison Bell featured discussing measles and meningitis.

In his final months at the University of Virginia, fourth-year student Brandon Williams anticipated his stress would be on planning his next move after college. Instead, he is worried about the spread of infectious diseases and whether his college campus is adequately protected.

Doctors share concerns over how declining rates of vaccinations could put people at risk for Meningococcal and Measles.

“When you have pockets where you have less people vaccinated, Measles, it’s shown over and over again has the ability to find where those pockets are and spread,” said Dr. Taison Bell, “Meningitis is also a vaccine preventable disease.”

Dr. Bell said at least 95% of a population needs to be vaccinated to prevent a disease’s spread.

“There’s not a lot of wiggle room there,” Bell said. “If we get everyone who’s able to be vaccinated, vaccinated then we do achieve that level where we can prevent the spread of it.”

WATCH ON NEWS29



“Inside the Collapse at the NIH” Dr. Taison Bell talks with The Atlantic about the importance of NIH funding for medical research.

For decades, the National Institutes of Health has had one core function: support health research in the United States.

The agency has had a hand in “nearly all of our major medical breakthroughs over the past several decades,” Taison Bell, a critical-care specialist at UVA Health.

READ MORE



Black History Month: Gregory Townsend, MD — ‘Creating a Culture Where Everyone Feels Valued, Included, and Respected’

What piqued Dr. Townsend’s interest initially in becoming a physician? “I have loved biology since I was a small child and upon entering college I envisioned doing research in some related field,” he recalls. “But during gap years after college, I realized I really enjoyed working with people, and I thought that medicine would be a better fit for me. I’m absolutely sure I made the right decision!”

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Weight and Metabolism Determined More by Genetics Than Diet

VA doctor Susanna Keller, dietician Sibylle Kranz and their colleagues studied four different strains of mice that were given a vegan, vegetarian, Mediterranean or typical American diet. Kranz says it was a challenge creating each kind of mouse chow given their goals.

“We set certain standards for nutrients that we wanted to achieve. No matter what the diet was. It all had to have the same amount of calories, the same amount of carbohydrates, proteins and fats,” Kranz explains.

With funding from the university, Keller says, they spent five years documenting what happened to each genetically different group of mice when eating the different diets.

“We had one strain that gained the most weight on all the diets, and then we had this other strain that just didn’t gain weight on any of the diets.”

“We always assumed that diet will affect everybody in the same way, or at least somewhat in the same way, and we now have measurable outcomes that demonstrated that is just not happening.”

READ AND LISTEN ON PUBLIC RADIO

Dr. Michael Ayers discusses sports cardiology.

Cardiovascular symptoms while playing sports can vary depending on a person’s age.

Symptoms such as chest pain, unusual shortness of breath, and fainting can be checked by your family doctor or cardiologist by running tests.

Dr. Michael Ayers speaks with Community Conversation

WATCH ON NBC29



Dr. Antonio Abbate on Inflammation - Death Clock with Brent Franson

In this episode of Death Clock, host Brent Franson sits down with Dr. Antonio Abbate, a cardiologist and expert in inflammation, to explore the hidden dangers of chronic low-grade inflammation. While you may associate inflammation with visible symptoms like swelling or redness, Dr. Abbate explains how internal inflammation, often unnoticed, plays a critical role in increasing the risk of heart disease, diabetes, dementia, and other chronic illnesses.

WATCH PODCAST



WELCOME!



Welcome to Taylor Lloyd, who joined the Central Medical Education Team in March as the Pulmonary Critical Care and Sleep Medicine Fellowship Coordinator. Taylor's background as a project coordinator and educator has given her strong organizational and communication skills that will be put to good use in her new role in our fellowship program.

50th Charlottesville 10-Miler Run



The Infectious Diseases "Running a Fever" team!



Drs Bill Petri and Brian Uthlaut on far left with some of the house officers.

FOLLOW UVA IM RESIDENCY

SUBMIT NEWS

SAVE THE DATE!

Mark your calendars and plan to join us for our 2025 Department-wide Carey, Marshall, and Thorer Research & Scholars Day.

Tuesday, May 27th, in the Pinn Hall conference center, with oral presentations beginning mid-day, followed by poster presentations that afternoon. The event will conclude with award presentations on Friday, May 30th, to kick off our research-focused Medical Grand Rounds.



spark

INNOVATION AND IDEAS
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Department of Medicine Family Fun Day

Get ready for a day filled with laughter, exciting games, delicious treats, food trucks, petting zoo, music and fun for all ages.

Saturday, April 19th, 2025

12:00PM - 4:00PM

Morven Farm
600 Morven Drive, Charlottesville

RSVP to Terri Washington by Friday, April 4th



FOLLOW



Follow DOM on INSTAGRAM!

UPDATE

DIVISION

Message from Dr. Karen Ballen, Division Chief of Hematology and Oncology



It is an honor to highlight the successes of our incredible Hematology/Oncology Division. We have had another excellent year in clinical care, research, education, and community engagement.

In the past year, we have had the good fortune to recruit three new clinical faculty, with two physicians starting in the next few months. Dr. Nate Roberts, a graduate of our training program, has joined our Lymphoma Team, specializing in T cell lymphomas. Dr. Ludi Cavalcante, a sarcoma expert, leads our Medical Sarcoma program and is expanding our Phase I research program. Dr. Manny Cirenza has rejoined our team and is working hard in our Fishersville office. We welcomed Dr. Joseph Clara in March 2025 to our Stem Cell Transplant Team, and in September, Dr. Jack Masur will join our Genitourinary Oncology and Head and Neck Cancer team. Many thanks to our Administrative Specialists and Search Committees for the time and hard work on these successful recruitments.

Congratulations and thanks to our Advanced Practice Provider leads, Jessica Kassay-McAllister and Susie Herndon. Our APP program continues to expand. APPs Philip DeTrana, Allyson Doss, Christina Ide, Rachel Thai-Larsen, Stephanie Good, Ryan Boyles, and Corah Kaufman joined our team this year.

We are proud that 28 of our providers were recognized for achieving Press-Ganey scores above the 90th percentile. Based on the growth of our clinical program, new infusion units are opening this year in Pantops and Gainesville. Press Ganey recently recognized our clinics as a Pinnacle of Excellence.

In research, we started a new Section of Hematology/Oncology: Basic Research, led by Charles Chalfant. Dr. Chalfant is mentoring several colleagues as part of our UVA Comprehensive Cancer Center led by Dr. Tom Loughran. We received notice of awards on several RO1 grants studying novel drug development and nanomedicine.

In clinical research, we have 155 open clinical research treatment trials. We are grateful to the many friends of the Cancer Center and Hematology/Oncology who provide philanthropic support for our research efforts and help to improve access to clinical trials.

In education, Dr. Trish Millard assumed leadership of our fellowship program in July 2024. We had over 500 applicants for four slots and were excited to match with four UVA residents. In undergraduate medical education, Dr. John Densmore has successfully led the program at Inova.

We continue to work towards greater engagement with our community; we are partnering with our colleagues in Community Outreach and Engagement and have several clinical trials dedicated to improving access to sub-specialty care.

I am most grateful for our fantastic colleagues. We appreciate such excellent colleagues in other divisions and departments and our dedicated and outstanding nurses, division staff, research coordinators, and other team members. You all make my job and our essential work such a pleasure!

~ Karen K Ballen, MD

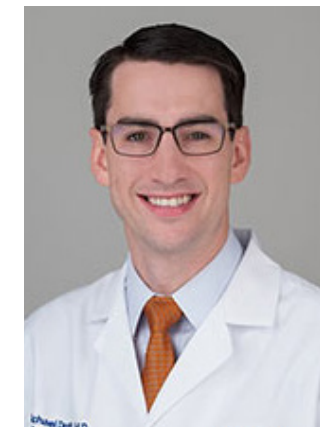
DIVISION CLINICAL

We continue to grow our clinical volumes and move more of our services to outpatient. Clinical Volumes grow yearly in all of our locations.

Clinical Volume chart FY2020-FY24

	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024
Inpatient Attending	13,351	14,182	14,066	13,898	14,671
Inpatient Consults	2,700	2733	2,546	2,181	2,683
Inpatient Totals	16,051	16,915	16,612	16,079	17,354
Outpatient New	4,125	4611	5,257	5,753	5,762
Established Outpatient Visits	40,721	43, 876	47,646	53,846	57,731
Outpatient Totals	44,846	48,487	52,903	59,599	63,493

2024 Clinical Faculty Promotions



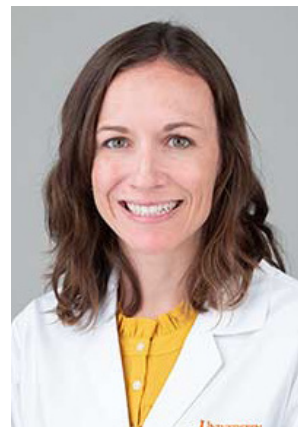
Michael Devitt MD



Ryan Gentzler MD



Richard Hall MD



Trish Millard MD



Indu Varadarajan MD

Dr. Michael Devitt was promoted to Associate Professor.

Dr. Ryan Gentzler was promoted to Associate Professor without Term.

Dr. Richard Hall was promoted to Associate Professor without Term.

Dr. Trish Millard was promoted to Associate Professor.

Dr. Indu Varadarajan was promoted to Associate Professor.

DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE
MEDICINE GRAND ROUNDS
 UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

DIVISION EDUCATION

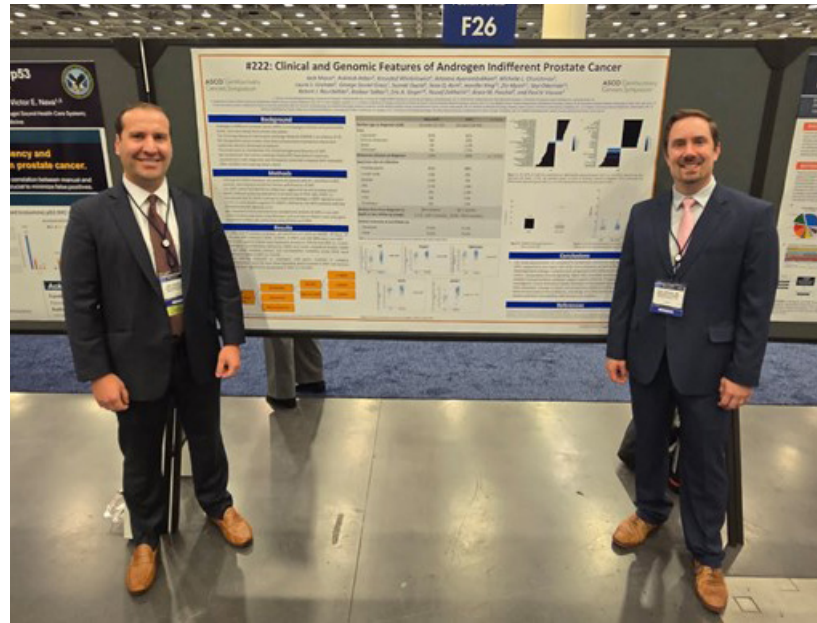
Letter from the Program Director By Trish Millard MD

The UVA Hematology/Oncology fellowship program consists of four fellows per year for a total of twelve fellows. The three-year training program makes the fellows board eligible for hematology and oncology. The first year of fellowship is principally clinical training, including service months on inpatient malignant hematology, classical hematology, and oncology consults. Fellows participate in 6-month continuity clinics throughout their three years. The second and third year of fellowship includes greater elective time for clinical sub-specialization and research work.

In 2024, we welcomed first-year fellows: Zoe Begun (Thomas Jefferson University), Jean Clement (University of Maryland), Charles Morris (University of Virginia), and Shaunak Varma (Emory University). We are so grateful for the members of our fellowship family.



Fellow Highlights



Jack Masur

Jack Masur MD

Jack has a reputation for a superior work ethic, which pays off with academic success. He is the first author of a manuscript in the Internal Journal of Molecular Sciences: [“Clinical and Genomic Features of Androgen Indifferent Prostate Cancer.”](#) He attended GU ASCO in February 2025, where he presented two abstracts, and he was selected to participate in the 2025 GU Oncology Early Career Thought Leaders Conference in Philadelphia in March 2025. We are thrilled that Jack will join the UVA faculty specializing in GU and Head & Neck! (L to R: Jack Masur MD and GU Oncology Faculty Member Paul Viscuse MD)

Valerie Tran MD

Valerie stands out in the hematology/oncology division for her positive attitude and hard work, which makes her a pleasure to work with. She has found a niche in malignant hematology and successfully published as the first author in Current Hematologic Malignancy Reports in June 2024: [“MRD in Philadelphia Chromosome-Positive ALL: Methodologies and Clinical Implications.”](#)

Jeffrey Lantz MD

Jeffrey demonstrates a superior ability to practice hematology and oncology thoroughly and efficiently. In addition to his clinical talent, he has had academic success collaborating with the malignant hematology team and UVA IM resident Natalie Pham MD, with his project presented at the 2024 ASH Annual Meeting: Quality Improvement Initiative of Patients with Acute Myeloid Leukemia Receiving Non-Intensive Therapy in Academic-Community Medicine Partnerships in Rural Appalachia.



Fabian Bolte MD

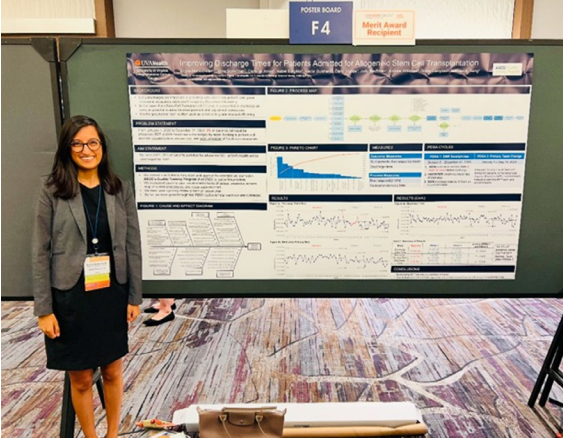
We are endlessly impressed with Fabian’s dedication to furthering the field of oncology through his research work. He is our 2024 Farrow and Weiss Award recipient and a UVA DOM Physician Scientist Training Program member. Fabian participated in the “Tiny Packages with Big Impact on Extracellular Vesicle Separation and Characterization” workshop in March 2024. He established a collaboration with Uta Erdbrügger (Division of Nephrology) and launched an investigator-initiated trial on extracellular vesicles in advanced kidney cancer at UVA Cancer Center. This pilot study aims to identify predictive and prognostic biomarkers, paving the way for more personalized care of patients with kidney cancer.

Fabian Bolte

into a skilled hematologist/oncologist. She recently published a manuscript on her lung cancer research as the first author in the Journal of Thoracic Disease: [“Implications for practice: Phase II/III trial of carboplatin and irinotecan for elderly patients with extensive-stage small-cell lung cancer in Japan.”](#) She also presented at the 2024 ASCO Quality Care Symposium on Improving Discharge Times for Patients Admitted for Allogeneic Stem Cell Transplantation, earning a Conquer Cancer Merit Award.

Shipra Maheshwari MD

Shipra has been well-known in the Division since her time as an outstanding UVA IM resident, and we have loved seeing her grow



Shipra Maheshwari

Sean Dougherty MD

We are pleased to announce that Sean Dougherty has been selected as our Chief Fellow for 2025-2026. Sean stands out for his dedication to his co-fellows and patients alike. He has shown outstanding academic success in fellowship with three recent publications, including his manuscript Osimertinib for Uncommon EGFR Mutations: Herding UNICORNS in a Field of Horses. He has collaborated with the thoracic oncology team. He will present two posters at the 2025 Targeted Therapies in Lung Cancer Conference, including work with his co-fellow, Fabian Bolte, on [“Real-world Experience and Efficacy of Tarlatamab for Small Cell Lung Cancer in the Second-Line Setting and Beyond.”](#)



Sean Dougherty



From left: Jeffrey Lantz, Jenna Schlefman, Shipra Maheshwari, and Jack Masur

Upcoming 2025 Graduations

We are incredibly proud of our third-year fellows and are confident they are ready to embark on their careers. We look forward to celebrating each of them at graduation in June. **Jeffrey Lantz MD** (Community Practice at Blue Ridge Cancer Care, Roanoke, VA), **Jenna Schlefman MD** (Breast & GI oncology faculty at Levine Cancer Institute, Charlotte, NC), **Shipra Maheshwari MD** (GI oncology faculty at Inova Schar Cancer Institute, Fairfax, VA), and **Jack Masur MD** (GU & Head & Neck oncology faculty, UVA, Charlottesville, VA).

DIVISION RESEARCH

DISEASE SECTIONS

Medical Oncology

By Robert Dreicer MD

The section of medical oncology concluded a productive clinical and academic year. At the beginning of the new academic year, the section welcomed Dr. Ludi Cavalcante to join the Division as the new head of the medical sarcoma program and her role as Associate Director of the Phase I program. In the short period since her arrival in concert with her colleagues, she has reconstituted a sarcoma tumor board and opened several therapeutic sarcoma trials.

Our thoracic medical oncology program (Drs. Gentzler/Hall) has successively implemented a new bi-specific T-cell engager (BiTE) program for patients with small cell lung cancer, including a process to treat these patients in the outpatient setting.

A trial for which our thoracic oncology team made important contributions, MARIPOSA-2, published in the Annals of Oncology in January 2024, resulted in FDA approval of amivantamab + chemotherapy for EGFR-mutated lung cancer.

Jack Masur MD, a current third-year Hem/Onc fellow (mentored by Dr. Paul Viscuse) who will be joining the section at the beginning of the new academic year, presented A Single-Institution Experience of Pneumonitis in Patients with Metastatic Renal Cell Carcinoma Treated with Immune Checkpoint Inhibitors at the ASCO GU 2025 meeting in San Francisco.

Dr. Varinder Kaur assumed the medical director role of the UVA Cancer Center Infusion Center, and Dr. Mike Devitt was named Hem/Onc Division Clinical Documentation Initiative MD advisor.

Ongoing recruitments include both breast and thoracic oncology clinical investigators.

Melanoma/and related disorders

Drs. Liz Gaughan and Varinder Kaur

APP: Jennifer Eccles, Jenea Brown

Breast Medical Oncology

Drs. Christiana Brenin, Patrick Dillon, and Trish Millard

APP: Paul "Mike" Marshall and Melody Noble

Thoracic Medical Oncology

Drs. Ryan Gentzler and Richard Hall

APP: Marie Thomas

Head and Neck Oncology

Drs. Jack Masur and Varinder Kaur

APP: Jenea Brown

Gastrointestinal Medical Oncology and Unknown Primary Neoplasms

Drs. Tri Le, Paul Kunk, Muneeb Rehman, and Matthew Reilley

APP: Jenna Ally, Jenna Campo and Susie Herndon

Genitourinary Medical Oncology

Drs. Michael Devitt, Robert Dreicer, Jack Masur, William Paul Skelton, Paul Viscuse

APP: Jennifer Eccles and Katie Stiebing

Sarcoma

Drs. Ludimila Cavalcante and Michael Douvas

Infusion/Urgent Care

APP: Rachel Chai, Elizabeth Coyman, Stephanie Good, Elizabeth Lester, and Rachel Thal-Larsen

Stem Cell Transplant **By Karen Ballen MD**

The Stem Cell Transplant and Cellular Therapy Program continues to expand our clinical and research programs. We perform transplants for plasma cell dyscrasias, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, Hodgkin lymphoma, acute leukemias, myelodysplastic syndrome, myeloproliferative disorders, and bone marrow failure states. Our chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) T program continues to grow, and we have both FDA-approved and research CAR T products for myeloma, lymphoma, and acute leukemia. We had 11 presentations at the Transplant Cell Therapy Meeting this year. We held our first annual BMT Patient Picnic with over 300 attendees. A significant advance in our field is new treatment strategies to prevent graft vs host disease, allowing us to perform mismatched transplants safely.

Stem Cell Transplant

Drs. Karen Ballen, Joseph Clara (starting March 2025), Krithika Shanmugasundaram, Indumathy Varadarajan, Leonid Volodin, and John Wagner

APP: Hania Bushnaq-Aloul, Jessica Kassay-McAllister, and Kristen Noonan

APP Inpatient: Ryan Boyles, Isabel Burgess, Mary Faith Dudley, Kristine Gillis, Erin Harr, Jordyn Sewell, and Philip DeTrana

Hematologic Malignancies

By Karen Ballen MD

The Hematologic Malignancy Program continues to grow in patient care and research. We welcomed Dr. Nate Roberts to our lymphoma program this summer—the lymphoma team of Drs. Ayers, Marchi, Portell, Roberts, and Williams have had several national and international presentations on lymphoma. Dr. Keng leads our quality program and inpatient units. Dr. Danny Reed is working on novel treatments for acute myeloid leukemia. Dr. Douvas is an active educator focusing on the complex young adult population. Dr. Garrett-Bakelman is studying epigenetics and older patients with Acute Myeloid Leukemia. In myeloma, Drs. Densmore and Foster are focusing on novel strategies for this population, with many exciting new treatment options for these patients.

Lymphoma and CLL

Drs. Emily Ayers, Enrica Marchi, Craig Portell, Nate Roberts, and Michael E. Williams,

APP: Kim Conrad, Allyson Dalton, Christina Ide

Myeloma

Drs. John Densmore and Laahn Foster

APP: Allyson Dalton and Christina Ide

Leukemia

Drs. Michael Douvas, Francine Garrett-Bakelman, Michael Keng and Daniel Reed

APP: Kim Conrad and Amelia Hodson

Classical Hematology

By Kelly Davidson MD

Classical Hematology has had another dynamic year, marked by significant clinical care and education advancements. As the primary academic referral center for much of Virginia and the surrounding region, we continue to provide expert care for patients with a wide range of complex and rare hematologic disorders. Given the interdisciplinary nature of classical hematology, our faculty remains deeply engaged in medical education, delivering lectures and leading conferences for medical students, residents, fellows, and colleagues across multiple specialties.

Dr. Louise Man continues to lead the grant-supported Adult Comprehensive Bleeding Disorders Clinic. In March, she and the Bleeding Disorders team will expand their outreach efforts by launching a clinic in Bristol. Additionally, she serves as the site primary investigator for a newly opened multicenter clinical trial investigating emicizumab-kxwh as a hemostatic treatment alongside standard immunosuppressive therapy in newly diagnosed acquired hemophilia A. Dr. Davidson leads the Adult Sickle Cell Disease Comprehensive Center and collaborates with the CDC and the Virginia Department of Health to establish a statewide SCD registry. She has joined the American Society of Hematology Committee on Practice, which addresses critical issues affecting hematology practice and helps shape national policies. Dr. Hillary Maitland has started enrolling patients in a pilot project to decrease post-operative thromboembolic events in the bariatric surgery population. Patients are sent home with a wireless sequential compression device to improve venous return from the legs in obese, sedentary patients.

Our team also remains committed to addressing iron deficiency across multiple patient populations, including pregnant individuals, cardiac surgery patients, and emergency department patients. In September 2024, we launched Virginia's first NP-driven Iron Deficiency Anemia Clinic at Pantops, run by Tammy Tedsen. This innovative clinic has significantly reduced referral wait times and received high patient satisfaction by offering rapid access to IDA management, including intravenous iron infusions.

We are actively recruiting two additional faculty and look forward to adding another APP to our growing team in the coming months.

And last (but not least!), congratulations to Katie Gabler, NP, and her husband, Lee, on the arrival of their second son, Henry Willys Gabler, born 9/6/2024.

Classical Hematology

Drs. Kelly Davidson, Valery Kogler, Hillary Maitland, and Louise Man
APP: Julie Armatas, Katie Gabler, and Tammy Tedsen

Basic Research

By Charles Chalfant, MD

Basic Research in the Division of Hematology and Oncology had a robust month. Drs. Loughran and Feith and Dr. Aakrosh Ratan in the Department of Genomic Sciences received a notice of award for their National Institutes of Health grant, R01CA178393, entitled, “Genomic Architecture of LGL Leukemia.” The award is for \$3.4M over five years.

A new clinical trial stemming from research guided by the Program Project (P01CA171983) currently led by Drs. Chalfant and Loughran is FDA-approved. Specifically, the Ceramide Nanoliposome (CNL) initially developed by former UVA Researcher Dr. Mark Kester has been approved by the FDA to begin clinical trials in Acute Myeloid Leukemia (AML) (NCT04716452). The P01 group led by Drs. Chalfant and Loughran also recently reported in Blood Advances a new subclassification of AML based on sphingolipid context, which is the target of CNL. This P01 group also received an outstanding score on their new NIH P01 application studying Ceramide-Directed Therapeutics for the Treatment of AML.

In addition to the intense efforts from researchers studying leukemia, Dr. Chalfant received an outstanding score on an NIH R01 grant that proposes to study metabolic reprogramming in macrophages, which is linked to tumor microenvironment regulation and sensitivity of tumors to immune checkpoint inhibitors. His group also published a report in Molecular Therapy-Nucleic Acids characterizing a new long non-coding RNA (CyKILR) linked to specific oncogenotypes with plausible roles in precision medicine.

The Basic Research Section continues to expand, leading to the implementation of new grantsmanship workshops and the development of new mentoring committees and a grant review committee for Hematology and Oncology Research Faculty.

UVA Community Oncology

By Karen Ballen MD

Moving to Community Health contracts, this year was a transition for our team. The UVA Community Oncology Section serves patients with a spectrum of hematologic and solid tumor diagnoses in Fishersville, Culpeper, and Manassas. We thank Liz Gaughan for her excellent leadership of this team for eight years. Dr. Manny Cirenza joined the program in Fishersville, and an expansion of exam and infusion areas is planned. We started seeing patients in Manassas up north and plan to open the UVA Cancer Center in Gainesville.

Fishersville

Drs. Gwendalyn Garcia, Manny Cirenza, and Nicholas Paphitis
APP: Corah Kaufman

Culpeper

Drs. Ali Mahjoub, Pranav Patel, and Balraj Singh
APP: Michelle Otto

Prince William/Manassas

Dr. Balraj Singh

Advanced Practice Providers

Meet the team: Oncology Advanced Practice Provider Supervisors, Jess Kassay-McAllister, DNP, Susie Herndon, NP, and Alycia Yowell-Many, FNP-C, with additional support provided by Bill Lombardi, DNP, Administrator of the UVA Center for Advanced Practice (CAP). There are currently 34 APPs in Hematology/Oncology.

We welcomed eight new faces to our team this year.

Tammy Tedsen, NP – Classical Hematology
Philip DeTrana, PA – Inpatient SCT/Cellular Therapy
Allyson Doss, DNP – Malignant Hematology
Christina Ide, PA – Malignant Hematology
Corah Kaufman, PA – Community Oncology
Rachel Thai-Larsen, PA – CERT team
Stephanie Good, PA – CERT team
Ryan Boyles, – Cellular Therapy/SCT Inpatient

DIVISION PUBLICATIONS

Total number of publications in 2024 - 2/2025: 123

[Cell Type Specific Suppression of Hyper-Recombination by Human RAD18 Is Linked to Proliferating Cell Nuclear Antigen K164 Ubiquitination.](#) Rogers CB, Leung W, Baxley RM, Kram RE, Wang L, Buytendorp JP, Le K, Largaespada DA, **Hendrickson EA**, Bielinsky AK. *Biomolecules*. 2025 Jan 20;15(1):150. doi: 10.3390/biom15010150. PMID: 39858544 Free PMC article.

[Clinical and Genomic Features of Androgen Indifferent Prostate Cancer.](#) Masur J, Ratan A, Wierbilowicz K, Ayanambakkam A, Churchman ML, Graham LS, Grass GD, Gupta S, Kern SQ, King J, Myint Z, Rounbehler RJ, Salhia B, Singer EA, Zakharia Y, Paschal BM, **Viscuse PV**. *Int J Mol Sci*. 2025 Jan 15;26(2):679. doi: 10.3390/ijms26020679. PMID: 39859392 Free PMC article.

[Acute myeloid leukemia mitochondria hydrolyze ATP to resist chemotherapy.](#) Hagen JT, Montgomery MM, Aruleba RT, Chrest BR, Green TD, Kassai M, Zeczycki TN, Schmidt CA, Bhowmick D, **Tan SF, Feith DJ, Chalfant CE, Loughran TP Jr**, Liles D, Minden MD, Schimmer AD, Cabot MC, Mclung JM, Fisher-Wellman KH. *bioRxiv* [Preprint]. 2024 Nov 11:2024.04.12.589110. doi: 10.1101/2024.04.12.589110. PMID: 38659944 Free PMC article. Preprint.

[Acute myeloid leukemia stratifies as 2 clinically relevant sphingolipidomic subtypes.](#) Paudel BB, **Tan SF, Fox TE**, Ung J, Golla U, Shaw JJP, Dunton W, Lee I, Fares WA, Patel S, Sharma A, Viny AD, Barth BM, Tallman MS, Cabot M, **Garrett-Bakelman FE**, Levine RL, Kester M, **Feith DJ**, Claxton D, Janes KA, **Loughran TP Jr**. *Blood Adv*. 2024 Mar 12;8(5):1137-1142. doi: 10.1182/bloodadvances.2023010535. PMID: 38170742 Free PMC article. No abstract available.

[Long-Term Follow-Up of the RESORT Study \(E4402\): A Randomized Phase III Comparison of Two Different Rituximab Dosing Strategies for Low-Tumor Burden Follicular Lymphoma.](#) Kahl BS, Jegede OA, Peterson C, Swinnen LJ, Habermann TM, Schuster SJ, Weiss M, Fishkin PA, Fenske TS, **Williams ME**. *J Clin Oncol*. 2024 Mar 1;42(7):774-778. doi: 10.1200/JCO.23.01912. Epub 2024 January 9. PMID: 38194625 Clinical Trial.

[Dynamic Changes in Circulating Tumor Fraction as a Predictor of Real-World Clinical Outcomes in Solid Tumor Malignancy Patients Treated with Immunotherapy.](#) **Gentzler RD**, Guittar J, Mitra A, Iams WT, Driessen T, Schwind R, Stein MM, Kaneva K, Hyun SW, Liu Y, Dugan AJ, Vibat CRT, Sangli C, Freaney J, Rivers Z, Feliciano JL, Lo C, Sasser K, Ben-Shachar R, Nimeiri H, Patel JD, Chaudhuri AA. *Oncol Ther*. 2024 Sep;12(3):509-524. doi: 10.1007/s40487-024-00287-2. Epub 2024 July 22. PMID: 39037536 Free PMC article.

[Applications of the partial-order continual reassessment method in the early development of treatment combinations.](#) Wages NA, **Dillon PM, Portell CA**, Slingluff CL Jr, Petroni GR. *Clin Trials*. 2024 Jun;21(3):331-339. doi:

[A Pilot Study of the Combination of Entinostat with Capecitabine in Advanced Breast Cancer.](#) **Millard T, Brenin C**, Humphrey C, Dhakal A, Falkson C, Petroni G, Wages NA, **Dillon P**. *Int J Breast Cancer*. 2024 February 7;2024:5515966. doi: 10.1155/2024/5515966. eCollection 2024. PMID: 38356965 Free PMC article.

[Patient-centric care in primary immune thrombocytopenia \(ITP\): shared decision-making and assessment of health-related quality of life.](#) **Maitland H**, Lambert C, Ghanima W. *Hematology*. 2024 Dec;29(1):2375177. doi: 10.1080/16078454.2024.2375177. Epub 2024 Jul 8. PMID: 38975804 Review.

[Current and upcoming treatment approaches to uncommon subtypes of PTCL \(EATL, MEITL, SPTCL, and HSTCL\).](#) **Marchi E**, Craig JW, Kalac M. *Blood*. 2024 Oct 31;144(18):1898-1909. doi: 10.1182/blood.2023021788. PMID: 38657272 Review.

[Precision Oncology in Melanoma: Changing Practices.](#) Dougherty SC, Flowers WL, **Gaughan EM**. *J Nucl Med*. 2024 December 3;65(12):1838-1845. doi: 0.2967/jnumed.124.267781. PMID: 39542696 Free PMC article. Review.

[Immune-related adverse events not associated with survival in advanced or metastatic gastroesophageal cancers.](#) Elghawy O, Patel R, Mullapudi A, Kurian M, Wang J, Xu J, **Kaur V**. *J Chemother*. 2025 Jan 7:1-7. doi: 0.1080/1120009X.2024.2448644. Online ahead of print. PMID: 39773445

[Overtreatment and Undertreatment of Early-Stage Breast Cancer in Older Women: Evaluating the POWER Trial.](#) Turkheimer LM, Yan J, **Millard T**, Ragoowansi H, Showalter SL. *J Surg Res*. 2024 Oct;302:585-592. doi: 10.1016/j.jss.2024.07.027. Epub 2024 August 23. PMID: 39181025

RESEARCH FUNDING DATA

All Research Awards

FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024
\$7,107,000	\$8,460,587	\$10,834,126	\$13,740,678

CLINICAL TRIALS - Hematology/Oncology faculty serve as PIs on 155 active protocols. Selected studies below:

A Randomized, Phase III Trial of Pre-Operative Window of Endocrine Therapy to Inform Radiation Therapy Decisions in Older Women with Early-Stage Breast Cancer (POWER II)

IRB #HSR230513

CT. Gov. ID: NCT06507618

Sponsor Protocol: POWER II

Sponsor: University of Virginia

Principal Investigator: Millard, Trish

Study Contact: Ann Brown amb8e@uvahealth.org, Cara Hanby clh5ke@virginia.edu 434-243-9900, Kim A Bullockkb9d@virginia.edu 434-924-0180, Taylor Reid ukc3zu@virginia.edu

Phase II Trial of Cardioprotective Prophylaxis with Combination of Beta Blocker and Angiotensin-Converting Enzyme Inhibitors During Intensive Chemotherapy for Patients with Newly Diagnosed Acute Myeloid Leukemia

IRB #HSR210151

CT. Gov. ID: NCT04977180

Sponsor Protocol: HSR210151

Sponsor: University of Virginia

Principal Investigator: Keng, Michael

Study Contact: Ann Brown amb8e@uvahealth.org, Cara Hanby clh5ke@virginia.edu 434-243-9900, Kim A Bullockkb9d@virginia.edu 434-924-0180, Jay H Burchard jhb9r@uvahealth.org 434-924-8709, Kelly Reed yvy8ge@uvahealth.org 434-297-7783

A Phase 2/3, Multicenter, randomized, Double-blind, placebo-controlled, study to evaluate the safety and efficacy of Alpha-1 Antitrypsin for prevention of graft-versus host disease in patients receiving hematopoietic cell transplant (MODULAATE Study)

IRB #HSR220016

CT. Gov. ID: NCT03805789

Sponsor Protocol: CSL964_2001

Sponsor: CSL Behring, LLC

Principal Investigator: Volodin, Leonid

Study Contact: Danyelle Coley jcs6rz@uvahealth.org 434-982-5027

Targeted Therapy Directed by Genetic Testing in Treating Patients With Locally Advanced or Advanced Solid Tumors, Molecular Analysis for Combination Therapy Choice (ComboMATCH)

IRB #HSR230432

CT. Gov. ID: NCT05564377

Sponsor Protocol: EAY191

Sponsor: ECOG-ACRIN

Principal Investigator: Reilley, Matthew

Study Contact: Francis Bagley fb9up@uvahealth.org

A Phase III Multicenter, Open-label, Sponsor-blinded, Randomized Study of AZD0901 Monotherapy Compared with Investigator's Choice of Therapy in Second- or Later-Line Adult Participants with Advanced/Metastatic Gastric or Gastroesophageal Junction Adenocarcinoma Expressing Claudin18.2 (CLARITY Gastric 01)

IRB #301467

CT. Gov. ID: NCT06346392

Sponsor Protocol: AstraZeneca

Sponsor: ECOG-ACRIN

Principal Investigator: Le, Tri

Study Contact: Amanda Neider aln4k@uvahealth.org

A feasibility study to examine the impact of a remotely monitored exercise intervention on cardiorespiratory/muscular fitness and fatigue in patients with metastatic castrate-sensitive prostate cancer (mCSPC) undergoing treatment with androgen-deprivation therapy (ADT) intensification

IRB #HSR230542

CT. Gov. ID: NCT06429813

Sponsor Protocol: Prostate 006

Sponsor: University of Virginia

Principal Investigator: Viscuse, Paul

Study Contact: Taylor Reid ukc3zu@virginia.edu

A Phase 1b/2, Open-label Study of Amivantamab Monotherapy and Amivantamab in Addition to Standard of Care Therapeutic Agents in Participants with Recurrent/Metastatic Head and Neck Squamous Cell Carcinoma

IRB #301202

CT. Gov. ID: NCT06385080

Sponsor Protocol: 61186372HNC2002 / OrigAMI

Sponsor: Janssen Research & Development

Principal Investigator: Kaur, Varinder

Study Contact: Rachael L Zhang rlz4fp@virginia.edu 571-699-6379

A phase 1b open-label study to evaluate the safety and anti-cancer activity of loncastuximab terisine in combination with other anti-cancer agents in patients with relapsed or refractory B-cell non-Hodgkin lymphoma

IRB #HSR220009

CT. Gov. ID: NCT04970901

Sponsor Protocol: ADCT-402-105

Sponsor: ADC Therapeutics S.A.

Principal Investigator: Ayers, Emily

Study Contact: Michal Ande mma2cz@uvahealth.org 434-297-5150

A Phase 3, multicenter, randomized, open-label, parallel group, treatment study to assess the efficacy and safety of the lifileucel (LN-144, autologous tumor-infiltrating lymphocytes [TIL]) regimen in combination with pembrolizumab compared with pembrolizumab monotherapy in participants with untreated, unresectable or metastatic melanoma

IRB #HSR230237

CT. Gov. ID: NCT06346392

Sponsor Protocol: IOV-MEL-301

Sponsor: Iovance Biotherapeutics, Inc.

Principal Investigator: Gaughan, Elizabeth

Study Contact: Samantha Schaeffer sms6wn@uvahealth.org

A Randomized, Phase IIB, Multicenter, Trial of Oral Azacytidine Plus Romidepsin versus Investigator's Choice in Patients with Relapse or Refractory Peripheral T-cell Lymphoma (PTCL)

IRB #HSR200080

CT. Gov. ID: NCT06246916

Sponsor Protocol: PTCL-001

Sponsor: University of Virginia

Principal Investigator: Marchi, Enrica

Study Contact: Aishling Rada jdp5pg@uvahealth.org 434-924-0816, Ann Brown amb8e@uvahealth.org, Cara Hanby clh5ke@virginia.edu 434-243-9900, Kim A Bullock kb9d@virginia.edu 434-924-0180, Jay H Burchard jhb9r@uvahealth.org 434-924-8709

A Randomized Phase 2 Study of Cabozantinib, Ipilimumab, and Nivolumab in Patients with Soft Tissue Sarcoma

IRB #301653

CT. Gov. ID: NCT05836571

Sponsor Protocol: 10556

Sponsor: ETCTN

Principal Investigator: Cavalcante, Ludimila

Study Contact: Zoe Hemmer zh7jf@virginia.edu

A Phase 3, Open-Label, Randomized, Multicenter Study of DZD9008 versus Platinum-Based Doublet Chemotherapy as First-Line Treatment for Patients with Locally Advanced or Metastatic Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer Harboring Epidermal Growth Factor Receptor Exon 20 Insertion Mutation

IRB #HSR230066

CT. Gov. ID: NCT05668988

Sponsor Protocol: DZ2022E0005

Sponsor: Dizal Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd

Principal Investigator: Gentzler, Ryan

Study Contact: Francis Bagley fb9up@uvahealth.

Gracie Hockenberry mgt4n@virginia.edu 434-297-7784

ADMINISTRATION NEWS

New Hires!

Jaime Collins joined Hematology/Oncology in March 2024 as an Administrative Generalist. Jaime has worked for UVA for 5 years, and we are delighted that Jaime has joined our administrative team.

Mandana Hyder joined Hematology/Oncology as Finance Generalist on May 6, 2024. Mandana has worked for UVA for 26 years, and we are delighted that Mandana has joined our finance team.

Eileen Trainum joined Hematology/Oncology on December 2, 2024, as the Pre-Award Grants and Contracts Financial Services Specialist. Eileen has worked for UVA for 20 years.


We are delighted that Jaime, Mandana, and Eileen have joined our administrative team!

DIVISION EVENTS

Updates in Hematology & Hematologic Malignancies 2024 April 12, 2024 in Charlottesville, VA



Front L to R: Karen Ballen, Laahn Foster, Cameron Lee, Alana Ferrari, Kelsey Ferralli, Firas El Chaer
Back L to R: Krithika Shanmugasundaram, Brad Kahl, Michael E. Williams, Emily Ayers, Daniel Reed, Craig Portell




2025 UPDATES IN HEMATOLOGY AND HEMATOLOGIC MALIGNANCIES

April 11, 2025
The Omni Hotel
212 Ridge McIntire Rd, Charlottesville

This program will explore research and advances in the diagnosis and management of benign hematologic conditions and hematologic malignancies, including indications for novel therapies and use in special populations.

More information at www.cmevillage.com

VIEW BROCHURE



Hematology/Oncology Division Retreat



Tri Le, Katie Stiebing, Marie Thomas, Craig Portell, John Densmore



Krithika Shanmugasundaram, Paul Skelton, Elizabeth Lester, Gwenalyn Garcia, Michael Williams



Patrick Dillon, Laahn Foster, Karen Ballen, Matthew Reilley, Kaitlyn Stiebing



Francine Garrett-Bakelman, John Wagner, Judy Kauffman, Ali Mahjoub



Hematology/Oncology Group



Ryan Gentzler, Leonid Volodin, Jessica Kassay-McAllister, Kelly Davidson, Jenna Ally, Muneeb Rehman

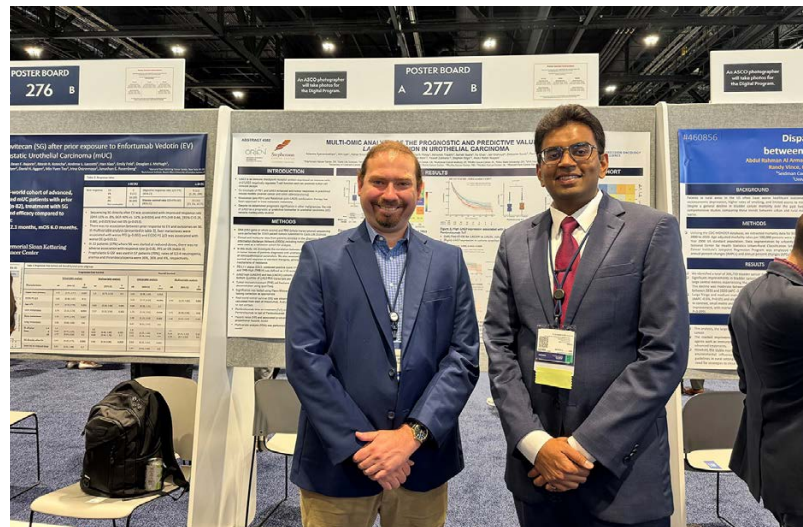
American Society of Clinical Oncology Annual Meeting May 31 - June 4, 2024 in Chicago, Illinois



From left: Drs. Paul Skelton, Mike Keng



From left: Drs. Paul Skelton, Paul Viscuse, Jack Masur (fellow)



From left: Drs. Paul Skelton and Adanna Ayanambakkam from Stephenson Cancer Center University of Oklahoma, in front of our poster “Multi-omic analysis of the prognostic and predictive value of LAG3 expression in urothelial carcinoma”



From left: Drs. Paul Viscuse, Mike Devitt, Paul Skelton

San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium December 10-14, 2024 in San Antonio, Texas



From left: Drs. Ali Mahjoub, Jenna Schlefman (fellow), Trish Millard and Patrick Dillon



From left: Jenna Schlefman, Trish Millard, Pooja Arora (former fellow), Patrick Dillon and Ali Mahjoub

**The 65th American Society of Hematology Annual Meeting
December 7-10, 2024 in San Diego, California**



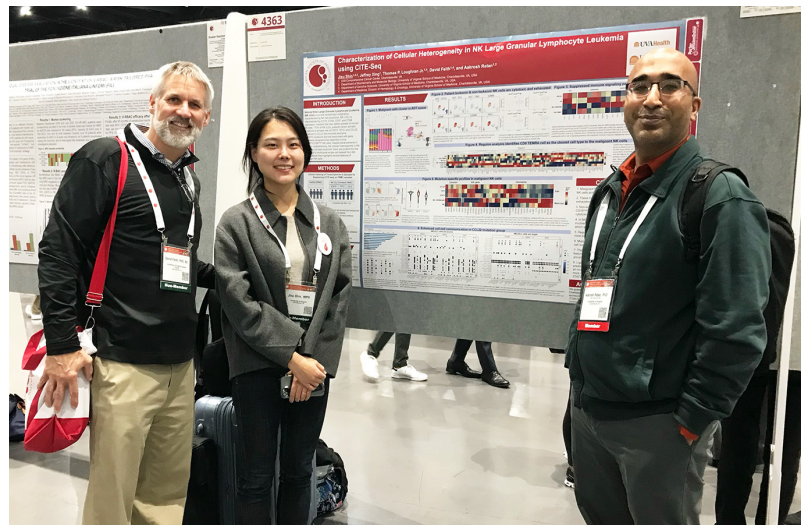
From left: Drs. Valerie Tran, Kelly Davidson, Laahn Foster, Craig Portell, Dave Feith, Michael E. Williams, Karen Ballen, Enrica Marchi, Lisa Hardy, Firas El Chaer



From left: Drs. Dave Feith, Craig Portell, Krithika Shanmugasundaram, Enrica Marchi, and Firas El Chaer



From left: Drs. Valerie Tran and Kelly Davidson



From left: Dave Feith, Jisu Shin, Aakrosh Ratan

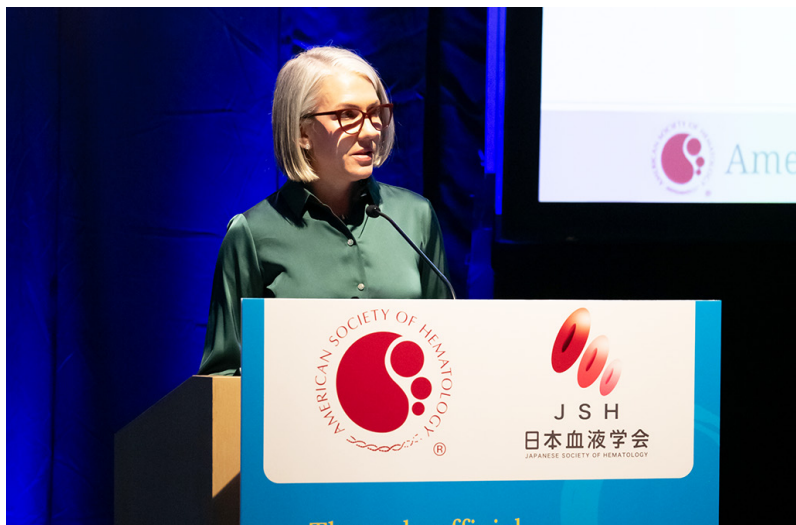


From left: Drs. Krithika Shanmugasundaram, Karen Ballen, Michael E. Williams, Craig Portell, Enrica Marchi, Laahn Foster, Nathan Roberts, Kelly Davidson, Valerie Tran, and Firas El Chaer



From left: Drs. Matthew Reilly, Paul Kunk, Tri Le, Einsley Janowski and Jenna Ally, NP

**2025 Highlights of ASH in Asia-Pacific
February 22-23, 2025 in Yokohama, Japan**



2025 Highlights of ASH in Asia -Pacific Kelly Davidson



2025 Highlights of ASH in Asia -Pacific Kelly Davidson

**Transplantation & Cellular Therapy Meeting
February 12-16, 2025 in Honolulu, HI**



Jess Kassay-McAllister and husband Mark with other attendees



From left: Jess Kassay-McAllister, Krithika Shanmugasundaram, Philip DeTrana



DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE AWARDS

- Ali Mahjoub**–Excellence in Clinical Care
- Pranav Patel**–Excellence in Clinical Care
- Anuradha Illendula**–Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Award
- Rick Hall**–Excellence in Education
- Enrica Marchi**–Excellence in Mentorship
- Craig Portell**–Excellence in Research
- Jodi Leake**–Outstanding Staff Contributor

Newest Members of the Family



Congratulations to Drs. Michael and Rachelle Keng who welcomed baby Liam Michael in October 2024.



Congratulations to Drs. Emily and Michael Ayers who welcomed baby Evelyn Elizabeth and Beatrice Anne in February 2025.



Congratulation to NP Christina and husband Bill Ide who welcomed baby Bridget Linda Ide in March 2025.



Congratulations to Dr. Indu Varadarajan and husband Sid who welcomed baby Vedavalli in March 2024.



Congratulations to NP Katie Gabler and husband Lee who welcomed baby Henry Willys Gabler in September 2024.



Congratulations to Drs. Muneeb Rehman and Noreen Khan who welcomed baby Ibrahim Khan Rehman in March 2025.

Hematology/Oncology Grand Rounds
First Wednesday of Each Month
8 a.m. – 9 a.m.
ZOOM LINK

DIVISION PROFILE

STAFF - Lisa Mackey



Lisa and her children Tristan and Mikah

Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I've been at the University of Virginia for nearly 23 years, with 20 spent in Hematology/Oncology. I've lived in Charlottesville for most of my life, and it's a place I truly call home. Outside of work, I'm a proud mommy to my nine-year-old son, Tristan, and my six-year-old daughter, Mikah.

Why Education?

I became a medical education coordinator because I enjoy organizing and supporting the training process, helping ensure that future healthcare providers have the resources and structure they need to succeed.

What brought you to Charlottesville?

My family moved to Charlottesville when I was 4, and it has felt like home ever since. Growing up here, I've developed a deep connection to the community and the area, and I'm grateful to have made it my lifelong home.

What excites you about your work?

What excites me most about my work is that every day brings something different. There are so many moving pieces, and that variety keeps things interesting. I also feel fortunate to work with amazing teams—both in medical education and within the Heme/Onc admin group—where collaboration is genuinely valued, and everyone works together seamlessly.

What do you consider to be your greatest achievement outside the professional realm?

My children are, without a doubt, my greatest achievement. Those who know me can attest that I'm an introvert at heart, but my kids could not be more different. They are the friendliest, most energetic beings you'll ever meet, and watching them grow into their vibrant personalities has been a truly fulfilling experience.

What are you usually doing in spare time?

In my spare time, I'm all about family—whether it's soccer games, day trips, or movies together.

What is the best advice anyone ever gave you?

The best advice anyone ever gave me was, 'What's for you, is for you.' It's a reminder that everything happens in its own time and that sometimes the path to what's meant for you might not always be straightforward, but it will come when it's meant to.



What is your favorite vacation/activity spot?

My favorite vacation spot is Disney, but honestly, anywhere with sun, sand, and water. There's nothing like relaxing by the beach with a drink in hand, complete with an umbrella! It's the ultimate way to unwind.

What about you would surprise us?

One thing that might surprise you is that I am a Lego nerd. I love doing adult LEGO sets! It's something I find incredibly relaxing, and it helps me re-center like nothing else.



DIVISION PROFILE

AAP - Liz Lester



Liz and husband, Jason

Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I began working at the University of Virginia in 2011 as a PCT while moving into nursing as a second career. I garnered my RN degree from PVCC in 2012 and worked for Bon Secours in Richmond, Virginia, until 2015, when I returned to UVA to work as an RN in the MICU. I began the BSN-DNP program in 2016 at UVA SON. Following graduation in 2019, I started working as an NP in the MICU, training in Charlottesville and working in Culpeper. I transitioned to outpatient cardiology in 2020, and then, in 2023, I was offered the opportunity to help continue building a fledgling service line in the cancer center. In this role, I answer building emergencies here at Emily Couric, respond to all infusion reactions/emergencies on the 4th floor (infusion), and see patients in a same-day oncology clinic designed to help treat patients with symptoms related to their cancer or its treatment. I have worked for the SON for several years, first as a clinical instructor and then as a course professor in the AGACNP program.

Why Healthcare?

I first garnered a degree in English Literature, and while working on my teacher licensure, I was required to take a microbiology course. I loved it! I asked the other students what they intended to do with this knowledge, and the answer was, "Go to nursing school, of course!"- it was a prerequisite for the RN program. My then-boyfriend was also in Medical School here at UVA, so it sealed the deal; I went into nursing and never looked back. I love that you're always learning, trying to solve a puzzle, and making an impact on someone's life. I've been privileged enough to go on to obtain my MSN and DNP from UVA SON, making me a double wahoo. I've worked in the MICU, acute cardiology, OP cardiology, and now I am in a niche role working with Oncology patients who have emergencies or reactions to their infusions/treatments. I also teach at the SON in the AGACNP program.

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What brought you to Charlottesville?

The boyfriend in Medical School! Besides a brief stint living and working in Richmond, VA, I've lived in this area for nearly 15 years. It's a great town near airports, highways and has four temperate seasons; I could go on...

What excites you about your work?

The people, the medicine, the colleagues- I learn something new every day. Most recently, I was accepted into the fellowship cohort for Emerging Cancer Center Leaders, and it has already been exciting and edifying!

What do you consider to be your greatest achievement outside the professional realm?

Outside of the professional realm, I probably completed half marathons- which I no longer do, but it was a fun decade until my knees insisted I stop

Describe yourself in one word.

Studious.

What do you enjoy doing on the weekend?

Anything outside, reading, and baking sourdough. I like to pretend I'm renovating the 1948 house we live in, but ten years later, it's still freezing in the winter, and I have about 10 projects that have never quite reached completion.

How did you meet your partner?

Shoutout to Match.com! Ten years and two kids later, we are still best friends.

What is the one thing you always have in your fridge?

Cheese, of course. Is there any other answer?

Do you have any pets?

Three dogs and a barn cat.

What is your favorite vacation/activity spot?

Mauui, Hawaii- the most beautiful spot in the world. I can be on any beach and be happy, though. We go to Maine and New Hampshire every summer to see our family and we love it up there.

Who is the person you admire most, and why?

Is it too cliché to say Osler? There are so many people who are and have been, and most have some admirable trait if you listen long enough. That being said, I'd love to sit down to dinner with Tolkien and C.S. Lewis, ala "the inklings," because their intelligence, creativity, and understanding of the world's layers are likely still unmatched by most. I'd become more intelligent just by sitting at their table. Maya Angelou would also be great; her ability to bend the English language to her will is unparalleled.

What is the best advice anyone ever gave you?

When I first began my career, a nurse once told me to give the job six months before deciding whether or not I liked it. After that, she said it'd still be challenging, but I would know if it was for me. That was great advice, and it is hard, but medicine is definitely for me.

What about you would surprise us?

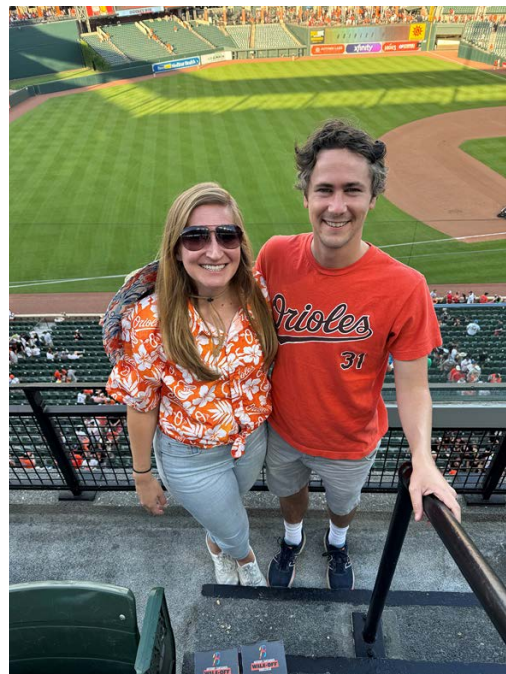
I used to be a manager at Bodo's Bagels on Emmett. Also, I was hit in the head with an ice skate, which required seven electric blue stitches to my forehead- if we are going for a medicine-oriented surprise.

What is a talent or skill you don't have that you wish you did?

Olympic-level ice skating.

DIVISION PROFILE

FELLOW - Jean Clement



At the Orioles game in Baltimore Spring 2024.

runner in high school or college. It was a

What do you enjoy doing on the weekend?

My ideal weekend involves a morning hike with the dog and my husband an afternoon at a panoramic vineyard, followed by a trip to an antique store.

How did you meet your partner?

We met at the most romantic place in the world: Dave & Buster's! It was a friend's birthday. We went head-to-head in arcade basketball (I won).



At Turk Gap with my husband and dog this past fall.

Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I've been at the University of Virginia since July 2024, when I started my fellowship in Hematology and Oncology. Before that, I completed an internal medicine residency at the University of Maryland in Baltimore, Maryland, where I went to medical school! I'm from Raleigh, North Carolina, but I moved to Baltimore in 2013 for a graduate program in molecular microbiology and immunology, after which I worked at the FDA developing diagnostics for two years.

Why Healthcare?

I enjoy caring for patients with hematologic and oncologic disorders and the relationships I form with the patients and their families. Specifically, I enjoy helping patients and their families understand their disease and discussing potential management options.

What brought you to Charlottesville?

I moved to Charlottesville to start a fellowship in Hematology-Oncology at UVA. When I looked at fellowship programs, I was drawn to the kindness of UVA staff and the collegiality of the program. Charlottesville looked like a great place to live. A small town nestled in the mountains? Sounds amazing to me.

What excites you about your work?

Oncologic therapies are rapidly expanding, and it's an incredibly exciting time to offer patients therapies that were not available even a decade ago.

What do you consider to be your greatest achievement outside the professional realm?

I've run two marathons despite not being a hobby I picked up to de-stress.



My husband and I after running the Richmond Half in November 2024.

Do you have any pets?

I have a son, I mean a dog, named Waverly. His is a 45-pound, shaggy Miniature American Shepherd. We take him practically everywhere we go. He's been as north as Philly and south as Crescent Beach, Florida.

What is your favorite vacation/activity spot?

Key West in February! We like the water activities and food. The city gets together at sunset, and everyone cheers when the sun passes from the horizon.

What is the best advice anyone ever gave you?

When I first joined my bench research laboratory, I was intimidated by the knowledge that everyone else had and wondered how I would ever learn everything. One of the other graduate students reminded me that all those people- including the head principal investigator MD, PhD- were once in my shoes and knew as little as I did.

DIVISION PROFILE

FACULTY - David Feith



My wife and I at a Pittsburgh Steeler game.

Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I have been a PhD research scientist at the University of Virginia since September 2013, after previous training and positions at the Penn State College of Medicine. I oversee the day-to-day activities of the research program directed by Tom Loughran, Jr., MD, director of the UVA Cancer Center. Our group varies in size from 15 to 20 individuals, comprised of research faculty, postdocs, grad students, technicians, and clinical research coordinators; plus, we always have a few UVA undergrads with us, too.

Why Research?

I was drawn to research because it is both challenging and rewarding in that it requires you to apply existing knowledge, technologies, and expertise to gain new understanding. Quick and easy answers are rare, so it takes hard work to develop and apply new tools with exceptional team members, many of whom are trainees learning the process. Our group is mainly focused on translational research requiring basic scientist, physician, and physician-scientist collaborators to enable progress that spans biochemistry, cell biology, immunology, genomics, drug discovery and development, and other fields to make impactful discoveries across multiple diseases.



My son and I on a hike at Old Rag.

What brought you to Charlottesville?

I joined Tom Loughran's team about one year before he was recruited to lead the Cancer Center here at UVA. Several team members and I were excited to relocate with him to an excellent research institution with close integration between the school of medicine, health system, and undergraduate components.

What excites you about your work?

The most exciting part of my work is the exceptional collaborators within the Loughran research team, our multi-institutional program project grant in acute myeloid leukemia, and the Translational Orphan Blood Cancer Research Initiative (TOBCRI) at UVA. We have an extremely active research program with many ongoing projects that keep me stimulated and on my toes. Many of these studies utilize our unique Large Granular Lymphocyte (LGL) Leukemia Registry, the largest repository in the world of specimens and clinical records for this rare disease. The translational research from our group has provided the rationale and preclinical data to enable multiple early-phase clinical trials in hematologic malignancies. It's also exciting to work on continually evolving projects regarding discoveries, participants, and directions...no two days are the same.

What do you consider to be your greatest achievement outside the professional realm?

Raising two kids who are far more focused, disciplined, organized, and accomplished than I was at their age. My daughter is a recent University of Pittsburgh graduate in Biology, and my son is a current Georgia Tech freshman in Aerospace Engineering.

Describe yourself in one word.

Facilitator. I enjoy finding new directions, making connections, organizing efforts, and solving problems to advance our research.

What do you enjoy doing on the weekend?

I like to bike and hike and visit local wineries and breweries. I'm a big sports fan, especially the Pittsburgh Steelers and Penguins. I also like to run and currently have a streak of 43 weeks with at least one run. However, I frequently do yardwork, work around the house, or clean and wash cars (which I actually enjoy), plus a bit of work. (Pictures 1, 2, 3)

What about you would surprise us?

I have been playing men's league ice hockey for almost 30 years despite never formally playing organized ice hockey while growing up. I started with roller hockey in high school, pond hockey in college, then pick-up games with fellow grad and med students in grad school. We eventually formed a team and joined a league. I've been on many teams ever since (with the exception of several months to recover from back surgery in 2003). I've played in Richmond since Main Street Arena closed on the downtown mall in 2018.

How did you meet your partner?

This one may surprise you, too; we were high school sweethearts.

What is the one thing you always have in your fridge?

Fresh jalapenos (for pizza, egg sandwiches, burgers, chili, Mexican food, etc.)

What is your favorite vacation/activity spot?

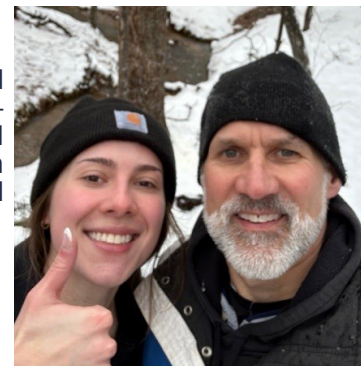
My all-time favorite was a three-and-a-half-week trip to four Hawaiian islands that was part of the most fantastic undergrad J-term class ever offered: Geology and Biology of Hawaii. Only the last week was indeed a vacation, but the whole trip was great. The Current favorite and most frequent vacation spot is North Carolina OBX, where we've rented beach houses with family for 25 years or so. It's a great place to relax with family, and I especially enjoy watching the sunrise over the ocean while sand crabs, pelicans, porpoises, and dolphins wander past.

Would you rather do one thing extraordinarily well or ten things admirably well?

In our large research group with many diverse projects, it's more like 50 things reasonably well.

What's the most unusual thing you have ever eaten?

Seafood gumbo in Cancun has many assorted tentacles and various other bits of unknown species.



My daughter and I hiking during a rare Virginia snowfall.

DIVISION PROFILE

FACULTY - Krithika Shanmugasundaram



My husband, Dr. Ben White and I.

Tell us a little bit about yourself.

After completing a fellowship at the NIH in Hematology/Oncology, I've been at the University of Virginia for two years. Clinically, I take care of patients undergoing bone marrow transplantation or chimeric antigen receptor T-cell (CAR T-cell) therapy, with a research interest in developing clinical trials to improve outcomes in patients needing either of these treatments to cure their leukemia or lymphoma.

What brought you to Charlottesville?

Coming out of fellowship, I sought a faculty position within a supportive academic community. I wanted to be surrounded by incredible clinicians and researchers eager to collaborate and share their wisdom. UVA easily had that. The best part is that Charlottesville is where my boys (four-year-old Valen, one-year-old Suryan, and five-year-old black lab Kupp) could enjoy their childhood while learning and growing in a nurturing neighborhood. After the wonderful people, family-friendly local haunts, and the perfect climate, the Shenandoah mountains just next door were the cherry on top.

What excites you about your work?

I feel incredibly privileged to offer the cutting-edge therapies that we have in the field of hematology/oncology. However, when these therapies fall short, I improve the current science to serve our patients better. I enjoy being able to identify the unanswered questions in cancer care. Then, I get to work on figuring out the following steps, whether designing a new trial or helping translate the important work colleagues and collaborators are doing in the lab into clinical trials.

What do you enjoy doing on the weekend?

I love to take time to get brunch. Visiting the Children's Museum in Harrisonburg with the kids is a treat, and most weekends, I love to peruse Costco with the family.

What is the one thing you always have in your fridge?

Sir Kensington's Chipotle Mayo (it pairs perfectly with salmon burgers)

Do you have any pets?

Our sweet Kuppaswami ("Coop") joined our family in August 2019. We drove to the shelter IMMEDIATELY after we sat for our Internal Medicine boards to meet him and bring him home.



Kupp and myself.



My sons, Suryan & Valen and myself.

Favorite fictional characters?

Abed from Community is one of my favorites. I also love the X-men universe and am so fascinated by Magneto. In a similar vein, I have a soft spot for Severus Snape. Younger Krithika constantly looked up to Mulan.