

MEDICINEMATTERS

JULY 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



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 Office of the Chair



Dear Friends and Colleagues,

July brings renewal, reflection, and resolve. Amid ongoing instability, from President Ryan's resignation to concerns over potential federal cuts to Medicaid, food assistance, and federal research funding. Yet what continues to uplift me is how our department rises to the occasion and does outstanding work.

In this issue, we highlight the Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, a highly active division renowned for its excellence in clinical programs and education. Please take a moment to learn about the division and its amazing people.

We're also inspired to welcome our new cohort of residents and fellows, including our newly appointed chief residents. Their energy, enthusiasm, and fresh perspectives are already enhancing our teaching programs and patient care. I look forward to seeing how they will shape the future of our department.

I also want to congratulate Dr. Coleen McNamara (Cardiology) and Dr. Mohan "Mo" Nadkarni (General Medicine) on receiving the University's highest honor—the Thomas Jefferson Award. Their transformative contributions to research and clinical service exemplify our department's spirit and dedication.

Despite external challenges, your excellence in patient care, research, education, and mentorship remains our brightest beacon. Thank you all for your continued dedication and leadership.

My best to you,
Taison Bell, MD, MBA
Acting Chair, Department of Medicine



"It is a privilege to care for patients through direct clinical work, educating the next generation

of clinician-leaders, conducting research to innovate and cure, and by collaborating with our teams to improve our systems. Thank you to all who are invested in improving the lives of our patients!"

~Andrew Wang MD



UVA

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Department of Medicine

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DEPARTMENT OF NOTE

Department of Medicine Summary of Consolidated Financials May 2025

FY25 as of

	Budget YTD	Actual YTD	\$ Variance YTD
Work RVUs	1,315,083	1,263,798	(51,285)
Clinical Receipts (NPSR)	86,025,603	79,198,139	(6,827,465)
Total Revenues	225,434,454	225,292,077	(142,376)
Total Expenditures	227,428,390	226,123,369	1,305,021
Net Income	(1,993,937)	(831,292)	1,162,645

Summary Explanation of Variance:

1. For the fiscal year through May 2025, DOM reported a consolidated net loss of \$831K and a favorable variance to YTD net income budget of \$1.2M.
2. Clinical receipts underperformed budget by \$6.8M primarily due to lower productivity and lower conversion factor. Productivity was impacted by CrowdStrike software outage, inclement weather interruptions and Community Oncology transitioning to Community Health. In addition, changes in third-party agreements, unrealized budgeted revenue cycle efficiency, budgeted risk withhold for transplant posted to miscellaneous revenue, lower MIPS payments, and accrual model adjustments.
3. Total revenue includes \$5.0M MC clinical deficit and APP gap coverage revenue accrual, \$1.9M unbudgeted internal research support, \$1.8M unbudgeted gifts and \$440K endowment revenue for June 2025.
4. Total expenditures are impacted by unbudgeted hires, extra clinic shifts, unbudgeted merit increases unbudgeted sign on bonuses and unrealized budgeted personnel reduction contingencies.

Welcome To The World



Congratulations to PCCM fellow Caroline Chessare and husband Jason Shugoll who welcomed baby Julia Marie Shugoll on June 6, 2025.

FOLLOW UVA ENDO

FOLLOW UVA ID

**FOLLOW UVA
PULMONARY**

**FOLLOW UVA
NEPHROLOGY**

FOLLOW GASTRO

FOLLOW CARDIO



Patricia Rodriguez-Lozano MD



Todd Villines MD



Nate Roberts MD



Sidhartha Pani MD



Dana Albon MD



Julia Scialla MD



Anne Sperling PhD



Uta Erdbrügger MD



Paul Viscuse MD

AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Congratulations to **Drs. Patricia Rodriguez-Lozano, Todd Villines** (Division of Cardiovascular Medicine), and colleagues on the publication of their study [*“CT Derived Fractional Flow Reserve: Part 2 – Critical Appraisal of the Literature”*](#) in the Journal of Cardiovascular Computed Tomography.

Congratulations to **Dr. Nate Roberts** (Division of Hematology and Oncology) and the **Pathology/Oncology/HR team**, who have been selected to receive a *Hoos Building Bridges Award*. This award acknowledges and celebrates our staff members and teams who are working on projects that span multiple areas of the University.

Congratulations to **Dr. Sidhartha Pani** (Division of General, Geriatric and Palliative Medicine) and colleague Dr. Madhu Misra who co-wrote [*“Bone Metabolism in Celiac Disease”*](#) for Medscape.

Congratulations to **Dr. Dana Albon** (Division of Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine), who has been accepted as a fellow by the *American Thoracic Society* (ATSF) in recognition of her dedication, accomplishments, and contributions to the fields of pulmonary, critical care, and sleep medicine.

Congratulations to **Dr. Julia Scialla** (Division of Nephrology), who has been recognized with a Distinguished Mentor Award by the American Society of Nephrology. Each year, the American Society of Nephrology acknowledges individuals who have demonstrated exceptional leadership and achievements in patient care, research, and education through their lifetime achievement and midcareer awards (ASN Midcareer Awards).

Congratulations to **Dr. Anne Sperling** (Division of Pulmonary and Critical Care), who was selected for the UVA SOM Committee on Women in Medicine and Science (COWIMS) as the June Woman of the Month.

Congratulations to **Dr. Uta Erdbrügger** (Division of Nephrology), who has been selected for a three-year term as a 2025 Pinn Scholar by the School of Medicine. [Read more...](#)

*Correction from the June 2025 Edition: **Dr. Paul Viscuse** was mistakenly left off the list of contributors to this article.* Our apologies. Congratulations to **Drs. Michael Devitt, Robert Dreicer, William P. Skelton IV, and Paul Viscuse** (Division of Hematology and Oncology) on the publication of their paper [*“When You Get to the Fork in the Road, Take It: The Challenges in Managing Patients With Advanced Prostate Cancer”*](#) in JCO Oncology Practice.

DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE MEDICINE GRAND ROUNDS UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA



UVA Resources for Team Members

support for dealing with crisis and how to stay informed

SUBMIT NEWS

FOLLOW WOMEN IN INTERNAL MEDICINE NETWORK

University's Top Honors Go To Doctors Known For Their Heart



Dr. Mohan Nadkarni, Dr. Taison Bell (Acting Chair, Department of Medicine), and Dr. Coleen McNamara (Photos by Matt Riley, University Communications)

Two Department of Medicine doctors received Thomas Jefferson Awards, the highest honor bestowed upon members of the University of Virginia community.

UVA President Jim Ryan presented **Dr. Mohan M. Nadkarni** with the Thomas Jefferson Award for Service and Interim Executive Vice President and Provost Brie Gertler presented **Dr. Coleen A. McNamara** with the Thomas Jefferson Award for Scholarship during a Board of Visitors meeting.

"These awards are the most prestigious honors that the University presents," Ryan told board members and guests gathered in the Rotunda's Dome Room. "They're given to members of the University community who have exemplified the principles, ideals and mission of the University in their character, work and influence. Past recipients include some of the most extraordinary teachers, scholars and citizens to ever walk our Grounds."

[Read more...](#)



Dr. Coleen McNamara



Dr. Mohan Nadkarni



UVA Cancer Center
An NCI-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center

Save the Date for
the Michael J.
Weber Symposium
Friday, October 3

UVA Cancer Center
An NCI-Designated Comprehensive
Cancer Center

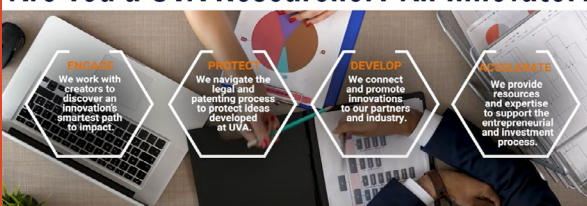
The fifth annual **Michael J. Weber Symposium** will take place on **Friday, October 3, 2025**, at the Claude Moore Medical Education Building (200 Jeanette Lancaster Way).

The theme of the symposium is "**Drugging the Undruggable in Cancer**".

The Michael J. Weber Symposium was established to honor the life and achievements of Michael Weber, a renowned scientist, professor and former UVACCC Director. The symposium aims to bring together cancer researchers and clinicians to present their findings on cancer research, with a focus on integrating basic, translational, and population science research with clinical trials and compassionate patient care.

Questions? Email Muzet Felgar at m6uh@uvahealth.org.
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RESIDENCY**

BREAST

Shorter Anthracycline-Free Chemo Immunotherapy Adapted to Pathological Response in Early Triple Negative Breast Cancer (SCARLET), A Randomized Phase III Study
IRB #302336
CT. Gov. ID: NCT05929768
Sponsor Protocol: S2212
Sponsor: SWOG
Principal Investigator: Millard, Trish
Study Contact: Grace Patsche me7sd@uvahealth.org

GENITO UNINARY (GU)

A Phase 3, Two-part, Randomized, Open-label, Adoptive Study Comparing BMS-986365 versus Investigator's Choice of Therapy Comprising Either Docetaxel or Second Androgen Receptor Pathway Inhibitor (ARPI), in Participants with Metastatic Castration-resistant Prostate Cancer (mCRPC) - rechARge
IRB #302120
CT. Gov. ID: NCT06764485
Sponsor Protocol: CA0711000
Sponsor: Celgene
Principal Investigator: Dreicer, Robert
Study Contact: Anna Cappelina sdu6dy@uvahealth.org

SARCOMA

A Randomized Phase III Trial of Doxorubicin + Pembrolizumab Versus Doxorubicin Alone for the Treatment of Undifferentiated Pleomorphic Sarcoma (UPS) and Related Poorly Differentiated Sarcomas
IRB #302338
CT. Gov. ID: NCT06422806
Sponsor Protocol: EA7222
Sponsor: ECOG-ACRIN
Principal Investigator: Cavalcante, Ludimila
Study Contact: Huimin Ge nut7uh@uvahealth.org

THORACIC

A Phase I Dose Finding and Phase II Randomized Trial of Iadademstat Combined with Immune Checkpoint Inhibition Maintenance After Intial Chemoimmunotherapy in Patients with Extensive-Stage Small Cell Lung Cancer
IRB #302115
CT. Gov. ID: NCT06287775
Sponsor Protocol: 10629
Sponsor: ETCTN
Principal Investigator: Gentzler, Ryan
Study Contact: Yaroslav Shvorakf ys7cb@uvahealth.org 434-297-7384

A Master Protocol to Evaluate Biomarker=Driven Therapies and Immunotherapies in Previously-Treated Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer (Lung-MAP Screening Study)
IRB #302137
CT. Gov. ID: NCT03851445
Sponsor Protocol: LUNGMAP
Sponsor: SWOG
Principal Investigator: Gentzler, Ryan
Study Contact: Christopher jcc4dt@uvahealth.org 434-297-8854

A Phase II Study of Amivantamab SC (subcutaneous) in Participants with MET Amplification-Positive Stage IV or Recurrent Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer (Lung-MAP Sub-Study)
IRB #302167
CT. Gov. ID: NCT06116682
Sponsor Protocol: S1900J
Sponsor: SWOG
Principal Investigator: Gentzler, Ryan
Study Contact: Gracie Hockenberry mg14n@virginia.edu 434-297-7784

A Randomized Phase II Study of Capmatinib plus Osimertinib with or without Ramucirumab in Participants with EGFR-Mutant, MET-Amplified Stage IV or Recurrent Non-Small Cepp Lung Cancer (Lung_MAP Sub-Study)
IRB #302182
CT. Gov. ID: NCT05642572
Sponsor Protocol: S1900G
Sponsor: SWOG
Principal Investigator: Hall, Richard
Study Contact: Gracie Hockenberry mg14n@virginia.edu 434-297-7784

A Randomized Phase II/III Study of Docetaxel and Ramucirumab with or without Cemiplimab (REGN2810) for Paticipants Previously Treated with Platinum-based Chemotherapy and Immunotherapy for Stage IV or Recurrent Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer (Lung-MAP Non-Matched Sub-Study)
IRB #302346
CT. Gov. ID: NCT06616584
Sponsor Protocol: S1800E
Sponsor: SWOG
Principal Investigator: Hall, Richard
Study Contact: Christopher jcc4dt@uvahealth.org 434-297-8854

DEPARTMENT EDUCATION UPDATE



By Brian Uthlaut, MD

It has been another busy and exciting spring in the realm of education in the Department of Medicine, as another year of residents and chief residents close out the academic year, and another year of students graduate from the University of Virginia School of Medicine.

Mulholland Department Teaching Award

Each year, the outgoing medical students select a clinical department to recognize for providing the best educational experience. For the record-breaking **tenth** straight year (and 17 years out of 21), the Department of Medicine was honored by our students with this award. This continues the longest streak of consecutive awards in the more than four-decade history of the Mulholland Department Award. It is a testament to our daily commitment to education and inclusion in the clinical learning environment, as evidenced by the variety of experiences our students rotate through in our Department. It is truly an award that all staff, residents, fellows, and faculty should celebrate. Thank you and congratulations!

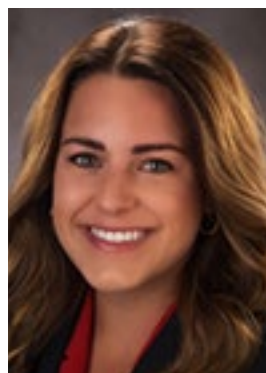
Resident and Fellow Teaching Awards from Students



Dr TJ Babalola



Dr Jason Erno



Dr Emily Jezewski



Dr Heather Frazier

Congratulations to IM Residents **Drs. TJ Babalola, Jason Erno, and Emily Jezewski**. Each was selected for one of ten Mulholland Resident/Fellow Teaching awards.

Dr. Heather Frazier was also recognized at the School of Medicine graduation ceremony with the Kindred Award—an award given by the

graduating class to a member of the housestaff felt to have displayed the greatest enthusiasm for teaching while inspiring them through the experience of uncertainty. Congratulations to these committed and outstanding physician teachers!

MAY 23rd - Chief Resident Grand Rounds and Residency Program Awards

Outgoing chief residents— **Drs. Thompson Barr, Marcus Ellison, Shaina Hasan, and Kia Salafian** did an outstanding job teaching and leading the residency program this past year. Their Grand Rounds— *“We Miss the Precedented Times: The Chiefs’ Guide to the New Normal”*—capped a year of outstanding achievement and leadership from our chiefs and by residents.



Drs. Marcus Ellison, Kia Salafian, Thompson Barr, and Shaina Hasan

We honored many residents, faculty, and staff in our year-end awards:

- Outpatient Nurse/NP of the Year: **Karen McNeill (UMA)**
- Outpatient Attending of the Year: **Allison Lyons, MD (General Medicine)**
- Inpatient Attending of the Year: **Rebecca Clemo, MD (Hospital Medicine)**
- Inpatient Nurse/NP of the Year: **Meredith Davis, NP (Palliative Care)**
- Case Manager of the Year: **Cassie Houchens (3East)**
- Emergency Medicine Resident of the Year: **Grant Robinson, MD**
- Outstanding Fellow of the Year: **John Popovich, MD (Pulmonary-CCM)**
- Outstanding Fellow of the Year: **Caroline Chessare, MD (Pulmonary-CCM)**
- Andy Wolf Award: **David Guarraia, MD (Cardiology)**
- Leadership Service and Advocacy Award: **Hector Picon, MD**
- Intern Professionalism Award: **Margaux Everingham, MD**
- Resident Teaching and Mentorship Award: **Heather Frazier, MD**
- Leroy Dunn Award: **Kenan Michaels, MD**
- Esprit de Corps Award: **Hannah Laird, MD**
- Brodie Resident Clinician Award: **Robyn Goodrich MD, and Michael Bates, MD**
- Mulholland Resident Teaching Award: **TJ Babalola, MD, Jason Erno, MD, and Emily Jezewski, MD**



From left: Brian Uthlaut MD, Margaux Everingham MD, Karen McNeill, Meredith Davis NP, Grant Robinson MD, Caroline Chessare MD, Allison Lyons MD, Rebecca Clemo MD, David Guarraia MD, Heather Frazier MD, Hector Picon MD, Hannah Laird MD, Kenan Michaels MD



Robyn Goodrich MD being presented the Brodie Resident Clinician Award.



Michael Bates MD being presented the Brodie Resident Clinician Award.

View More Photos From the Awards Event

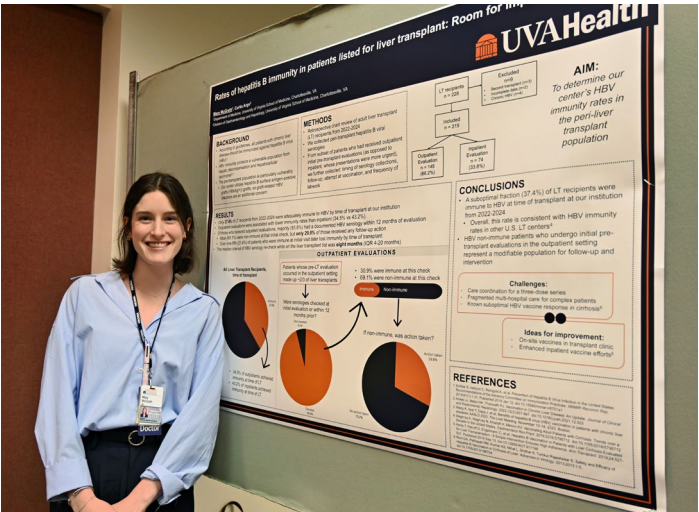
May 27th: Carey, Marshall, and Thorner Research and Scholars' Day

The Department of Medicine's Carey, Marshall, and Thorner Research & Scholars' Day was held in the Education Resource Center on May 27th, with Grand Rounds on May 30th, delivered by Dr. Scott Heysell. This annual research celebration of the Department of Medicine included five oral presentations and 62 poster presentations. The investigation spanned all medical disciplines, including allergy, immunology, endocrinology, nephrology, pulmonology, general medicine, gastroenterology, cardiology, infectious diseases, hematology and oncology, rheumatology, as well as medical education and physician well-being.

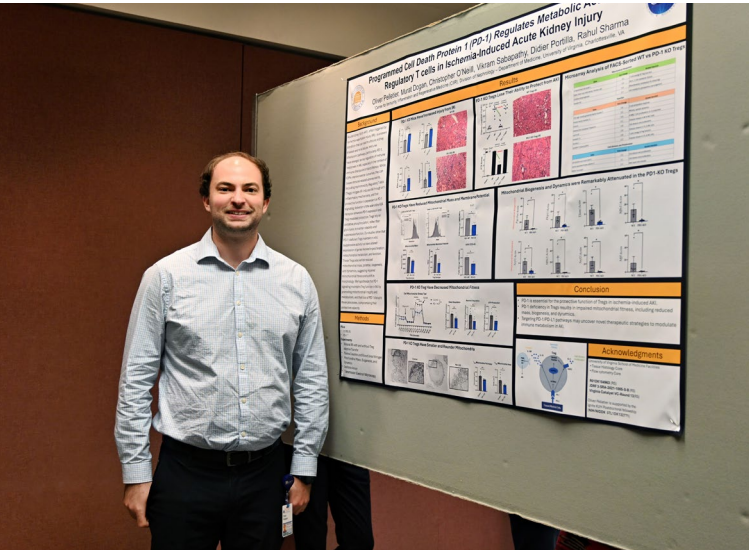
Presenters included residents and interns, subspecialty fellows, graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and undergraduates. The titles of the presentations receiving awards are given below as a sample of the exciting science that members of the Department of Medicine are conducting.

Outstanding Publications:

- **Farha Naz**
- **Vikram Sabapathy**
- **Sean Dougherty**



Mary McGrath



Oliver Pelletier

- **Mary McGrath** - Rates of hepatitis B Vaccination in Patients Listed for Liver Transplant: Room for Improvement

Outstanding Oral Presentations:

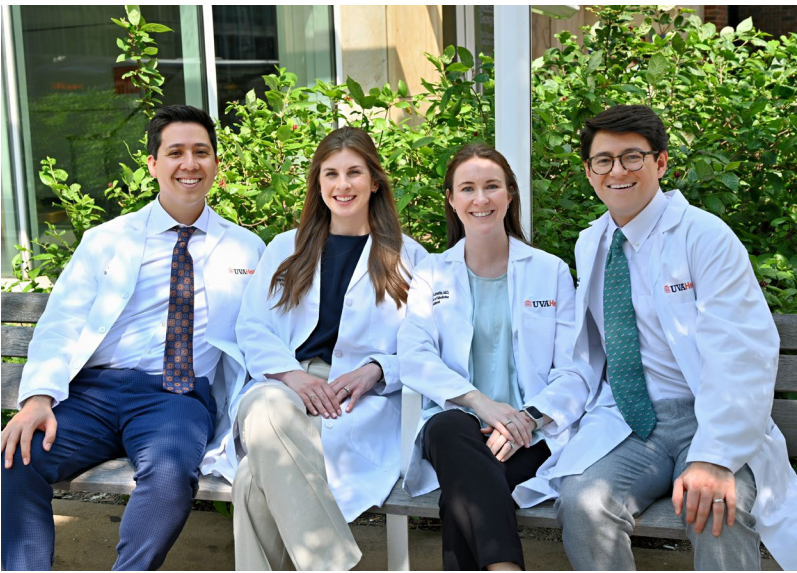
- 1st Place – **Becky Brown** – Characterizing Serositis-Type GVHD
- 2nd Place – **Sara Young** - Improved Survival with Sodium-Glucose Cotransporter-2 Inhibitors and Immune Checkpoint Inhibitors in Metastatic Solid Tumors

Shyr-Te Ju Immunology Award:

- Tie between **Vikram Sabapathy** and **Hiro Inoue**

Outstanding Poster Presentations:

- **Eibhlin Goggins** - Pulsed Ultrasound Targeted to the Spleen Mitigates Against Kidney Injury and Permits Kidney Repair
- **Oliver Pelletier** - Programmed Cell Death Protein 1 (PD-1) Regulates Metabolic Activity of Regulatory T Cells in Ischemia-Induced Acute Kidney Injury
- **Daniel Bailey** - Developing a Probe-Based Bioconjugation Methodology to Capture and Identify the Bacterial Target(s) of Chemokine-Derived Antimicrobial Peptides
- **Abhijit Ravindran** - Coronary Calcium Score Versus Coronary Stenosis for the Prediction of Major Cardiovascular and Transplant-Related Outcomes in Lung Transplant Patients



Drs. Keven Toy, Heather Frazier, Laura Beth Lavette, and Michael Bates

JUNE/JULY Transitions

Our PGY-3 graduating residents completed their training in June 2025 and are heading to positions in hospital medicine, primary care internal medicine, or continuing their training in subspecialty fellowships, near and far. We held a wonderful end-of-residency celebration in the Dome Room of the Rotunda on May 23rd, honoring our graduates and spending time in fellowship with them and many of their families. To our class of 2025, congratulations and thank you!

On June 1st, our new chief residents began their tenure as leaders, teachers, and mentors for the 2025-2026 academic year. Welcome to the Chief Residents' Office, **Drs. Michael Bates, Laura Beth Lavette, Heather Frazier, and Kevin Toy.**

Our intern class of 2024-2025 has been a superb group that has established outstanding clinical acumen and commitment to our educational mission. They celebrated the upcoming end of the intern year on June 14th with the traditional year-end Intern Appreciation Day, during which upper-level residents, fellows, and faculty covered the inpatient services so that all interns could come together to celebrate.

This year's new class of interns will be oriented during the week of June 23rd–30th and will begin on July 1st. Please welcome the new class of physicians to UVA as they arrive in July.



House Staff 2025 (Photos by Kim Kelley-Wagner)

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Each year, the Department of Medicine has the honor of selecting a 4th-year medical student recipient for each of two awards. For the graduating class of 2026, we are now accepting nominations with a deadline of **Friday, August 1, 2025!**

The award descriptions and selection criteria are listed below. The selection committee is comprised of the following faculty from the Charlottesville and Inova campuses, in alphabetical order: Molly Hughes, Alex Millard, Glenn Moulder, Brad Nitta (Inova campus), Brian Uthlaut, and Homan Wai (Inova campus). Please send your nominations to Molly Hughes at mah3x@uvahealth.org, specifying the award for which you are nominating a student. The final selection of awardees will be determined in August, allowing students to include the award information in their residency applications, which are due in early September.

The Gratton Alexander Litz Award honors Dr. Alex Litz, who graduated from the UVA SOM in 1983. He completed his Internal Medicine residency at the University of Alabama, where he received many teaching and clinical awards and was named "Outstanding Medicine Resident." He was selected to be Chief Resident at UAB but developed cancer during his final year of residency and, tragically, passed away from cancer in November 1986. His family, friends, and colleagues established this award to honor the attributes that Alex exemplified.

Litz Award - Selection criteria: a 4th-year medical student who exhibits all of the following:

- Excellent clinical skills
- Outstanding ability to interact with patients
- Zest and enthusiasm for the Clerkship
- Eagerness to learn
- Good sense of humor
- Evidence of being a well rounded person

The Herbert R. Farber Award honors Dr. Herbert R. Farber, who graduated from the UVA SOM in 1940. Dr. Farber had a passion for medicine and was a well rounded individual with a wide range of outside interests and hobbies, including accomplishments in sports and the fine arts. The Farber family set up this award to honor these attributes.

Farber Award - Selection criteria: a 4th-year medical student who exhibits the following:

- Excels in the Internal Medicine Clerkship
- Demonstrates excellence in athletics or in the fine or performing arts



Drs. Taison Bell and Brian Uthlaut show off the Mulholland Department Teaching Award which for the tenth year running, the Department of Medicine has secured. Congratulations all! (Photo by Jack Looney)

CONGRATULATIONS
CONGRATULATIONS
CONGRATULATIONS
CONGRATULATIONS
CLASS OF 2025!

IN **DEPARTMENT** MEDIA

Dr. William Horton talks with MedPage Today about key takeaways from the recent American Association of Clinical Endocrinology annual meeting.

Dr. William Horton talks with MedPage Today about key takeaways from the recent American Association of Clinical Endocrinology annual meeting. Experts highlighted new approaches to identifying and managing hypercortisolism in patients with type 2 diabetes, innovations in insulin pump technology, and emerging cardiovascular risk markers.

In this MedPage Today video, William Horton, MD, of the University of Virginia School of Medicine in Charlottesville, discusses key takeaways and shares how his own research is addressing heart failure risk in patients with type 1 diabetes.

WATCH VIDEO



HIV Discovery Could Open Door to Long-Sought Cure

University of Virginia School of Medicine scientists have uncovered a key reason why HIV remains so difficult to cure: Their research shows that small changes in the virus affect how quickly or slowly it replicates, and how easily or stubbornly it can reawaken from hiding.

These insights bring researchers closer to finding ways to flush out the dormant virus and eliminate it for good.

“HIV treatment is lifesaving but also lifelong,” said Patrick Jackson, MD, one of the two lead authors on the paper. “Understanding how the virus stays latent in cells could help us develop a lasting cure for HIV.”

**READ MORE
and
HERE**

How Black Lung Came Roaring Back to Coal Country - The New York Times

At the University of Virginia, Dr. Drew Harris, a pulmonologist, read the report and wanted to help. Now, once a month, he drives the 300-plus miles from his office in Charlottesville, Va., to see patients who have black lung — or might soon.

The time he spends in St. Charles is packed with appointments. He's the only pulmonologist for Stone Mountain Health Services, which runs two black lung clinics in southwest Virginia. His patients, including Mr. Thacker and the Brocks, often drive more than an hour to see him.

Dr. Harris administers breathing tests and looks over CT scans to monitor disease progression in established patients, the sickest of whom arrive with portable oxygen units.

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UVA Health is the first in Virginia to use a new heart valve procedure. News29 talks to Dr. John Saxon

A first-of-its-kind procedure is being performed in Virginia thanks to UVA Health. Doctors there recently became the first to use a new valve system to treat tricuspid regurgitation, a serious condition in which one of the heart's valves fails to close correctly.

"If the tricuspid valve leak isn't treated, people will continue to feel shortness of breath, particularly when they exert themselves," said cardiologist Dr. John Saxon.

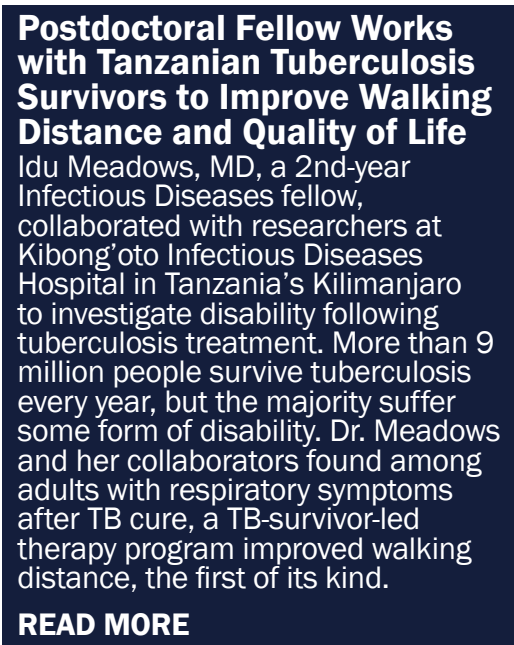
WATCH ON 29NEWS



Jie Sun, PhD, Secures Grants Totaling \$6.2 Million to Study Aging and Chronic Diseases After Viral Injury

Harrison Distinguished Teaching Professor of Medicine Jie Sun, PhD, has secured two new five-year NIH R01 awards totaling \$6.2 million. Dr. Sun's projects aim to unravel why some people, especially older adults, never fully recover after severe respiratory infections such as COVID-19 or influenza, and to develop strategies that restore healthy lung function.

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Postdoctoral Fellow Works with Tanzanian Tuberculosis Survivors to Improve Walking Distance and Quality of Life

Idu Meadows, MD, a 2nd-year Infectious Diseases fellow, collaborated with researchers at Kibong'oto Infectious Diseases Hospital in Tanzania's Kilimanjaro to investigate disability following tuberculosis treatment. More than 9 million people survive tuberculosis every year, but the majority suffer some form of disability. Dr. Meadows and her collaborators found among adults with respiratory symptoms after TB cure, a TB-survivor-led therapy program improved walking distance, the first of its kind.

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Research's New Unknowns

The University of Virginia magazine talks with Dr. Edward Egelman, Dr. William Petri, Dr. William Knaus, Dr. Mariano Garcia-Blanco, and Dr. Audrey Brown about the impact of federal research funding uncertainty.

"There are breakthroughs that happen literally every week in biomedical research in the U.S.," said William Petri (Grad '80, Med '82), vice chair for research at the Department of Medicine. "It's one of the things where we lead the world."

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**Research
in Motion**

The Alpha-Gal Syndrome Story: How Researchers Traced a Red-Meat Allergy to Ticks

Dr. Thomas Platts-Mills talks with The Scientist about his discovery of alpha-gal syndrome, which causes a red-meat allergy.

"I didn't believe her; it doesn't make sense. People don't become allergic to red meat in the middle of their life." Thomas Platts-Mills

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Mapping Where Housing Materials Add to Risk of Infectious Disease

Dr. Josh Colston's research into housing quality and disease prevention is featured in the University of Virginia magazine.

By identifying risk factors for disease clusters, public health professionals can better pinpoint the potential presence of a disease. "You can then target it for some kind of intervention," said Dr. Colston.

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Rare Tick-Borne Disease is Spreading to Virginia

Health experts are ringing the alarm bell about a rare tick-borne disease slowly making its way into Virginia.

The disease, called babesiosis, is commonly found in the Northeast and Upper Midwest.

For a majority of people, this disease will either have minimal or no symptoms at all. There are rare cases, though, especially for people with weak immune systems.

"It can be severe and people can become anemic and have low platelets and it can be life threatening, but that really is the exception," Dr. Jeff Wilson

"Often times you can just do a simple course of antibiotics, namely doxycycline, for folks who come in with tick bites," Dr. Wilson said. "But it doesn't treat babesia."

To make sure Virginians are properly diagnosed, health experts are asking people, and their doctors, to be on the lookout for this disease during tick-season.

WATCH ON 29NEWS



Q&A: With a rare tick-borne disease now in Virginia, what do you need to know?

With the growth of the deer population come more ticks, which can spread maladies like Lyme disease and Rocky Mountain spotted fever. The deer tick – the same insect that transmits Lyme disease – spreads the parasitic infection babesiosis.

Dr. Jeffrey Wilson answered UVA Today's questions about babesiosis, how it affects people, and how to stay safe this summer.

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**Women In
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Medicine
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*Please share your ideas
with us here.*



Diabetes Screening or Testing: Is Point-of-Care A1c Testing Ready for Prime Time?

Dr. Heather Ferris discusses with Medscape whether point-of-care A1c testing is the most effective screening option for diabetes.

“We’ve had some pretty significant issues recently with inaccuracies in POC A1c testing to the point where we’ve had to completely replace our system,” said Heather Ferris, MD, PhD.

[READ MORE](#)



Sarthak Virmani, MBBS, Elected Co-Chair of Trainee and Young Faculty Community of Practice for American Society of Transplantation

Sarthak Virmani, MBBS, an assistant professor of medicine in nephrology, was elected as the co-chair of the Trainee and Young Faculty Community of Practice (TYF COP) at the American Society of Transplantation (AST). Dr. Virmani will serve for three years: first as co-chair, then as chair and past-chair.

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At UVA Medical Center, scientists are making breakthroughs that could change—and save—lives

Congratulations to **Drs. Richard Hall** (Division of Hematology and Oncology), **Thomas Platts-Mills**, **Jeffrey Wilson** (Division of Asthma, Allergy and Immunology), and **Jie Sun** (Division of Infectious Diseases), whose research work was highlighted by Cville along with Drs. John Lukens, Richard Price, and the Manning Institute.

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Clinical Reasoning with Andrew Parsons and MJ Sacco

By the end of this podcast, listeners should be able to develop an expert-guided approach to identifying and helping trainees improve deficits in diagnostic reasoning, complex decision-making, and effective communication of complicated clinical situations within the healthcare team.

[LISTEN TO THE PODCAST](#)



Rural Hospitals Risk Closure With Funding Bill's Medicaid Cuts, Industry Says

Hundreds of rural hospitals teetering on the edge of financial collapse could be pushed over the edge by healthcare funding cuts and other changes to coverage eligibility included in the reconciliation package passed by the House of Representatives last month,

"Medicaid really is essential for, I would say, everywhere in America—but for rural America, it is probably even more important," Kathleen McManus, MD said.

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Virginia health officials confirm state's third measles case of 2025

Dr. Costi Sifri talks with Richmond NPR-affiliate VPM about measles. Two doses of the measles, mumps and rubella vaccine provide lifetime protection, but unvaccinated people — and infants who are too young to be vaccinated — are very susceptible to infection. "Unfortunately, these circumstances are certainly a pressure test on some preparedness planning, and we're rolling out and developing more resources for our frontline clinicians to be able to respond to this so we do have a measles control plan," said Dr. Sifri.

[READ MORE](#)



Dr. Christopher Kramer talks with Medscape about weight loss drugs. Weight-Loss Drugs

While evidence mounts to support the use of both semaglutide and tirzepatide in people with heart failure who need to lose weight, experts at the British Cardiovascular Society Annual Conference 2025 warned that access to these drugs remains limited in the UK and the US.

Christopher Kramer, president of the American College of Cardiology and chief of the Cardiovascular Division at the University of Virginia Health, said that US insurers seemed to be "working hard to try to limit the use of these drugs to hold down costs."

[READ MORE](#)



Should You Start Colorectal Cancer Screening Before Age 50? Dr. Andrew Wolf talks with Consumer Reports about when to get screened for colorectal cancer.

"A 45-year-old today has the same risk of developing colorectal cancer as a 50-year-old did in the 1990s, when we first started recommending that screening begin at age 50," says Wolf. "A 45-year-old should consider themselves 50 when it comes to colon cancer."

[READ MORE](#)



Exclusive Interview with Prof. Christopher M. Kramer: President of the American College of Cardiology (ACC)

During the 19th Oriental Congress of Cardiology, held in Shanghai, China, the Vessel Plus Editorial Office had the distinct honor of conducting an exclusive interview with Prof. Christopher M. Kramer—current President of the American College of Cardiology. In the interview, Prof. Kramer shared timely perspectives on artificial intelligence (AI), international collaboration, and strategies for addressing global challenges in cardiovascular care.

[READ/LISTEN TO INTERVIEW](#)

UPDATE

DIVISION

Message from Dr. Andrew Wang, Division Chief of Gastroenterology and Hepatology



The Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology is concluding another strong and busy year. Our faculty, fellows, and staff have continued our tradition of excellence in clinical patient care, education, and research. We are fortunate to be the premier academic Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Our Division is comprised of 24 faculty members (nine full professors, eight associate professors, five assistant professors, one clinical instructor, one visiting professor), six advanced practice providers, seven clinical research coordinators (CRC), a clinical research coordinator manager, twelve GI fellows, a Division Administrator, and four administrative staff who make up five sections (Luminal Gastroenterology, Inflammatory Bowel Disease, Interventional Endoscopy, Hepatology/Liver Transplantation, and Education). Our team boasts outstanding clinicians, educators, caregivers, researchers, and professionals. We are regularly referred patients for GI and hepatology care from throughout Virginia and the surrounding states. Additionally, patients seek the Division's subspecialty expertise, consultative care, and advanced endoscopy procedures from across the United States and internationally.

We are pleased to welcome Dr. Mohammad (Shadab) Siddiqui to our Section of Hepatology in July 2025. Dr. Siddiqui, a Professor of Medicine, joins us from the Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) in Richmond, VA, where he has been a key clinician and researcher since 2012. Dr. Siddiqui is a transplant hepatologist with a research focus on metabolic liver disease, biomarker development, and liver transplantation. We are also excited to announce the arrival of Dr. Kenneth DeVault, who will be joining our Section of Luminal GI in August 2025. Dr. DeVault is a Professor of Medicine at the Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville, FL, where he has practiced since 1995. During his tenure at the Mayo Clinic, Dr. DeVault served as Chair of the Department of Medicine for ten years and the Chair of the Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology for six years. Dr. DeVault is an expert in esophageal diseases and upper GI tract motility, and he served as President of the American College of Gastroenterology from 2015-2016.

Our faculty have been recognized with numerous awards and honors this past year. Several have authored clinical guidelines and/or clinical practice updates for our major GI and hepatology societies, which have positively influenced patient care. We wish to congratulate Dr. Neeral Shah, who was honored with the 2025 Outstanding Faculty Member Award, conferred by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV). A SCHEV award is the Commonwealth's highest honor for faculty at Virginia's public and private colleges and universities. Dr. Shah also received a 2025 Award for Excellence in Teaching from the Jefferson Scholars Foundation, which underscores his passion and dedication to educating the next generation of leaders.

The Division is doing more clinical work than ever. We are on pace to provide 15,000 outpatient clinic consultations and perform over 16,000 endoscopic procedures in Fiscal Year 2025. Our annual inpatient consult volumes continue to rise incrementally each year, highlighting the increasing demand for our services. Due to the work of our division's transplant hepatologists, we now staff outreach clinics in Northern Virginia (Arlington) and Southwest Virginia (Wytheville), caring for patients with liver disease and enabling those who require liver transplantation to have access to this life-saving procedure.

As we enter the latter half of 2025, our Division and the UVA Digestive Health Program still have work to do. To meet the demand for the exceptional clinical care we provide, we are actively recruiting outstanding clinicians, educators, and researchers to fill positions in transplant hepatology, inflammatory bowel disease, and general gastroenterology. We continue to partner with the leadership in UVA Community Health (CH) to build a community-based GI/Hepatology program in the Prince William/Manassas corridor. Dr. Rohit Sharda, UVA CH's first GI hospitalist, has led several initiatives that have expanded GI care to patients in Northern Virginia. In the past year, we renovated our two existing interventional endoscopy fluoroscopy rooms and created a third state-of-the-art interventional endoscopy room to meet ever-increasing demands for our advanced endoscopy services. To better meet the huge demand for our general endoscopy services, we began offering outpatient endoscopy procedures at UVA Riverside/Monticello Surgery Center. Our outpatient clinics have expanded to Zion Crossroads, and we anticipate seeing patients in the near future at the UVA Multispecialty Clinic in Fishersville.

As always, our Division and our Physician-Medical Directors continue to work closely alongside our Digestive Health leaders (Rob Teaster, Jody Farmer, Cathy Bauer, Charlotte Lineberry, Susan Gayda, Heather Rojas, and Diane McCourt). Our physicians, advanced practice providers, and fellows would not be able to do what we do without our skilled and dedicated nurses, technicians, medical assistants, and access team members. High-quality patient care is a result of our entire team working together, and we are grateful for the outstanding team we have.

Please take a few minutes to read this issue of Medicine Matters. In these pages, you will learn about the clinical advances and research being pursued by each of our sections.

Finally, we would like to thank our grateful patients, GI fellowship alumni, and all who have made donations to the division to further our academic mission. Special thanks to the family and estate of Jack Chambers, who donated a generous endowed gift in honor of Dr. Steve Caldwell's exemplary care, which we hope will foster outstanding hepatology care and research in our Division for years to come. The contributions of all our generous donors are crucial to everything we do.

Thank you for joining us!

Andrew Y. Wang, MD, AGAF, FACG, FJGES, FASGE
David D. Stone, MD, Professor of Medicine
Division Chief of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, UVA School of Medicine
Director of Interventional Endoscopy, UVA Medical Center
University of Virginia

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Follow Dr Andrew Wang



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DIVISION CLINICAL

Section of Inflammatory Bowel Disease

The Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) Section has faced access challenges over the last year due to the departure of Drs. Esteban Figueroa and Brian Behm from the University in 2024. As a result, the section had to make the difficult decision to limit the number of new patients that can be seen to ensure access for already established IBD patients. Fortunately, in December, **Julia Winegard PA-C**, joined **Anne Tuskey MD**, and **Krysti Homa NP**. In other positive news, **Dr. Preethi Venkat**, one of our senior fellows, has accepted an offer to join the section upon her graduation in 2026. Dr. Venkat plans to start an adult IBD intestinal ultrasound program at UVA.

In addition to its busy clinical practice, the IBD section continues to be involved in clinical research. The section received funding from two NIH awards last year and currently participates in five industry-sponsored IBD clinical trials, as well as two upcoming IBD registry trials. Lastly, Dr. Tuskey continues to maintain a commitment to education and the academic mission of the Division. She is the co-lead for the six-week GI System for UVA SOM's first-year students and was an invited speaker at regional and national meetings this past year.

Section of Hepatology

The Section of Hepatology has remained active and successful in its academic missions in FY25. The 2024-2025 period was exciting, as we had two significant additions to our team. **Dr. Anya Mezina** joined our group in September 2024 and has been working very successfully to advance her clinical and research endeavors while balancing her busy family life with two small children. **Heather Camp FNP**, is a highly experienced nurse practitioner who decided to focus her career path on clinical hepatology and joined our team in September 2024. We are thrilled to have both of these outstanding clinicians join our already strong and talented hepatology group.

Our section is poised for further growth. We are excited to be welcoming **Dr. M. Shadab Siddiqui** to our hepatology faculty on July 1, 2025, as Professor of Medicine. Dr. Siddiqui is an NIH-R01-funded clinical researcher who will bring a strong research element to our group. He will take over as Director of Transplant Research, bringing fourteen years of clinical, educational, and research leadership experience from VCU. Our entire Division is excited to have Shadab join our team.

The Hepatology Section is fortunate to have three highly experienced and talented APPs supporting our team's general hepatology clinical mission. **Colleen Green PA-C**, **Carolyn Driscoll FNP PhD**, and **Heather Camp FNP**, provide outstanding care and bring a wealth of experience to the benefit of our patients with liver disease who come from all across Virginia. In 2024-2025, the group expanded and now conducts hepatology APP clinics at the UVA Specialty Clinic in Augusta and at Zion Crossroads. We all continue to be strongly supported by an exceptional nurse coordinator team, which includes **Amy Brown**, **Katherine Craig**, **Marcia Haney**, **Stacy Harper**, **Faith Mawyer**, **Jivannie Nelson**, and **Jackie Van der Linde**.

Dr. Brian Wentworth had a highly productive year. He founded UVA's first Cholestatic Liver Clinic, which cares for patients with typical cholestatic liver diseases (primary biliary cholangitis and primary sclerosing cholangitis), as well as patients with inherited conditions affecting bile acid transporters. Dr. Wentworth also sponsored visiting hepatologist Dr. Kwang-il Seo from Busan, South Korea. Dr. Wentworth is currently the principal investigator (PI) for five industry-sponsored clinical trials, ranging from cholestatic liver disease to MASH. Brian also had two first-author papers and was a key contributor to an extensive international inpatient study of AKI in cirrhosis patients.

Dr. Zachary Henry successfully spearheaded the addition of an Outreach Clinic in Wytheville, VA to the UVA Liver Transplant program while assuming the Medical Directorship for UVA Living Donor Liver Transplant and establishing UVA's first-ever Transplant Oncology clinic in July 2024. He also served as the Division's Quality Officer, providing mentorship to Dr. Rebecca Haug, who will fully assume this role in fiscal year 2026. Dr. Henry was named one of Virginia's Top Doctors for Gastroenterology. Dr. Henry also co-authored two white papers for the American Society of Transplantation, focusing on obesity and liver transplantation. On a personal note, Zach also completed his first marathon!

Dr. Nicolas Intagliata continued to demonstrate exceptional leadership as Program Director of the Transplant Hepatology Fellowship program, as well as Medical Director of the UVA Transplant Clinic. He has also completed several visiting professorships following the publication of his international multicenter study on peri-procedural bleeding in patients with cirrhosis in the high-impact journal Gastroenterology. Nic will also be participating in the upcoming Baveno conference, the premier conference for discussing and creating international guidelines for portal hypertension management.

Dr. Neeral Shah has had a remarkable year, marked by significant clinical, educational, and leadership achievements. In addition to rotating on the inpatient hepatology service and seeing patients in the general hepatology clinic, he was honored by receiving both the 2025 SCHEV Outstanding Faculty Award from the Virginia Department of Education and the 2025 Jefferson Scholars Teaching Award. Once again, Dr. Shah led the GI course for the medical school and taught the hepatology sections, continuing his commitment to medical education. Neeral served as the Director for UVA's annual regional CME course, was appointed as an Associate Editor for the American Journal of Gastroenterology, and was elected Governor for Virginia for the American College of Gastroenterology.

Dr. Curtis Argo continues to serve as Head of the Hepatology Section in our Division. He is also the Medical Director of the UVA Liver Transplant Program. Dr. Argo will continue to serve as Co-Director of UVA's Controversies in Liver Transplantation fall conference.

Dr. Stephen Caldwell continues as the Director of our Division's Clinical Research Program, overseeing a team of seasoned CRCs and an annual research budget in the \$1.2-1.4 million range.

Our section continues to provide strong support to UVA's Liver Transplant program, which is anticipated to receive over 500 liver transplant referrals this academic year and to perform 80 deceased and living-donor liver transplants, with exceptional one- and three-year patient outcomes. Our team's performance led to our program's first-ever ranking of five out of five bars on the UNOS/SRTR 1-year post-transplant survival outcome metric. This ranks our program in the highest 20% of programs nationally for this metric. The living-donor liver transplant program continues to evaluate record numbers of donor candidates, and Dr. Henry and newly hired transplant surgeon Dr. Juan Francisco Guerra aim to expand the program from its current strong foundation.

Our hepatology team has refined our urgent outpatient clinic visit triage mechanism, which helps provide general and transplant consultative care on a time-sensitive basis according to the urgency of the request. This has been successful in helping to maintain a manageable wait time for accessing hepatology care at the clinic. Dr. Nicolas Intagliata, Dr. J. Andrew Legan (Addiction Psychiatry), and Bill Potts (Transplant Social Work) continue to lead our UVA Liver Transplant team's approach to transplant candidacy for patients with alcohol-related liver disease, emphasizing an individualized, relapse-risk-based approach rather than an inflexible and arbitrary required abstinence period.

Section of Luminal Gastroenterology

Our Section of General or Luminal GI comprises a group of clinically focused faculty who provide a broad range of expert care to meet the clinical needs of patients from the UVA primary care base, as well as, in consultation, patients referred by gastroenterologists, surgeons, and other practices across Virginia. The luminal GI group also takes great pride in its educational endeavors within and outside UVA. This group includes **Drs. Copland, Doran, Frye, Haug, Kumral, Powell, Worthington**, and **Yoshida**, as well as our two advanced practice providers, **Hallie Gunnoe, PA**, and **Julia Felty, FNP**. Our group offers a full array of procedural support, including services that are limited across the Commonwealth for needs such as small bowel enteroscopy and GI motility services (esophageal manometry, gastroesophageal reflux/pH studies, anorectal manometry, smart pill endoscopy, and targeted breath testing). In particular, esophageal motility and reflux studies have played an essential role in supporting other programs, such as the UVA lung transplant program.

Dr. Jeanetta Frye directs Virginia's most comprehensive gastrointestinal motility lab, performing high-resolution esophageal and anorectal manometry, as well as other gastrointestinal physiology studies. This year, **Drs. Haug, Doran**, and **Copland** assisted in creating and executing a fast-track program for esophageal screening at Albemarle Fire and Rescue, along with their Medical Director, Dr. Bill Brady. This program helps support their efforts to use Esoguard for noninvasive screening for firefighters who are at increased risk for esophageal cancer. Furthermore, the Luminal GI group offered key endoscopy services to the community, including high-quality colonoscopy for colorectal cancer screening and an open-access diagnostic upper endoscopy and colonoscopy program for UVA patients.

The luminal group is growing, and we're delighted to welcome **Dr. Ken DeVault** as a Professor of Medicine in August 2025. Dr. DeVault comes to UVA with experience from a storied career at the Mayo Clinic. We are excited about the expertise, mentorship, and clinical acumen that he will bring to the division. We were delighted to welcome **Julia Felty, FNP**, to our group as our newest nurse practitioner. She brings a wealth of experience to the group from her prior palliative care practice, and we're excited to have her join the luminal GI programs.

Our general GI practices are primarily housed at the main hospital, with a smaller satellite clinic at the UVA Crozet Clinic. In addition to the general GI clinics, there are several subspecialty clinics, such as the Celiac Clinic, led by **Dr. Dennis Kumral**, which provides focused care for patients with celiac sprue in close partnership with our dietetics colleague, Mallory Foster. The Society for the Study of Celiac Disease has recognized our clinic at the University of Virginia as part of its Celiac Disease Unit Recognition Program.

Dr. Andrew Copland specializes in the care of small bowel diseases, providing expertise in cases that require video capsule endoscopy and small bowel enteroscopy. Dr. Copland also specializes in endoscopic resection of large gastrointestinal polyps. In 2024, Dr. Copland was the first author of the AGA Clinical Practice Update on Appropriate and Tailored Polypectomy, which was published in the leading journal Clinical Gastroenterology and Hepatology. This year, his research interests have included the use of closure devices to reduce post-resection bleeding, which has been presented at national conferences alongside one of our GI fellows, Dr. Himesh Zaver. As Medical Director of Endoscopy, Dr. Copland oversees our busy Outpatient Endoscopy unit at Monroe Lane. His efforts to expand our endoscopy services have resulted in a new footprint for endoscopy at the UVA Health Surgical Care Unit at Riverside/Monticello Surgery Center.

Dr. Amy Doran serves as the Associate Program Director of our GI Fellowship program. She plays an active role in fellow education, curriculum development, and the GI fellows continuity clinic and is a member of the GME Curriculum Committee. Dr. Doran also served on the DOM's P&T committee, which offers a key service to our Department's faculty. Her efforts were recognized in part with her promotion to the rank of Associate Professor last year. Dr. Doran has partnered with Dr. Frye in research regarding small intestinal bacterial overgrowth, which has been presented at national conferences.

Dr. Jeanetta Frye continues to spearhead the UVA Luminal GI E-consult program in addition to her role as the Director of Motility. She has funded research activities evaluating a prebiotic supplement, ISOThrive, in GERD patients and has partnered with Dr. Doran in research on bacterial overgrowth. She is a stable presence in the Foundations of Clinical Medicine course for the medical school.

Dr. Rebecca Haug has thrived in her first year on the faculty following her graduation from our fellowship program. While growing her active general GI practice, she has taken on an essential role as the Quality Lead for the Division. She has had a productive year, giving many lectures to our residents and fellows. She is also contributing more globally to the School of Medicine by serving on the Clinical Competency Committee.

Dr. Mark Worthington has a busy general GI practice and shares his wealth of experience and enthusiasm with our fellows (and his partners!) daily. This year, he published a Clinical Practice Update on sclerosing mesenteritis for the American Gastroenterological Association. We appreciate his efforts as a member of the School of Medicine's Promotion and Tenure Committee, which serves a critical academic mission. This past year, Dr. Worthington led our expansion in endoscopy services to the UVA Health Surgical Care Unit at Riverside/Monticello Surgery Center. Recently, Mark has taken on the GI role in the C. Difficile Colitis Clinic, guiding when fecal microbiota therapy may be helpful. He also oversees our consultative program for checkpoint-inhibitor colitis.

Dr. Cynthia Yoshida leads the UVA Comprehensive Cancer Center's Colorectal Cancer screening program, which includes active outreach efforts at the UMA clinics, the Charlottesville Free Clinic, and the Haven. Dr. Yoshida continues to partner with Dr. Li Li and Dr. Jamie Zoellner on a project investigating genetic, lifestyle, and community factors that drive the significant racial disparities that exist for colorectal cancer. She is also a partner in a multicenter randomized PCORI study evaluating the effectiveness of colonoscopy vs. noninvasive testing for older patients with a history of low-risk polyps (the COOP trial). She has served as UVA's Virginia CRC Round Table lead, and she remains passionate about educating patients and providers about colorectal cancer screening options and best practices.

Hallie Gunnoe PA, started offering GI consultations in a clinic embedded in the Department of Medicine's University Medical Associates clinic. This collaboration between GI and general medicine has the potential to enable enhanced access to PCPs and their patients to GI care.

Julia Felty, FNP, has brought her knowledge and experience to begin a pilot program assisting our inpatient GI Luminal Consult Service, which has helped UVA Medical Center and has been very well received by our Division.

Section of Interventional Endoscopy

Dr. Nicholas Koutlas, our current Advanced Endoscopy Fellow and Clinical Instructor, performed in an outstanding fashion during the year. He was a welcome addition to our Section and Division and left a lasting impression of excellence in patient care and education. Dr. Koutlas will be joining a practice in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, and we are confident that he will be a highly sought-after clinician and advanced endoscopist in his region.

Dr. Vanessa M Shami, Section Chief of Interventional Endoscopy, continues in her role as Editor-in-Chief of Clinical Endoscopy. Along with her hepatology colleague, Dr. Zachary Henry, she continues to grow the field of endo-hepatology at the University of Virginia. She has just completed mentoring another gastroenterologist in our region as part of the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy's Diagnostic EUS course, which she co-created with two other colleagues at Stanford and the Mayo Clinic in Arizona.



Dr. Sauer's GI team in Guatemala

a small non-profit organization named Central America outReach and Endoscopy (CARE) at caendoscopy.org.

Dr. Bryan Sauer continues to co-direct the Adult Multidisciplinary Eosinophilic Esophagitis (EoE) Program with Dr. Emily McGowan in the Division of Asthma, Allergy, and Immunology. Together, they co-manage over 400 patients with eosinophilic esophagitis (EoE) and have an active research program (NIH R01). Additionally, he contributed to the ACG Guideline on the Diagnosis and Management of Eosinophilic Esophagitis, published in January 2025 in the American Journal of Gastroenterology.

He continues to oversee a Global Health Program in Guatemala, where teams of gastroenterologists, nurses, endoscopy technicians, and certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs) volunteer to provide endoscopy and GI consultative care. In February 2025, he led a team from UVA to Santiago Atitlán, Guatemala, where they performed over 45 procedures and conducted 25 clinic visits. This was the twelfth trip since 2019, during which we performed nearly 500 procedures for people in rural Guatemala who lacked access to endoscopy. To learn more, please visit the website of

Nationally, he also led the ACG Practice Parameters Committee, which is responsible for commissioning ACG clinical practice guidelines. This year, they have published over ten new practice guidelines on a broad range of subjects in gastroenterology and hepatology.

Dr. Ross Buerlein and Dr. Vanessa Shami initiated the EUS-directed chemotherapy ablation protocol for pancreatic cystic lesions at the University of Virginia (UVA), performing the first of these procedures in January 2025. Dr. Buerlein highlighted this exciting new technology on CBS 19 news in February. This procedure is designed to offer an alternative to surgery for managing non-malignant, high-risk pancreatic cysts in some patients, involving the endoscopic ultrasound-guided injection of chemotherapy into a pancreatic cyst. In addition to this work, Dr. Buerlein has launched his prospective study assessing plectin staining on biliary epithelial cells obtained via ERCP-directed biopsies and/or brushings as a novel diagnostic modality for cholangiocarcinoma in indeterminant biliary strictures. Dr. Buerlein has also started performing endoscopic submucosal dissection for the curative treatment of early cancers of the gastrointestinal tract.

UVA Health first in Virginia to offer treatment for pancreatic cysts

Mark Gad Feb 21, 2025



UVA Health is now the first in Virginia to offer a treatment for pancreatic cysts, which can develop into cancer.



Dr. Podboy's sons Isaac and Alden

Dr. Alexander Podboy has been actively engaged in national advocacy as part of the ACG Legislative Fly-In, where he lobbied Congress on critical issues, including prior authorization reform, surveillance colonoscopy policy, and Medicare payment for gastroenterologists. He is a participant in the ACG Early Career Leadership Program and a recipient of multiple grants, including an iTHRIV grant from the University of Virginia School of Medicine (UVA SOM) and Department of Medicine, that support studies on achalasia and post-ERCP pancreatitis. He was a mentor for the UVA SOM Medical Student Summer Research Program. He submitted a K23 application focused on immune phenotyping in achalasia and leads several clinical trials, including the first-in-world use of an endoscopic suturing platform for gastroparesis. His clinical research in bariatric and third-space endoscopy has resulted in seven manuscripts or publications. Most importantly, he and his family recently welcomed a new addition, Isaac, who loves peaches, snuggles, and being a little brother to Alden.

Dr. Daniel Strand received UVA Patient Experience Awards for both Ambulatory Surgery (endoscopy) and Medical Practice (clinic). He was elected to the UVA School of Medicine Academy for Excellence in Education. Locally, he also represented the Division of GI on the DOM Compensation Committee.

Nationally, he received the designation of Fellow of the ACG (FACG) and was appointed to the Editorial Board of the ACG Education Universe (their online education portal). He developed and led the ACG/VGS/MASGNA Regional Postgraduate Course in Williamsburg, VA, in October 2024 and has been invited to teach at two additional societal conferences. He contributed to 5 published peer-reviewed articles (and is a co-author on the NIH-funded SHARP trial's submitted publication). Dr. Strand had a book chapter published in *Quality in Gastroenterology* by Springer.



Dr. Strand (Course Director) and the rest of our division's attendees at the ACG/VGS/MASGNA Regional Postgraduate Course in Williamsburg, VA, in September 2024.

Dr. Andrew Wang completed his term as Chair of the AGA Clinical Practice Updates Committee. He continued his service as Chief of the Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology at the University of Virginia School of Medicine and as Medical Director of Interventional Endoscopy at the University of Virginia Medical Center. Dr. Wang was a co-author of 20 peer-reviewed publications during the past academic year, and he served as the site principal investigator (PI) for the NIH-funded (U01) SHARP trial, which was completed with data presented at Digestive Disease Week in May 2025. Dr. Wang has had the honor of serving as a visiting professor and/or course faculty member at several prestigious institutions in the past year, including Advent Health (Orlando, FL), Henry Ford Health (Detroit, MI), Cleveland Clinic (Cleveland, Ohio), Stanford University (Palo Alto, CA), and the National University of Taiwan Hospital (Taipei, Taiwan).

DIVISION RESEARCH

Clinical research in the Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology has been sustained for well over 36 years and continues to thrive. The current research portfolio encompasses industry-sponsored, state- and federally funded cutting-edge studies. Currently, there are 24 approved and active protocols led by nine Principal Investigators, with a research staff of six experienced Clinical Research Coordinators (Rebecca Hudnall, Cheree Denby, Holly McComb, Stephanie Mills, Lakin Underwood, and Caroline Rivers), who are overseen by CRC Supervisor Sharon Foster and Dr. Stephen Caldwell. The Division's clinical research work has long been a self-sustained and productive enterprise that manages a substantial research budget. The Division also garnered a very generous gift from the Chambers Family in honor of Dr. Stephen Caldwell, which will support clinical work and research in hepatology for years to come.

Notably, recent developments include the work of Dr. Alex Podboy, who is leading an iTHRIV-supported investigation into immunotherapeutic targets in achalasia. Dr. Podboy is also leading a prospective multi-site study to detect pylorospasm noninvasively. He is conducting studies to predict post-ERCP pancreatitis and to develop further endoscopic bariatric procedures aimed at weight loss. The Division is also excited and poised to welcome Dr. Shadab Siddiqui, an experienced NIH-funded (R01) investigator, who will serve as the Director of Transplant Research and continue his successful work on post-transplant metabolic liver disease and the role of weight loss medications in patients with metabolic liver disease. Dr. Siddiqui plans to develop a statewide cirrhosis registry to help target resources using claims/insurance/population data. Other new industry-sponsored studies include a potentially essential and novel investigation of NASH therapy based on specific genetic susceptibility variants, which is now enrolling under the leadership of Dr. Brian Wentworth.

Additional important recent studies include the investigation of fecal immunohistochemistry testing (FIT) versus colonoscopy for colon cancer screening, for which Dr. Cynthia Yoshida serves as our PCORI site principal investigator. Our Division is conducting therapeutic trials in patients with advanced liver disease, including portal hypertension and hepatorenal syndrome, under the leadership of Dr. Brian Wentworth. We are also involved in ongoing and active therapeutic trials in inflammatory bowel disease under Dr. Anne Tuskey, as well as NASH (non-alcoholic steatohepatitis) treatment trials under Dr. Caldwell, which contributed to the approval of resmetirom (Rezdiffra). Dr. Andrew Wang (with the aid of Drs. Daniel Strand, Ross Buerlein, Dushant Uppal, and Alex Podboy) enabled UVA to be the fourth leading site worldwide in the NIH-funded SHARP study—the results of this pivotal trial that randomized patients with idiopathic acute recurrent pancreatitis to minor papillotomy or sham were presented as a late-breaking oral presentation at DDW 2025. Other necessary new and ongoing trials include studies of PBC to prevent disease progression to more clinically advanced disease and one of the first trials of a GLP-1 agonist (efinopegdutide) under Dr. Caldwell to prevent the progression of NASH cirrhosis to a decompensated state.

In other news, the past year has also seen the retirement of Jaye Davis, RN, from the GI/Hepatology CRC team, marking 40 years at UVA, during which 20 years were spent with the GI/Hepatology Research group. Her work and contributions in the Division have been vital over this time and very well appreciated. She will be deeply missed, and we wish her all the best in her well-deserved retirement. The year has also seen the hiring of a new CRC, Caroline Rivers, who joined the group in September 2024 and has already been instrumental in the success of Dr. Yoshida's colon cancer screening trial, resulting in Caroline's invitation to address a national audience at a sponsored meeting. We look forward to Caroline's continuing contribution to the success of the clinical research work.

GI GRAND ROUNDS

Wednesdays

7:30 AM – 8:30 AM

SCAN TO GIVE NOW



Please consider supporting the UVA Division of Gastroenterology's missions of excellence in clinical care, education, and research.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Pancreatitis-related benign biliary strictures: a review of imaging findings and evolving endoscopic management. Awali M, Stoleru G, Itani M, Buerlein R, Welle C, Anderson M, Chan A. *Abdom Radiol (NY)*. 2025 Mar 29. doi: 10.1007/s00261-025-04863-6. PMID: 40156606

Current considerations in nonoperative surveillance of intraductal papillary mucinous neoplasms. Digestive Disease Interventions. Mayhew MM, Buerlein RCD, Zaydfudim VM January 2025. doi: 10.1055/s-0045-1802658

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DIVISION EDUCATION

The past academic year has been a remarkable one for our Division of Gastroenterology, marked by continued excellence in medical education, scholarship, and community engagement.

We began by welcoming our new fellows, who hit the ground running with their participation in the ASGE Endoscopy Simulation Course in the summer of 2024. Soon after, they attended the American College of Gastroenterology (ACG) Regional Conference in Williamsburg, VA. At that conference, senior fellow Dr. John Hickman impressed the audience with a dynamic and insightful case discussion.

This fall brought further academic milestones. Dr. Himesh Zaver, our incoming chief fellow, began the Master of Clinical Science Research program at the University of Virginia's School of Public Health Sciences—meanwhile, Drs. Preethi Venkat and Anthony Rainho, our current chief fellow, led hands-on endoscopy simulation sessions at the annual UVA Mini-Medical School, providing community members from Charlottesville with a unique window into the field of gastroenterology.

Our fellows have also been active educators, presenting at noon conferences and leading journal clubs for the internal medicine residency program. Drs. Anthony Rainho, Gianna Stoleru, Sahil Khanna, and Neha Rajpal were among those who shared their expertise with residents through these sessions.

At our 20th Annual CME Conference in Gastroenterology and Hepatology, we were proud to welcome back two fellowship alumni—Dr. Maithili Chitnavas (Atrium/Carolinas Medical Center) and Dr. Justin Crocker (Duke University). The conference featured a robust lineup of faculty speakers, clinical case presentations by fellows, and a presentation by a chief resident of internal medicine. It drew over 160 attendees from five states, including more than thirty trainees from UVA and other regional residency programs.

Our Division also celebrated major successes in research and scholarship. Dr. Preethi Venkat earned recognition for her research on infusion reactions in IBD patients, winning a Best in AIBD Posters of 2024 award. Her work was completed in collaboration with Dr. Jeffrey Wilson from the University of Virginia's Division of Asthma, Allergy, and Immunology. Dr. Himesh Zaver received two major honors—Outstanding Poster at the 2024 National ACG Conference (mentored by Dr. Zachary Henry) and an invitation to present his interventional endoscopy research at the prestigious North American Gastroenterology Fellows Research Conference in 2025.

Education remains at the heart of our mission. Drs. Neeral Shah and Anne Tuskey continue to lead the GI system in the pre-clerkship medical school curriculum. Dr. Shah received two significant honors this year: the SCHEV Outstanding Faculty Award from the Virginia Department of Education and the Jefferson Scholars Teaching Award. Dr. Tuskey completed her term as Chair of the ACG's Training and Education Committee.

In contrast, Dr. Shah completed his term as Founding Director of the UVA Academy for Excellence in Education and continues to serve as Chair of its Membership Committee. He also represents UVA on the Provost's University Teaching Awards Committee. He remains active on the Steering Committee for the AAMC's National Academies Collaborative, where he recently concluded his term as Chair by leading a four-hour national workshop at the AAMC.

This year, we were also fortunate to host an outstanding lineup of visiting professors—both in person and virtually—including Dr. Sarah McGill (UNC), Dr. Kyoungwon Jung (South Korea), Dr. Rotonya Carr (University of Washington, Seattle), Dr. Nancy Reau (Rush University), and Dr. Amit Bhatt (Cleveland Clinic).

Finally, in recognition of Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, Dr. Cindy Yoshida and internal medicine resident Dr. Tala Mahmoud (an incoming GI fellow) led a creative and impactful awareness campaign. Their efforts included health system announcements, Instagram posts, and a live educational event featuring the "Giant Colon" display in the hospital cafeteria.

From education to research to community outreach, the past year has reflected the tremendous energy, collaboration, and talent within our Division. We look forward to building on this momentum in the year ahead.

Graduating Fellows

Dr. John Hickman will be moving to Lynchburg, VA, to practice gastroenterology.

Dr. Sahil Khanna will be moving to Charlotte, NC, to practice gastroenterology.

Dr. Anthony Rainho completed a chief fellow year and will be staying at UVA for an additional year as a Clinical Instructor and Advanced Endoscopy Fellow.

Dr. Gianna Stoleru will be staying at UVA for an additional year as a Clinical Instructor and Advanced Endoscopy Fellow.

Incoming Fellows



Dr. Chloe Hundman is a chief resident in Med-Peds at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center College of Medicine. She also completed medical school at the same institution. She has a robust research portfolio with an interest in patients with SMA syndrome and eating disorders, and she has published case reports about colon and esophageal cancer, in addition to other publications and abstracts presented at national conferences. Chloe enjoys traveling, trying new workout classes, walking her dog (a golden retriever), playing sports (such as pickleball, tennis, and golf), and exploring new restaurants.

Dr. Venkata Sai “Jaya” Jasty is a resident at the University of Michigan and completed medical school at the University of Arizona College of Medicine - Tucson. He has a strong research background with interests in liver disease, the accuracy of elastography as a noninvasive marker, liver injury associated with checkpoint inhibitors, and the impact of social determinants on liver disease. He enjoys biking, weightlifting, competitive video gaming, assembling and customizing personal computers, cooking Indian breakfast dishes, and playing pickleball and tennis.



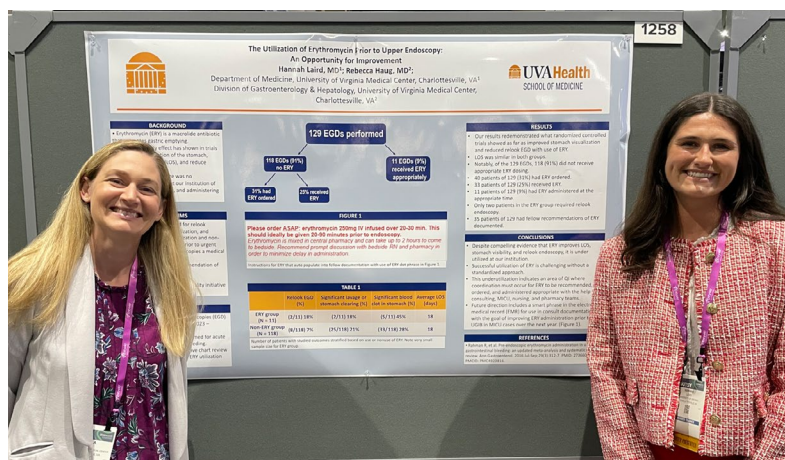
Dr. Tala Mahmoud is a current UVA resident who came to us from the University of Balamand Faculty of Medicine and Medical Sciences, having spent several years as a GI researcher at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN. Tala has been recognized with the ASGE Video GIE Outstanding Manuscript Award and recently recognized as the “Reviewer of the Month” for the ACG Case Reports Journal. Her research interests focus on obesity and endoscopic sleeve procedures, gastric intestinal metaplasia, advanced endoscopy, bariatrics, and cancers of the gastric and colorectal regions. Tala enjoys going to the gym, running, cooking, gardening, trying new restaurants and cuisines, and playing board games. She loves traveling and has explored over ten countries and fourteen states, always eager to learn about new cultures.



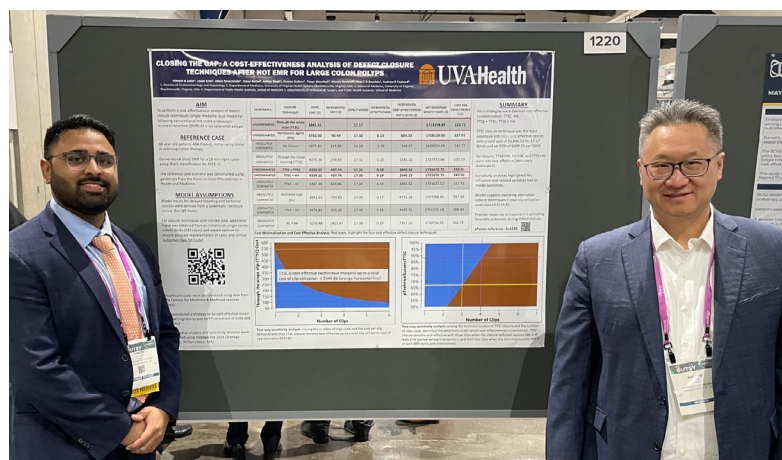
Dr. Mary Kate Sullivan is a current UVA resident who came to us from the Medical University of South Carolina College of Medicine. She has a strong commitment to global health, having participated in a worldwide health leadership track and worked in Uganda. Her research interests include bubble echos for hepatopulmonary syndrome, alcoholic hepatitis and LFT levels, and dysplasia in PSC and IBD. She enjoys furniture restoration, traveling, exploring new cultures, and teaching dance classes. Perhaps in the next three years, we can convince her to root for UVA over Clemson, where she was a Division 1 athlete.



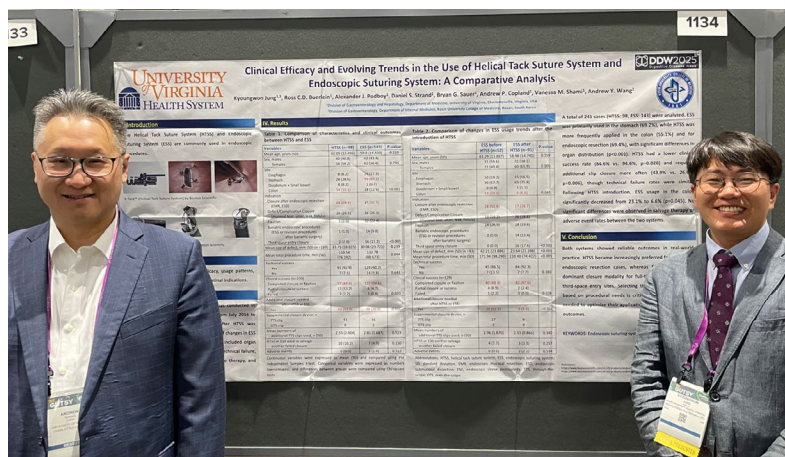
Digestive Disease Week 2025 in San Diego, CA



Dr. Rebecca Haug and Dr. Hannah Laird presenting their research at DDW 2025



Dr. Himesh Zaver presenting his research conducted with Dr. Andrew Copland to Dr. Wang at DDW 2025



Dr. Kyoungwon Jung (Visiting Professor at UVA from Busan, South Korean from 2023-2024) and **Dr. Wang** presenting their research at DDW 2025



“GI and Liver Rounds!” Friends and current and former members of UVA Health attend the Division’s reception at Digestive Disease Week 2025, in San Diego California. **Dr. Rohit Sharda** (UVA Prince William) and **Dr. Paul Kroner** (UVA Riverside) and **Dr. Li Li** (Chair of the Department of Family Medicine, UVA SOM), as well as several international guests, attended our reception. There are 3 present or former UVA GI Division Chiefs in this picture—can you name them all?

Check out GI's Fellowship Programs

DIVISION PROFILE

STAFF - Amaris Pulczinski



Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I recently returned to the University of Virginia as the coordinator for the Gastroenterology and Transplant Hepatology Fellowship. I've worked in graduate medical education for several years, including time here at UVA in the Department of Anesthesiology. Most recently, I served as the Fellowship Outreach Coordinator at DaVita, where I assisted nephrology fellows in exploring career opportunities and achieving their professional goals. I'm excited to be back at UVA, having called Charlottesville home for the last ten years.

Why Education?

I didn't plan to work in education, but once I found myself in the field, I discovered how much I enjoy it. I love being in a role where I can help shape the fellowship experience, whether that's managing day-to-day details, supporting fellows directly, or collaborating with faculty to ensure the program runs smoothly. I love the mix of people-focused work and problem solving, and it's incredibly fulfilling to be part of a program that helps others grow, both personally and professionally.

What brought you to Charlottesville?

When my parents moved here years ago, I saw it as a great opportunity to reconnect with the East Coast (I grew up in North Carolina) after spending some time in Texas. I didn't exactly intend to stay, but I always say Charlottesville has a way of pulling you in, in a good way! I still remember the first week I moved here, surveying the mountains from my backyard and thinking this place wasn't half bad. It didn't hurt that I arrived in October as the leaves were peaking! Over time, I've built a wonderful community here, and it certainly feels like home.

What excites you about your work?

The variety! I enjoy the balance of planning, problem-solving, and connecting with people. There is always something new to learn or a different challenge to tackle.

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

Scoring tickets to Taylor Swift's Eras Tour.

Describe yourself in one word.

Wholehearted.

What do you enjoy doing on the weekend?

I love getting outside with my pup or catching a live show. An Instagram post said going to concerts every couple of weeks adds years to your life, so I'm running with that!

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

Grillos Pickles, Costco Greek yogurt, Topo Chico.

Do you have any pets?

I do! I have a 13-year-old Lab/Husky mix, Beauregard Wallace (after Rasheed Wallace of "Ball don't lie" fame, obviously). He's my adventure buddy and loves getting lost in the woods with me, swimming after ducks, and, if I'm not paying close attention, chasing after UPS trucks with far too much enthusiasm for his age.

Do you travel or have a favorite trip?

I try to visit at least one National Park every year. To date, Glacier is my favorite, but I think I could spend a month in Arches, it still wouldn't get old! Up next on my list: Crater Lake.

Are you a hunter or a gatherer?

A gatherer, for sure. I have been told I am a "trinkety" person.

What is the last book you read for pleasure?

I just finished "Dreaming in Cuban" by Cristina Garcia for my book club and am currently reading "The Rise and Fall of the Dinosaurs" by Stephen L. Brusatte (The Science Museum of Virginia has a special dinosaur exhibit this summer, and I will be going!)

Do you collect anything?

Magnets from my travels, particularly the rectangular National Park magnets with illustrated points of interest, and brewery stickers (the hike-to-brewery pipeline is a real thing). Also, the occasional very cool rock.



DIVISION PROFILE

STAFF - Sharon Foster



Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I've been working at the University of Virginia for seventeen years, first within the Medical Center and then in a position within the School of Medicine, where I've been since 2014.

Why Research?

After working with a former Clinical Research nurse in Endoscopy, I was recruited by her to join a growing Clinical Research team, taking a position as a CRC, Clinical Research Coordinator. Two years later, I was eligible to earn my certification, known as CCRP – Certified Clinical Research Professional. I've been able to grow in this position, taking every opportunity to learn new things.

What brought you to Charlottesville?

I'm from Long Island, New York, and attended Long Island University's Southampton campus. That's where I met my roommate, Jessica, who would become my lifelong friend. She

relocated to Virginia, just outside Charlottesville, and I became acquainted with the area while visiting her and her family. My family decided to settle here just a few years later.

What excites you about your work?

Many tasks associated with my role aren't exactly exciting, but the process of launching clinical trials is an important one, as they can lead to the development of new medications and medical devices.

Describe yourself in one word.

Curious.

What do you enjoy doing on the weekend?

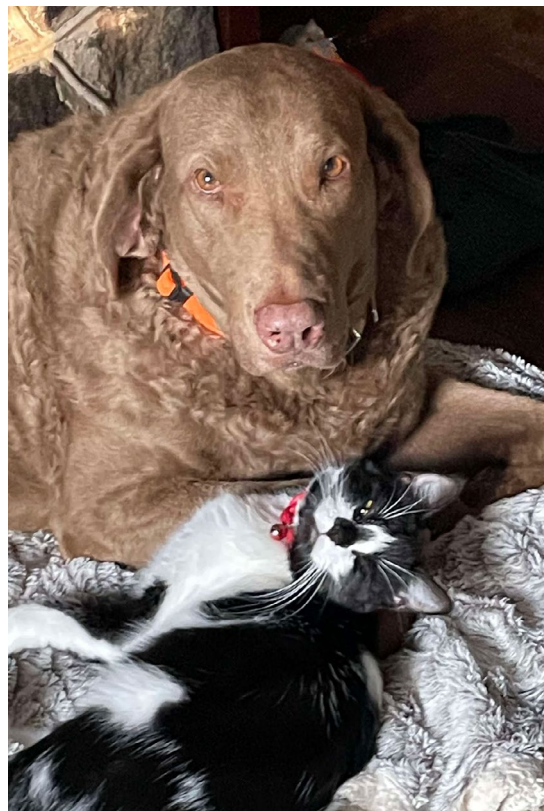
I enjoy kayaking, which allows me to move quietly through the water, enabling me to do some birdwatching. It's so peaceful and restorative to spend time in nature.

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

Flavored seltzers.

Do you have any pets?

Yes, our cat, Maple, and our dog, Max, a Chesapeake Bay Retriever.



What is the best advice anyone ever gave you?

Start as you mean to go.

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

I wish I could sing well, but as the old saying goes, I can't carry a tune in my pocket. In elementary school, I was the only student in my class NOT picked to be in the chorus. My voice is truly that bad.

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

I'd rather do ten things admirably well – variety keeps things interesting.



DIVISION PROFILE **FACULTY - Ken DeVault**



Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I am very excited to join the faculty of the University of Virginia this summer. Before moving to Virginia, I was a Professor of Medicine at the Mayo Clinic in Florida. I received my undergraduate degree from the University of Tennessee and my medical degree from Wake Forest University. My internship and residency in internal medicine were completed at Vanderbilt University, and I subsequently pursued a combined clinical and research fellowship at Jefferson Medical College. I joined the Mayo Clinic in 1992. I served as Chair of the Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology at the Mayo Clinic Florida from 2005 to 2010 and as Chair of the Department of Medicine from 2010 to 2020. I served as President of the American College of Gastroenterology from 2015 to 2016. Currently, I am the chair of the Gastroenterology Board and a Councilor of the American Board of Internal Medicine.

Why Gastroenterology?

As a medical student, I was drawn to gastroenterology due to my interactions with some amazing mentors and the research I was able to conduct. I have spent most of the last 40 years dedicated to caring for all patients, particularly those with esophageal diseases.

What brought you to Charlottesville?

I was introduced to UVA at a young age when one of my favorite uncles was hospitalized for heart disease in the old hospital sometime in the

1970s. His health care was complicated by hepatitis that he contracted during WWII and a gunshot wound from that war. It limited what could be done, and he eventually died. I know that we could have extended his life by decades with modern medicine. I was attracted to UVA as a student and resident, but it never worked out for me to train in Charlottesville. When we decided to move to our farm in Virginia (more below on that!), I was thrilled for the opportunity to work at UVA.

What excites you about your work?

I find it an honor to spend time talking to patients and helping them sort out their symptoms, then applying ever-evolving techniques to make a diagnosis and provide treatment. Teaching, mentoring, and assisting young people in publishing significant research is a significant part of my life. I have been very impressed with the faculty, trainees, and students at the University of Virginia (UVA) and look forward to long and productive interactions. My work with the American College of Gastroenterology and now the American Board of Internal Medicine are both essential to me as I play a small part in helping improve practice and quality of care in both Internal Medicine and Gastroenterology.

What do you enjoy doing outside work?

In addition to the opportunity at UVA, we have moved to Virginia to relocate and expand our alpaca farm (Sunny Acres Alpacas). We will have a working alpaca operation in Goochland County. We raise alpacas for the fiber they produce as well as for the babies we birth on the farm. This is a highly sustainable agricultural process, and we aim to maintain a herd of approximately 40-50 animals as we enhance their quality through careful and selective breeding. We also enjoy hosting visitors and providing education about these amazing creatures. I try to exercise regularly and have completed one marathon and several half-marathons. I hope to get back to trail running (which I love) with our move to Virginia.

How did you meet your partner?

We met in North Carolina, where I was in medical school and my wife, Shelley, was in college. We have seven children and are soon to be grandparents to five grandchildren. Our lives have been and continue to be very full. We love to have our children and grandchildren visit. While they grew up near the beach in Florida, they also love to visit both our current small farm in Florida and the bigger property in Virginia. This Fall, the youngest two of our seven will be seniors at Georgia Tech and freshmen at Virginia Tech, respectively.

Do you travel or have a favorite trip?

We have been blessed to have visited some amazing places. We have served in a mission hospital in Kenya on three occasions and hope to do more in the future. Just before COVID, we were lucky to take a National Geographic trip to Morocco, where Shelley spent part of her youth. Recently, we have visited Peru twice in connection with our Alpaca business and have grown to love the country as well. I wish I had better Spanish!

What is the best advice anyone ever gave you?

I have taken this from several sources over the years. When making a decision, always try to put your own best interest in the third position. For example, as an MD, the needs of the patient come first, the needs of my institution come second, and my needs come at least third. In my family, I try to put the needs of my wife, kids, and grandkids ahead of my own. I think using that construct as we make decisions usually pays off in the long run, although it can be a little painful in the short term at times.

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

I played music (mainly trumpet) up to about halfway through college. I put that aside for years, but now I'm working on improving my ability to play the guitar. We will see how that goes!





Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I joined the University of Virginia at the beginning of July 2025 after spending over a decade at VCU as a transplant hepatologist. I grew up in North Carolina, where I attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (go Heels) and then went on to medical school at Wake Forest University. I did my Internal Medicine residency and Gastroenterology and Hepatology fellowship at Northwestern University McGaw School of Medicine in Chicago, IL. Then, I completed a year of Transplant Hepatology at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) and remained on faculty as a transplant hepatologist for almost fifteen years. I had research and clinical interest in metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease (MASLD), liver transplantation, and metabolic co-morbidities that impact these. More recently, I have become increasingly interested in how the transplant community allocates livers for transplantation and if that process can be improved.

Why Healthcare?

I was fortunate enough to participate in research early in my career, and it has since become an integral part of my work. A key draw of research for me is tackling the ‘unknown’ or an unmet need in clinical research. In my experience, research is rarely the ‘aha moment’ but rather a culmination of persistent effort. That’s why seeing a concept translated into clinical practice takes time and patience. As a researcher, you become accustomed to having your ideas questioned and manuscripts or grants rejected; however, that makes the reward that much sweeter when things start to come together. Another big part of research is the ability to work in a multidisciplinary team. From an early age, we are taught to work hard and figure things out. However, as you get older and progress professionally, you come to realize that no matter how hard you work, there is not enough time or energy to become an expert in everything. This leads to specialization (i.e., transplant hepatology for me) at the expense of

broader general knowledge. At times, this may lead to a narrow focus on a research question that, as an individual, you are unable to grasp the issue or solution fully. Thus, working in a multidisciplinary team where you are surrounded by team members who bring complementary skills to the table is invaluable and a lot of fun. Even now, I am learning from team members who are still in undergraduate or graduate school about things that I may never fully master, but have learned to appreciate, such as Generative AI or the nuances of muscle physiology.

What brought you to Charlottesville?

Moving to Charlottesville was a no-brainer for me. It is one of the most prestigious public universities in the country, boasting world-renowned faculty across various departments that facilitate collaboration throughout the university. Additionally, what set Charlottesville apart for me was the incredible kindness of everyone. When I visited Charlottesville, I was taken aback at how inviting all the faculty and staff were. Everyone seems excited to be here, and this shows in how people interact with you.

What excites you about your work?

I think I’m one of the luckiest people, as I genuinely enjoy coming to work. I am paid to interact with great colleagues, take care of wonderful patients, push the envelope in improving patient care through research, and teach enthusiastic trainees (students, residents, fellows, etc.)

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

I think my proudest achievement is being the father to my three boys, who mean the world to me. What makes me proud is how socially responsible and empathetic they are. I love seeing the world through their eyes, where they think they can change the world for the better. As we get older, we often face the reality that some problems are more challenging to fix, and thus, we are less inclined to try. However, the energy and dedication of the younger generation, who are not biased, is precisely what we need to fix these problems. This not only applies to my kids but also to my mentees. Seeing them strive to make the world a better place in the future is the proudest thing for me, both personally and professionally.

Describe yourself in one word.

Uncertain – I used to dislike this word, and I think that as we are raised, our parents, teachers, and educators instill in us the importance of confidence and certainty when we approach different issues in life. However, within certainty lies conformity that can limit innovation. As I grow older, I no longer dread being uncertain about various aspects of my personal and professional life, because it allows me to evaluate issues in an unbiased manner.

What do you enjoy doing on the weekend?

I have several hobbies that I enjoy. Tennis has been a big part of my life and my family’s life, so we enjoy playing tennis together. Also, I enjoy gardening, particularly native plants, and woodworking.

DIVISION PROFILE

FACULTY - Shadab Siddiqui (continued)

How did you meet your partner?

I met my wife during freshman orientation during my undergraduate years at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Persistence is the key to success!!.

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

Things that I wish I had thrown out sooner.

Do you have any pets?

I have a cat named Momo. She is a typical cat that only cares about herself and likes to desecrate my house plants.

Are you a hunter or a gatherer?

Neither, I am liver, not a fighter!

Who is the person you admire most, and why?

Many people in history have left an impression on me, but I realize that there are underlying themes that center around perseverance and improving the conditions of others.

What is the best advice anyone ever gave you?

"Stay focused." In this day and age, academics are often asked to wear many hats (i.e., teachers, researchers, clinicians), but the time they have to devote to these roles is usually minimal. Understanding and prioritizing tasks, as well as what we decide to pursue, is essential for future success. This includes identifying areas of interest that are either personally meaningful or will help advance our careers. It is all too easy to get distracted, but learning to stay focused on a long-term goal is essential.



What about you would surprise us?

I don't like to surprise people, as you get older, boring is wonderful!!!

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

Painting. I love how artists use watercolors to bring ideas to life. However, paint brushes have been less kind to my efforts.

Favorite fictional characters?

I always enjoyed Sherlock Holmes growing up due to his deductive reasoning, and looking back, I don't think I have read any series in which I liked a fictional character more.

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

I think most of us try to do things 'admirably well' and 'extraordinary' things happen because we are in the right place at the right time.

Do you collect anything?

Memories.