

MEDICINE

NEWS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE

MATTERS

Editor, Kim Kelley-Wagner

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

SEPTEMBER 2024

 UVA Health | DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE

MISSION

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

VALUES

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

PLEDGE

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



Fall is almost here, and it is my favorite time of year to live in Central Virginia. The cooler air, beautiful fall foliage, and the ability to be outside in more comfortable weather is so appealing. I hope you will have time to spend outside and take advantage of nature and all this area offers, from hiking, biking, or enjoying one of the many vineyards.

This month, I am so proud that we highlight the many

Department of Medicine award winners across all of our missions. The Department of Medicine is a great organization that is vibrant, energetic, and driving the University of Virginia forward...this is due to all of you, and collectively, the results are amazing. This year's award winners span all missions and divisions and are great examples of excellence among us. Thanks to all of them for their work, and thank you, as well as to the entire Department of Medicine.

We will restart monthly town hall meetings, grand rounds, and informal lunches in the coming weeks. We want to hear from you and learn more about your work, how we can better support you, and what concerns you. Please reach out anytime. Enjoy the fall!

With best wishes,

Mitchell H. Rosner, MD, MACP
Henry B. Mulholland Professor of Medicine
Chair, Department of Medicine

DoM WEBSITE ▶

GRAND ROUNDS ▶

HIGHLIGHTED DIVISION . . . ▶

MINDFULLNESS MATTERS . . . ▶

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UVA Health

DOM UPDATES & NOTES

DOM Financial Update

Department of Medicine Summary of Consolidated Financials FY21 as of July 2024

	Budget YTD	Actual YTD	\$ Variance YTD
Work RVUs	109,355	105,651	(3,704)
Clinical Receipts (NPSR)	7,158,875	6,436,944	(721,931)
Total Revenues	28,285,132	28,384,928	99,796
Total Expenditures	22,853,271	24,089,755	(1,236,484)
Net Income	5,431,861	4,295,173	(1,136,688)

Summary Explanation of Variance:

For the fiscal year through July 2024, DOM reported a consolidated net gain of \$4.3M and an unfavorable variance to YTD net income budget of \$1.1M. Clinical receipts underperformed budget by \$722K primarily due to the impact of accrual model adjustment, Covidstrike outage, and unrealized revenue cycle efficiency budget. Total revenues include \$4.8M Endowment revenue recorded for August through June and \$1.8M clinical deficit coverage revenue accrual. Total revenue is missing \$1.5M in unsigned clinical agreements and indigent care. Total expenditures variance is unfavorably impacted by \$1.1M increased staff personnel expenditures due to payroll budgeted in August but processed in July. This includes \$711K of grant expenditures.

Welcome To The World



Congratulations to Kathryn Fortune and husband Robert Martino who welcomed baby Henry Francis Martino on July 31, 2024.



Congratulations to Thompson Barr and wife Annie who welcomed baby Peter Thompson Barr on July 5, 2024.

DOM UPDATES & NOTES



Patricia Rodriguez Lozano MD



Karen Warburton MD



Jie Sun PhD



Rahul Sharma PhD



Vikram Sabapathy PhD

Awards and Achievements

Congratulations to **Dr. Patricia Rodriguez Lozano MD** (Division of Cardiovascular Medicine), who has received funding for K01 on novel therapies for coronary microvascular disease.

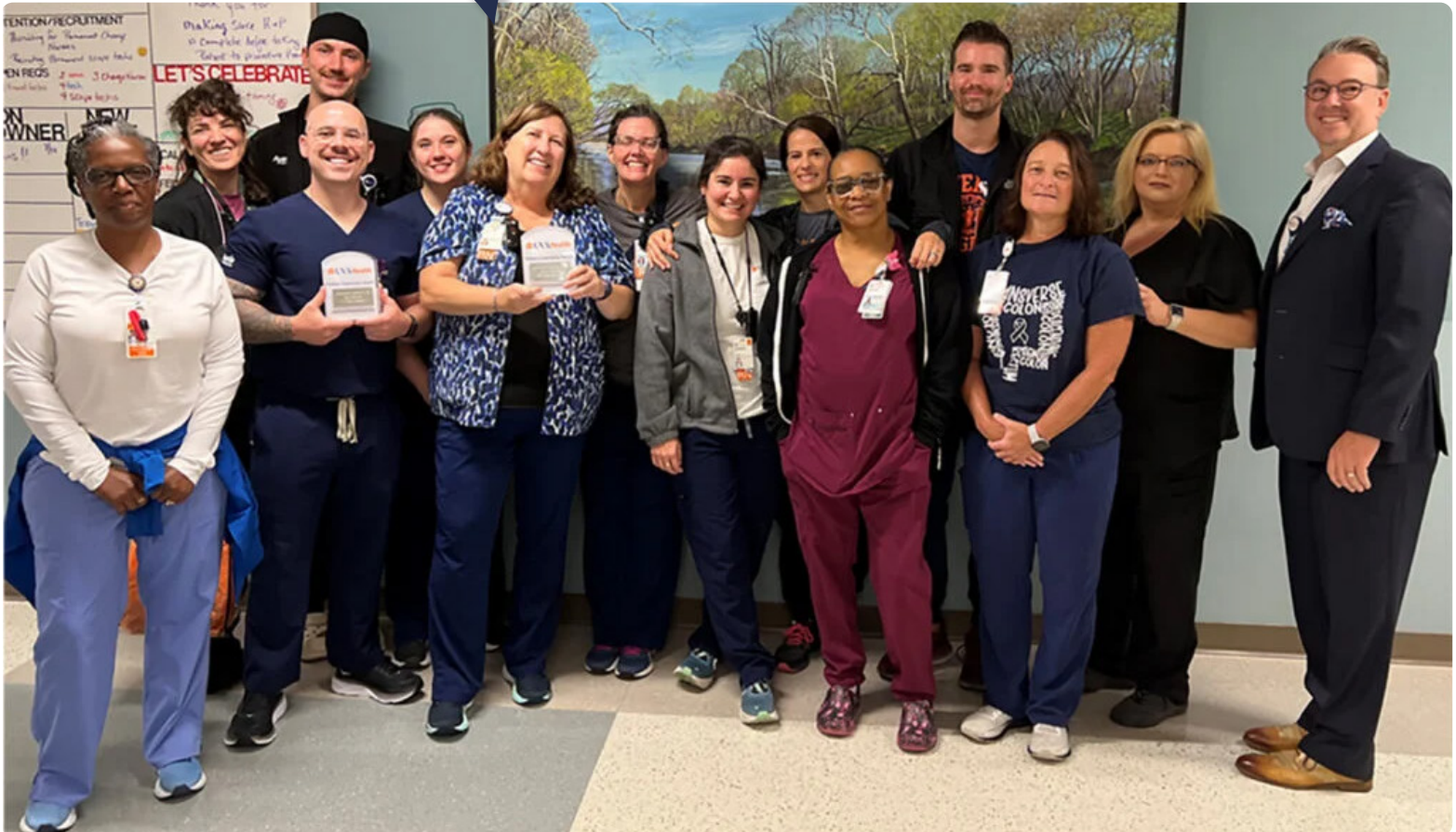
Congratulations to **Dr. Karen Warburton** (Division of Nephrology), who has received the 2024 American College of Physicians Virginia Mentorship Award. [Read more...](#)

Congratulations to **Dr. Jie Sun** (Division of Infectious Diseases and International Health) on being chosen as one of three 2024 Class of Pinn Scholars, selected for a three-year term effective July 1, 2024. Congratulations to Jie Sun, PhD, Professor, on being awarded this esteemed honor! [Read more...](#)

Congratulations to **Drs. Rahul Sharma** and **Vikram Sabapathy** and co-authors, on the publication in the Journal of the American Society of Nephrology (JASN) of their paper "[ST2+ T-regulatory Cells in Renal Inflammation and Fibrosis following Ischemic Kidney Injury.](#)"

Congratulations to the team at Monroe Lane Endobronc which won the Ambulatory Surgery Top Performer and Most Improved Award Q4.

TEAM



DOM UPDATES & NOTES

Excellence in Research



Emily McGowan MD PhD



Silas Culver MD



Stefano Toldo MD



Craig Portell MD

Excellence in Clinical Care



Tarina Parpia MD



Robert Becker MD



Dennis Kumral MD



Jeannine Engel MD



Kelly Wingerter MD



Kaitlin Love MD



Pranav Patel MD



Ali Mahjoub MD



Maria Badaracco MD

Excellence in Mentorship



Zhenqi Liu MD



Timothy Scialla MD



Stewart Babbott MD



Mami Taniuchi MD



Emily McGowan MD PhD



Jeffrey Wilson MD



Enrica Marchi MD

**FOLLOW
UVA ID**

**FOLLOW UVA
PULMONARY**

**FOLLOW
UVA CARDIO**

DOM UPDATES & NOTES

Excellence in Teaching



Ross Buerlein MD



Jacob Meindersma MD



Patricia Rodriguez MD



Patrick Jackson MD



Christopher Moore MD



Ian Crane MD



Ben Horton MD



Rick Hall MD

Outstanding Staff Contributor



LaMoria Alexander



Elaine Etter, PhD



Cynthia Peery



Lena Garrison



Cheryl Etelvari



Rebecca Jewell



Jordanna (Jodi) Leake

Excellence in Administration



Terri Washington

Women in Medicine Excellence Award



Swati Rao MD

**FOLLOW
UVA ENDO**

**FOLLOW UVA
NEPHROLOGY**

**FOLLOW
GASTRO**

DOM UPDATES & NOTES

Women in Medicine Diane Snustad Award



Tania Thomas MD



Jennifer Kirby MD

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Award



Andrew Wang MD



Gregory Townsend MD



Anuradha Illendula PhD

Outstanding Team Contribution



Cirle Warren MD



Brian Behm MD

Complicated Clostridium difficile Clinic Multi-Disciplinary Team

Department of Medicine would like to recognize the team led by Drs. Cirle Warren and Brian Behm, the CCC team at the University of Virginia (UVA) includes faculty and nursing staff from the Division of Infectious Diseases and Gastroenterology. The CCC has been at the forefront since 2021 and continues to provide expert and comprehensive care to patients referred from across Virginia and beyond. The team's dedication to improving patient outcomes is evident in establishing one of the nation's first specialty clinics for CDI.

Given the extraordinary benefits this team has provided through remarkable achievements in patient care, research, and medical education, it is an honor to have them as part of the department/division.

Are You a UVA Researcher? An Innovator?



Licensing & Ventures Group

Where research
gets *real*

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

Kate McManus, MD, Interviewed for Podcast About Helping Medicaid Patients Access HIV Medications

LISTEN TO PODCAST hosted on the Infectious Diseases Society of America website.

LISTEN HERE



DOM UPDATES & NOTES

Dr. Kyle Enfield tells The New York Times why humidity makes us so miserable.

Heat isn't the only thing in the picture. Here's why humid air makes us so miserable and exhausted, and how you can cope.

[READ MORE](#)



Article for The Conversation on elder fraud continues to get strong pickup, including in Scientific American.

Elder fraud has reached epidemic proportions – geriatrician Dr. Laurie Archbald-Pannone explains what older Americans need to know.

Americans age 60 and older lost more than US\$3 billion to scammers in 2023, according to the FBI. The consequences can be worse than just losing money. The experience is traumatic for many, with some victims feeling deep shame and self-doubt in the aftermath.

[READ MORE](#)



Dr. Michael Ayers Discusses the Benefits of Adding Fast Intervals to Your Daily Walk (HuffPost)

Walking is great for your mental health and physical health.

There are even ways to make your walks more beneficial, interval walking, which, according to Harvard Health, gets your heart rate up more than a regular walk. An interval walk incorporates phases of fast and moderate walking to create a heart-pumping, challenging workout.

[READ MORE](#)

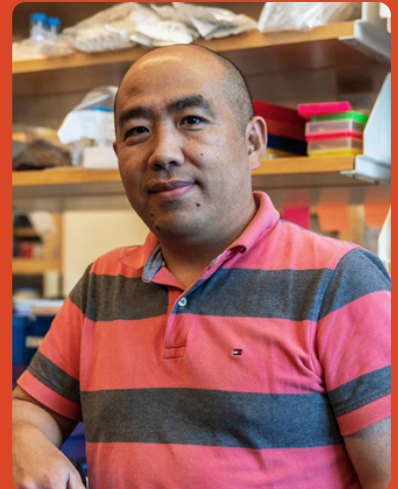


Arthritis Drugs May Relieve Long COVID Lung Symptoms

University of Virginia School of Medicine researchers have identified a potential treatment for the respiratory symptoms of long COVID after discovering an unknown cause of the condition inside the lungs.

The UVA researchers, led by Jie Sun, PhD, found that COVID-19 infection can cause sweeping changes in immune cells inside the lung tissues, promoting scarring and driving ongoing inflammation even after the initial infection has passed. This ongoing inflammation, they believe, drives the lasting respiratory symptoms, such as cough and difficulty breathing, associated with long COVID.

[READ MORE](#)



Eosinophilic Esophagitis Network of Virginia Inaugural Meeting

November 16, 2024

UVA Darden School of Business

Health Opening Lynchburg Asthma, Allergy, Immunology Clinic

UVA Health is opening an asthma, allergy, and immunology clinic to serve the Lynchburg area. The clinic will begin seeing patients Aug. 14 but is scheduling appointments now. The clinic will be located inside UVA Health Nephrology at 103 Clifton St., Suite B.

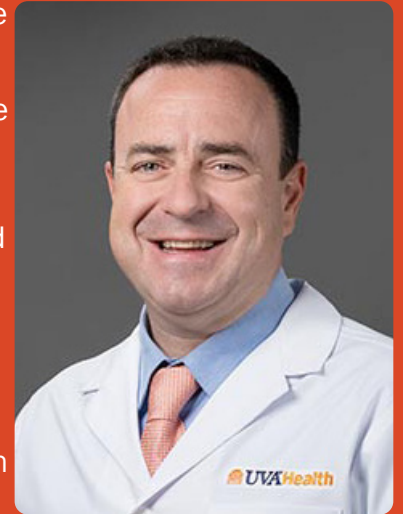


Services offered by board-certified allergist and immunologist Timothy Kyin, MD

[READ MORE](#)

UVA Health Joins New Nationwide Initiative to Empower Recurrent Pericarditis Patients

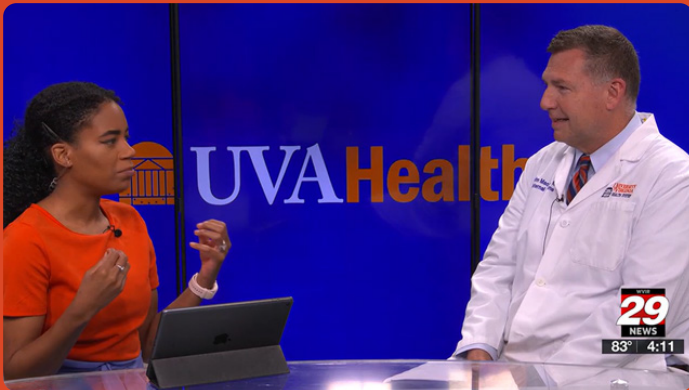
About 40,000 people in the United States experience recurrent pericarditis, or inflammation of the sac-like structure that protects the heart. The condition can cause chest pain and may lead to fluid buildup around the heart muscle.



Now, UVA Health has become one of 15 participating sites across the country to join a new American Heart Association (AHA) initiative to empower patients and equip healthcare providers with up-to-date science to inform recurrent pericarditis care decisions.

[READ MORE](#)

Dr. John MacKnight Discusses Safe Exercise in the Summer Heat



[WATCH VIDEO ON NBC29](#)

UVA Health Discuss Vascular Condition That Could Affect Athletes



Dr. Randy Ramcharitar
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

[WATCH VIDEO ON CBS19](#)

Blood Test Could Predict Long-Term COVID-19 Lung Problems

Catherine A. Bonham, MD and colleagues have discovered a potential way to predict which patients with severe COVID-19 are likely to suffer “long-haul” lung problems. That could help doctors better personalize treatments for patients.



“We are excited to find that people with long-haul COVID have an immune system that is totally different from people who have lung scarring that doesn’t stop,” said researcher Catherine A. Bonham, MD, a pulmonary and critical care expert who serves as scientific director of UVA Health’s Interstitial Lung Disease Program. “This offers hope that even patients with the worst COVID do not have progressive scarring of the lung that leads to death.”

[READ MORE](#)

Tool to Help Save Kids From Diarrheal Diseases

Josh M. Colston, PhD, and collaborators have been developing an online dashboard to advance the global battle against deadly childhood diarrheal diseases by identifying transmission hotspots and accelerating the deployment of treatments and vaccines.



[READ MORE](#)

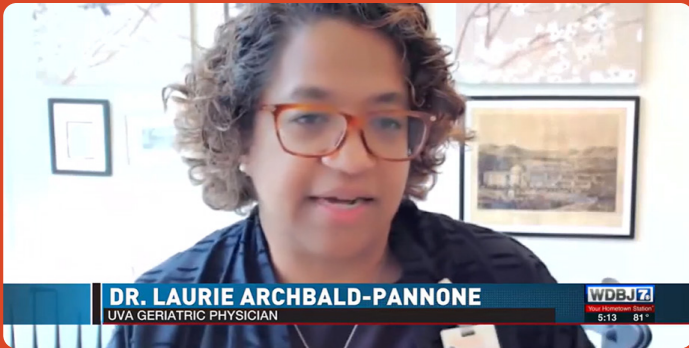
UVA Researchers Awarded \$2.8 Million to Study New Approach for Treating Abdominal Aortic Aneurysms

Coleen McNamara, MD, a professor of medicine and director of the UVA Beirne B. Carter Center for Immunology Research is part of a team of three researchers that is focused on developing targeted approaches for treating abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA). The research is backed by a new \$2.8 million grant from the National Institutes of Health.



[READ MORE](#)

UVA Doctor Advises Seniors to Clean Out Their Medicine Cabinets



[WATCH VIDEO ON WDBJ7](#)

UVA Health Seeing Surge In Confirmed COVID-19 Cases



Dr. Costi Sifri discusses the latest information on COVID.

[WATCH VIDEO ON 29NEWS](#)

The 'Growth Mindset' Trend: Experts Caution of Valuing Effort Over Success

In a new publication, the University of Virginia School of Medicine's Milad Memari, MD, and collaborators describe ways in which a growth mindset has taken off in medical education in recent years while also cautioning that this implementation is "essential but complicated." The lessons he and his co-authors share are targeted at medical educators but can be applied to anyone who wants to capitalize on a growth mindset to help themselves, their students, or their employees reach their fullest potential.



[READ MORE](#)

Is Your Division's Website Content Up-to-Date? Need a Team or Research Lab Photo Shoot?

Researchers and lab managers, if you don't already have a research page dedicated to your team, please get in touch with Kim Kelley-Wagner to get started at kak2cj@uvahealth.org or 434.328.0680

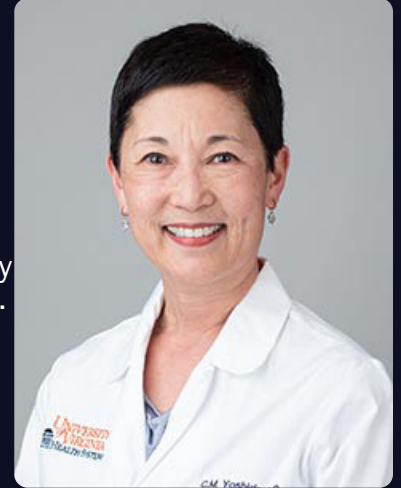
Infectious Disease Expert Dr. Patrick Jackson Eased Local Minds on Bird Flu Risk



WATCH VIDEO ON CBS19

Dr. Cynthia Yoshida: Virginia legislation expands insurance coverage for colorectal cancer screening (Daily Progress)

Dr. Cynthia Yoshida: Virginia legislation expands insurance coverage for colorectal cancer screening, which saves lives. But too many Virginians get a surprise bill from their insurance or simply cannot afford to pay to complete the screening. A new law requires that insurance companies cover all colorectal cancer screening tests approved by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force.



READ MORE

Drinking Too Much Water Can Actually Be Dangerous (Wall Street Journal)

Dr. Mitch Rosner warns water intoxication could be a growing issue; overhydration can cause severe health problems.



READ MORE

Dr. Christopher Kramer talks with MEdge about cardiac MRI. "CMR Trumps Echo in Heart Failure"

Cardiac MRI with late gadolinium enhancement is the imaging technique of choice when the goal is tissue characterization and infarct detection in heart failure, Dr. Christopher M. Kramer said at a cardiovascular imaging conference sponsored by the American College of Cardiology.



READ MORE

How to sleep on a plane: Doctors and travel experts share their hacks (Yahoo!life)

Some people can fall asleep before a plane's wheels lift off the tarmac. Other travelers spend the entire time squirming in their seats, struggling to get comfortable. If you're one of those passengers who have difficulty falling asleep on a plane or can't seem to sleep for long on board, all is not lost. Dr. Eric Davis, a sleep medicine expert in the Division of Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine, tells us how to prep, what to pack, what to avoid, and why you should take a beat to think about when booking your flight.



READ MORE

FOLLOW UVA IM RESIDENCY

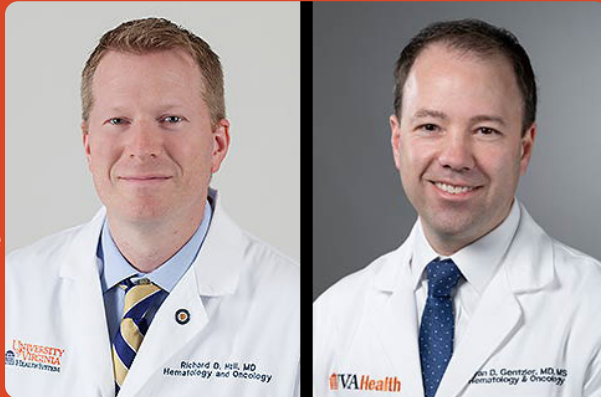
UVA Cancer Center Is First in State to Offer New Lung Cancer Treatment

UVA Cancer Center is the first healthcare provider in Virginia to offer a newly approved immunotherapy – which supercharges the body’s immune system to fight disease – to treat small cell lung cancer.

“We were able to treat our first patient so quickly after FDA approval thanks to successful collaboration and interdisciplinary efforts among our nurses, pharmacists, information technology team members and social workers,” said Ryan Gentzler, MD.

“Our nurse navigators are just one example of how our team comes together to bring the latest advances in cancer care to our patients,” said Richard Hall, MD

[READ MORE](#)



Updates on mpox outbreak: Where it’s been detected and what to do if you get it. (USA Today)



“When you have diseases like mpox where close skin-to-skin contact or close human contact is necessary, as opposed to respiratory diseases, you’re likely to see a slower spread than you are in a disease like influenza, COVID and other respiratory diseases, which just have a better ability to spread from human to human and therefore disseminate across populations faster,” Dr. Kyle Enfield said.

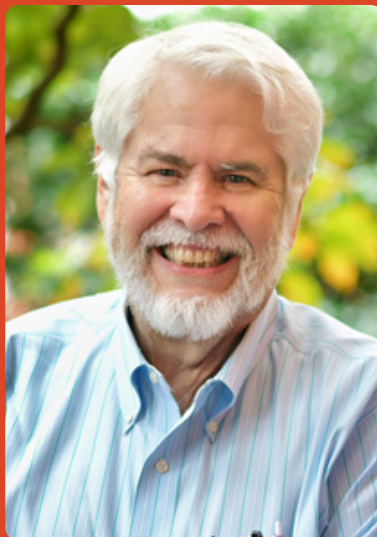
[READ MORE](#)

Some Cases of Recurrent Wheeze in Kids May Need New Treatment (USNews and World Report)

Gerald Teague, MD, UVA Department of Medicine pediatric pulmonologist, was highlighted in over 100 national news outlets, including U.S. News & World Report, for his insights into a previously unknown cause of wheezing in children.

“While steroids can help some children with wheeze, many children in the study showed no patterns of inflammation that would improve with steroids,” said lead researcher Dr. Teague.

[READ MORE](#)



DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE
MEDICINE GRAND ROUNDS
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

MINDFULNESS MATTERS
A Newsletter from the UVA Mindfulness Center

Jonathan Lindner MD and Brent French PhD Awarded \$2.9 Million to Study Ultrasound Cavitation to Enhance AAV Gene Therapy in the Heart

Jonathan Lindner, MD, the Francis Myers Ball Professor of Medicine and vice-chief for research in the Division of Cardiovascular Medicine, and Brent French, PhD, a professor of biomedical engineering, radiology and cardiovascular medicine, were awarded a \$2.9 million NIH grant, titled "Ultrasound Cavitation for Facilitated Cardiac Transduction of AAV."



[READ MORE](#)



MINDFULNESS FOR HEALTHCARE EMPLOYEES

Mindfulness for Healthcare Employees
Free 2024 Course
Fontaine Research Park
Mondays, Sept 18 - Nov 6, 2024
6:30pm - 8:30pm
Retreat: Saturday, October 26, 2024

[REGISTER](#)

Research in Motion

Research in Motion Video: Scott Heysell, MD discusses his work in treating the infections of poverty like tuberculosis.

In our new School of Medicine Research in Motion video series, we asked our researchers three questions: What do you do? What do you love about your research? How will it impact human health?

[WATCH VIDEO](#)

Spark Innovation Competition winners was truly inspiring! Congratulations Anne Sperling PhD on being one of the four winning finalists!



The 2024 theme focused on improving the research environment and resulted in 319 innovative ideas being submitted from team members from over 80 different areas across UVA Health. (Dr. Sperling pictured third from left).

[READ MORE](#)

 **Follow DOM on INSTAGRAM!**

DOM UPDATES & NOTES

Women In Medicine Network

On Thursday, August 29, we held the Women in Medicine Network's academic year welcome event at The Graduate Hotel. The event was an opportunity for attendings, trainees, and APPs from across the department to come together and socialize. It was a great success and will hopefully become an annual event!



Dr. Lindsay Carter briefly addresses and welcomes the attendees.



Jeannine Engel, Kim Dowdell, Anne Tuskey, Lisa Beach, Karen Finke, Colleen Green



Amy Mathers and Tania Thomas



Heather Frazier, Rachel Kon, Zein Aburish



Neha Rajpal, Lindsay Carter, Olivia Reszczynski, Aislinn Camoney, Deepika Suresh, Emily Minor



Monica Lawrence and Cathy Bonham

DOM UPDATES & NOTES



Archana Thakur, Swati Rao, Anuradha Illendula, Deepthi Priyanka Damera, Angie Nishio Lucar



Heather Frazier and Chelsea Marie Braun



FOLLOW UVA WOMEN IN INTERNAL MEDICINE NETWORK

Women In Internal Medicine Network would love to hear from you! *Please share you ideas with us here.*



Graphic, UVA Marketing

Celebrating Women in Medicine Month

SEPTEMBER 2024

Share your story about a woman in the field of medicine who has supported, mentored or inspired you during your healthcare career.

DOM UPDATES & NOTES

New Hematology/Oncology Clinical Trials (opened since 06/01/2024)

BREAST

A Phase IIa Study of Dendritic Cell Vaccines Against HER2/HER3 and Pembrolizumab in Patients with Asymptomatic Brain Metastasis from Triple Negative Breast Cancer (TNBC) or HER2+ Breast Cancer (HER2+BC)

IRB # HSR230190

CT. Gov. ID: NCT04348747

Sponsor Protocol 1-19-04120

Sponsor: Roswell Park Cancer Institute

Principal Investigator: Dillon, Patrick

Study Contact: Ashley Donihee.zwz6jrn@ullabealth. 434-243-6377

CELLULAR THERAPIES

A randomized, double-blind, multicenter, Phase 3 study to evaluate efficacy and safety of belumosudil in combination with corticosteroids versus placebo in combination with corticosteroids in participants at least 12 years of age with newly diagnosed chronic graft versus host disease (cGVHD)

IRB # HSR230441

CT. Gov. ID: NCT06143891

Sponsor Protocol: ROCKnrol-1

Sponsor: Sanofi US Service Inc.

Principal Investigator: Varadarajan, Indumathy

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

GENITO URINARY (GU)

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

IRB # HSR230542

CT. Gov. ID: NCT06429813

Sponsor Protocol: Prostate 006

Sponsor: University of Virginia

Principal Investigator: Viscuse, Paul

Study Contact: Taylor Reid ukc3zu@virginia.edu

MELANOMA

A Randomized Phase 2 Study of ATR inhibition in advanced PD-(L) 1-refractory Merkel cell carcinoma: The MATRiX Trial

IRB # HSR230542

CT. Gov. ID: NCT05947500

Sponsor Protocol: 10592

Sponsor: ETCTN

Principal Investigator: Kaur, Varinder

Study Contact: Samantha Schaeffer sms6wn@uvahealth.org

PULMONARY FIBROSIS

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

Patient Education Day

Attend Live or Virtually

MICHAEL J. WEBER SYMPOSIUM

RNA AND CANCER

OCT 11 2024

The **Michael J. Weber Symposium** honors the life and accomplishments of the late renowned scientist and UVA Cancer Center Director Dr. Michael J. Weber.

With a theme of "RNA and Cancer," the fourth-annual Weber Symposium features world renowned speakers including:

Phillip A. Sharp, Nobel Laureate (MIT)

Natasha Caplen (NIH/NCI)

Steve Cole (UCLA)

Yi Xing (U Penn)

Vinod Balachandran (Memorial Sloan Kettering)

The symposium will take place on **October 11, 2024**, in the **UVA Pinn Hall Conference Center**.

For more information about the symposium, including to view the agenda, please [click here](#).

While the event is in person, if you are unable to attend, we are happy to accommodate you virtually. For Zoom links, please use this **updated** email address: UVACCEvents@uvahealth.org.

COME SEE HOOS RUNNING WITH GIM!

‘Run with GIM’ (General Internal Medicine) would love for all interested to join us at 5pm every Wednesday across from the South garage on the corner of Jeanette Lancaster and Crispell Dr.

Run with GIM is a non-competitive, all-inclusive running group focused on building wellness and growing camaraderie.

Do You Have News You'd Like To Share on Medicine Matters?

Contact Kim Kelley-Wagner
kak2cj@virginia.edu
434.328.0680

FOLLOW

FOLLOW UVA SCHOOL OF MEDICINE DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

In Memoriam: Celebrating the Life of Jim Plews-Ogan, MD

By Alan Farr

It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of James (Jim) Plews-Ogan, MD, who retired from the Department of Pediatrics as Associate Professor in the Division of General Pediatrics on February 28, 2022, after 10 years of dedicated service.

Dr. Plews-Ogan joined us in 2012 with a groundbreaking vision: to start a program of home care delivery for medically complex children. This innovative idea led to the creation of By Your Side, a remarkable practice that quickly garnered national attention for its unique care model. Under Jim's careful financial and operational guidance, By Your Side flourished, becoming a flagship service for the UVA Children's Hospital. Jim and his colleagues presented nationally, published results, and passionately advocated for the children and families who needed them most. His ability to meet clinical and academic aspirations in a fiscally workable manner with minimal disruption was truly extraordinary.

In addition to his work with By Your Side, Jim's national presence as an innovator led him to be selected as the chair of the Complex Care Committee at the American Academy of Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine.

Jim also served as the inaugural chief medical officer for the VA-wide Clinically Integrated Network, Fortify Children's Health. Fortify, the nation's first pediatric clinically integrated network launched as a joint venture between two academic medical systems, presented unique challenges. Dr. Plews-Ogan's innovative and calm leadership was essential to its success, ensuring that both physicians and non-physician providers had a strong voice.

Jim's tenure in the Department of Pediatrics was marked by remarkable accomplishments, but perhaps his most significant achievement was how he faced his battle with ALS with grace and determination. Diagnosed with ALS at UVA Neurology in November of 2021, Jim's journey with the disease began with subtle weakness in his left hand. Demonstrating his characteristic resilience and proactive spirit, Jim quickly laid plans to combat the disease. This led to the creation of The Hummingbird Fund in April 2022. The fund's kickoff event in Charlottesville brought together Jim's family, friends, patients, neurologists at UVA, a local live band, and featured an ice bucket dousing. The event was a resounding success, raising nearly \$150,000 immediately. This marked the beginning of Jim's post-retirement focus on ALS advocacy.

Jim's ability to turn personal adversity into a cause for greater good is a testament to his character and leadership. His dedication to helping medically complex children through the By Your Side program and his pioneering work with the VA-wide Clinically Integrated Network, Fortify Children's Health, already established his legacy as an innovator and leader in pediatric care. However, his courage in facing ALS and his efforts to raise awareness and funds for the disease underscore his extraordinary commitment to making a difference in the lives of others.

From Jim's blog, here is the sentiment of why he chose the Hummingbird as the name to represent his foundation:

To see a hummingbird is to be surprised by joy—a reminder that no matter what our circumstance, there is joy and beauty all around us. Hummingbirds are also seen as messengers of hope and inspiration, representing joy, tenacity, and endurance. They are often portrayed in legends as a healer or as a spirit who helps people in need—many times playing an important mythological role of fire-bringer. These tiny, agile birds can do amazing things!

The world would be a better place if more people were like Jim.

His memorial service will be on July 21 at 2pm at St. Paul's Memorial Episcopal Church with a reception following. All are welcome to attend.

Please join us in remembering Dr. Plews-Ogan. You can view and make a donation to his foundation, here: [Hummingbird Fund](#)



In Memoriam: The Legacy of Munsey Wheby, MD

By Melina R. Kibbe, MD
Dean, UVA School of Medicine

We were deeply saddened to learn about the passing of Munsey Wheby, MD, Emeritus Professor of Medicine at UVA. Dr. Wheby, a distinguished hematologist, served as chair of the Department of Medicine and senior associate dean at the School of Medicine. He was widely recognized for his expertise in blood diseases and nutrition.

A native of Roanoke, Munsey majored in biology at Roanoke College, earning his B.S. in 1951. Munsey continued his education at the University of Virginia, where he received his medical degree in 1955. He completed his postdoctoral training at Cornell University Medical Center and UVA. He then served six years in the U.S. Army, achieving the rank of major and later attaining the rank of colonel in the U.S. Army Reserves.

Munsey joined the staff at Rutgers Medical School in 1965, but returned to UVA the following year as an associate professor of medicine. Among his many UVA honors is the Class of 1973's Outstanding Teaching Award, the Andrew D. Hart Endowed Professorship in 1983, and the Alumni Association Distinguished Professor Award in 1992.

In 1992, he was recognized as one of Roanoke College's 150 Distinguished Alumni. In 1999, Munsey received the Walter Reed Distinguished Achievement Award, the highest honor given by the UVA Medical Alumni Association Board of Directors. In 2000 he was named a Roanoke College Medalist and in 2006 was awarded an honorary Doctor of Science degree from Roanoke.

Munsey was actively involved with the American College of Physicians (ACP). In 2010, he received the Alfred Stengel Memorial Award for Outstanding Service, honoring his exceptional loyalty and significant contributions to the ACP. Munsey's service to this organization included roles as president, board of regents member, chair of the board of governors, chair of the foundation board of trustees, and governor of the Virginia chapter.

Munsey was a well respected leader in the Department of Medicine, renowned for his infectious enthusiasm for medicine, kindness, readiness to assist anyone and, he was a calm, steady voice of reason, always finding the positive in any situation. He mentored many throughout their careers and lived a fulfilling life surrounded by close friends and family. He will be deeply missed.

Our thoughts are with Munsey's family, as well as his many colleagues and friends at UVA.



UVA Health

DIVISION OF NEPHROLOGY

Message from Mark Okusa MD, Division Chief of Nephrology



I hope this message finds you well and thriving as we transition into the fall season. This season is an ideal time to celebrate the milestones we've reached, set new goals, and reflect on the meaningful contributions we continue to make in the field of nephrology.

I want to take a moment to highlight the outstanding efforts of our faculty, who are deeply committed to supporting community initiatives and training the next generation of nephrologists and scientists. Their dedication plays a crucial role in shaping the future of our field.

Unleashing the Future of Nephrology

As part of the Division of Nephrology's NIH-sponsored VA K-TUTOR Program, directed by Drs. Rahul Sharma, Mark Okusa, and William Guilford, the Annual Kidney Urology and Hematology (KUH) Undergraduate Research Symposium in which ~175 undergraduate students and 40 mentors from around the country descended upon Charlottesville, VA, from July 31 to August 2, 2024. This event marked the pinnacle for undergraduate participants nationwide in the summer KUH research program.

eagerly shared their research, forged invaluable connections with peers and faculty, and absorbed career development insights.

The symposium's highlight was the presence of several keynote speakers: Dr. Griffin Rodgers, Director of NIH/NIDDK; Dr. Vivian Pinn (Pinn Hall is named in her honor), the Inaugural Director of the Office of Research on Women's Health at NIH, and Mr. Paul Conway, the Chair of Policy and Global Affairs at the American Association of Kidney Patients.

The atmosphere was filled with enthusiasm, and the excitement was palpable. This immersive experience inspires undergraduates to pursue medical or graduate careers, ensuring a bright and innovative future for nephrology. Special thanks to Lena Garrison, Yadira Weaver, and Jackie McCauley for their significant contributions to the event's success.

The assembly of undergraduates and faculty program directors marked the symposium with various activities and intellectual exchange. Students



Undergraduate students from around the country attended the annual National Institutes of Health Kidney, Urologic, and Hematology Summer Undergraduate Research Symposium at UVA. The meeting began in the Rotunda library, followed by two days of meetings held in Alumni Hall. Nearly 200 participants, including 175 students, attended. Keynote speakers included Griffin Rodgers, MD, the director of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, and Vivian Pinn, MD.



Angie Nishio Lucar MD

Championing Diversity and Equity in Nephrology

The Division of Nephrology is deeply committed to fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in all aspects of our work. Led by Dr. Angie Nishio-Lucar, our DEI efforts address disparities in kidney disease outcomes, particularly among minority populations. We actively recruit diverse faculty and trainees, reflecting the communities we serve. Our initiatives include a dedicated DEI leadership team, strategic partnerships with HBCUs, and a diversity-focused webpage.

Kidney disease disproportionately affects individuals of color, especially Black and Latinx populations, who face higher risks and barriers to treatment. We aim to remove these barriers and ensure equitable care for all. Notably, our UVA Food Pharmacy, supported by grants and the Ralph Cohen Fund, provides kidney-friendly food to needy patients, emphasizing our commitment to addressing food insecurity and improving health outcomes.

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Tushar A Chopra MD

Empowering Tomorrow's Health Leaders: UVA KDSAP

Kidney Disease Screening & Awareness Program UVA Kidney Disease Screening & Awareness Program, or KDSAP, is an undergraduate student-led chapter that provides students with opportunities for career development through physician connections and community outreach via free kidney health screenings to promote chronic kidney disease prevention. This program, led by Dr. Tushar A. Chopra, offers a unique opportunity for undergraduate students to gain invaluable hands-on clinical experience aimed at the prevention of chronic kidney disease among individuals in medically underserved communities. Since its origin at Harvard University in 2008, KDSAP has expanded its reach nationwide. By fostering awareness and providing proactive measures, KDSAP has and continues to play a pivotal role in promoting the overall well-being of individuals, emphasizing the importance of kidney health awareness. In addition, this organization offers an array of professional encounters to facilitate student cultivation of professional skills.

Division Highlights

Enhancing Glomerular Disease Care with Exceptional Expertise



Yeshwanter Radhakrishnan MD

We welcome **Dr. Yeshwanter (Yesh) Radhakrishnan**, Assistant Professor of Medicine, to our faculty. Yesh completed his residency at the Cleveland Clinic Akron General in June 2021, followed by fellowship training at the Mayo Clinic, where he developed a strong interest in glomerular and tubulointerstitial pathologies under the mentorship of renowned experts Drs. Fernando Fervenza and Ladan Zand. He also has expertise in genetic kidney diseases, critical care nephrology, and acid-base disorders.

Yesh is an exceptional clinician and educator. He will lead our renal glomerulonephritis clinic and contribute to the Lupus clinic. He will be available on Wednesday and Friday mornings to treat patients with various glomerular diseases, including membranous nephropathy, minimal change disease, FSGS, lupus nephritis, vasculitis, hereditary nephritis, C3 glomerulonephritis, and more.

Dedicated to Excellence in Service: A Commitment to the Apheresis Society

The American Society for Apheresis (AFSA) Presidential Award committee has selected **Rasheed Balogun MD** for the 2024 Presidential Award. This distinguishing award recognizes Dr. Balogun's commitment to apheresis and consistency in contributing to and performing outstanding service for the Society over several years.



Rasheed Abiodun Balogun MD

UVA Transplant Nephrologists: Advancing Leadership and Elevating National Presence

UVA's transplant nephrologists are shaping the future of transplantation through leadership in prestigious national societies and committees: **Dr. Swati Rao** is currently the medical director of the kidney and pancreas transplant program, completed a 2-year term on the AST Women's Health COP Executive Committee, co-chairs the Leadership Workgroup, and serves on the AST Transplant Nephrology Fellowship Training Accreditation Program. **Dr. Alden Doyle**, Quality Director of UVA Transplant Service Line, co-chairs the OPTN Expeditious Task Force. **Dr. Angie Nishio**, Medical Director of Living Donor Kidney Transplantation at UVA, chairs the Education Workgroup of the AST Living Donor COP and is a member of the ASN Diversity Committee. **Drs. Sarthak Virmani** and **Jeanne Kamal** co-chair the AST Trainee and Young Faculty COP, supporting the next generation of transplant professionals.



Swati Rao MD

Dr. Swati Rao, recipient of the Department of Medicine's Women in Medicine Excellence Award

At UVA, Dr. Rao has integrated reproductive health counseling into the care of kidney transplant patients, ensuring that these critical conversations start from the first intake visit. Her leadership has successfully managed 11 pregnancies in kidney transplant recipients over the last five years, with seven resulting in live births. She has been a mentor and role model

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for women in medicine within and outside the Nephrology Division, guiding colleagues in their clinical, educational, and research pursuits. Nationally, she serves as an Executive member of the Women’s Health Community of Practice at the American Society of Transplantation, where she has spearheaded initiatives promoting equity for women and minorities in medicine.

Lena Garrison, recipient of the Department of Medicine’s Outstanding Staff Contributor Award



Lena Garrison

Even after her retirement in late 2021, Lena has remained a vital part of the Division of Nephrology and the Center for Immunity, Inflammation, and Regenerative Medicine and a member of the UVA community for over 44 years. She began her career in Radiology, then moved to work with Dr Shu Man Fu, former Chief of Rheumatology at UVA, in 1994 as she was interested in lupus research. She has been in Nephrology CIIR since 2007.

As a part-time Grants & Contracts Administrator, she manages the Division’s most complex grants, including the R25 and U2C-TL1 training and research awards. Lena’s exceptional support, built on solid relationships with subsites, trainees, and faculty,

reflects her deep understanding and quick adaptability. Her meticulous attention to detail, organizational skills, and willingness to take on project management tasks showcase her passion for excellence. Lena is also actively hiring and training her successor, ensuring a seamless transition. Her continued dedication exemplifies her commitment to the Division’s mission, even in retirement. The photo is of Lena Garrison (kneeling) with Dr. Vivian Pinn, Dr. Griffin Rodgers (Director of NIDDK), and R25 students (VA K-TUTOR).



UVA’s R25 students along with Griffin Rodgers, Director of NIDDK and Lena Garrison, Grants Administrator, at UVA huddle around Vivian Pinn, MD

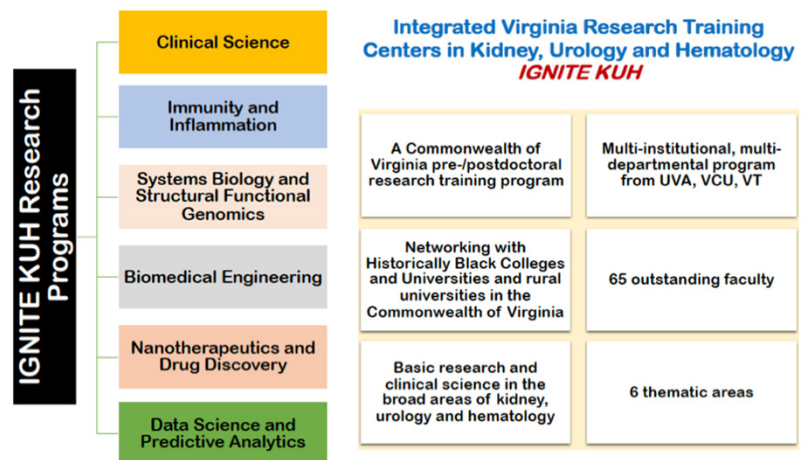
Tushar Chopra Recognized As Reviewer of the Year

Dr. Tushar Chopra was recognized by the American Society of Nephrology’s Kidney360 Journal as “Reviewer of the Year”. This award recognizes Dr. Chopra as an outstanding reviewer of articles published in the journal and ensures that publications are of the highest quality.

Research Update

IGNITE KUH: Empowering the Next Generation of Kidney, Urology, and Hematology Researchers Through NIH/NIDDK-Funded Training

Launched in 2021 with NIH/NIDDK funding, the IGNITE KUH program supports pre- and postdoctoral trainees in kidney, urology, and hematology research. A collaboration among UVA, VCU, and Virginia Tech, IGNITE KUH prepares the next generation of researchers through networking, professional development, and outreach to undergraduates, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities and rural universities. The program offers interdisciplinary training in cutting-edge technologies and methodologies, focusing on recruiting diverse candidates and advancing research through collaboration. Our mentoring team includes the three institutions’ top physician-scientists and basic science investigators.

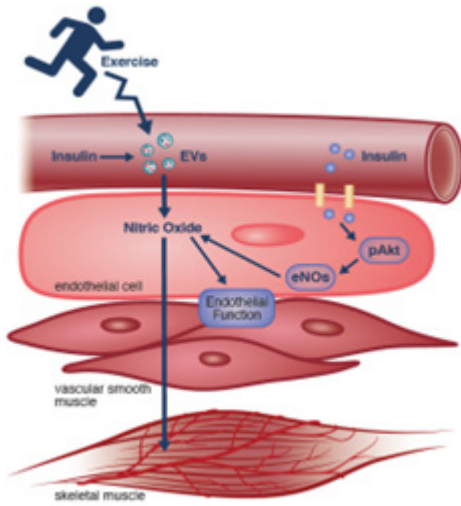


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Unveiling the Power of EVs: Pioneering Insulin-Induced Vascular Revolution in Type 2 Diabetes

Dr. Uta Erdbrügger, an associate professor in the Division of Nephrology within the Department of Medicine, alongside her colleagues at Rutgers, has been awarded a five-year NIH-NIDDK R01 grant for their research titled “Insulin, Extracellular Vesicles, Exercise, and Vascular Function in Type 2 Diabetes.” The Erdbrügger lab is at the forefront of studying Extracellular Vesicles (EVs), emerging as crucial intercellular and interorgan messengers in conditions like kidney disease, hypertension, and metabolic disorders. These submicron vesicles, which all cells release, carry essential cargo such as proteins and nucleic acids.

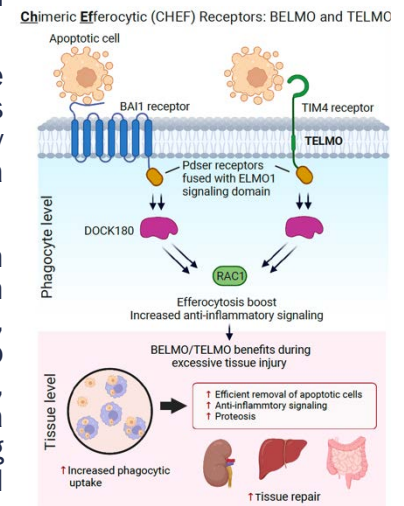
In their work, Dr. Erdbrügger and colleagues have explored the effects of exercise and insulin on circulating EVs in individuals with prediabetes and obesity. Their findings reveal that low cardiorespiratory fitness correlates with higher EV counts in adults with obesity and that acute exercise reduces fasting and insulin-stimulated EVs while enhancing vascular function in this population. Their new grant combines their expertise to investigate the hypothesis that EVs mediate insulin-induced vascular effects in Type 2 Diabetes. This research promises to shed new light on insulin resistance and uncover potential mechanisms through which exercise may reduce the risk of chronic disease.



Exploiting Apoptotic Cell Clearance: A Strategy for Treating Acute Kidney Injury and Beyond

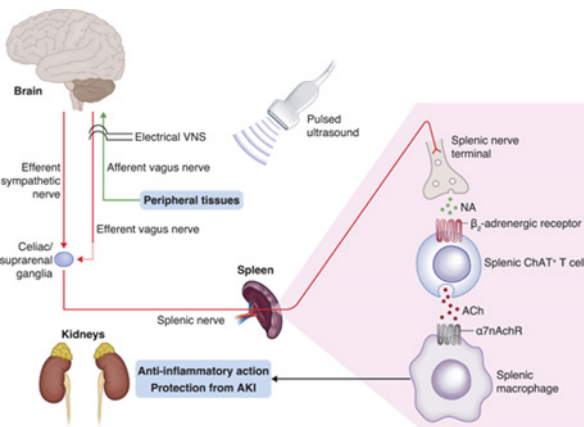
Sho Morioka, PhD, is an Assistant Professor in the Division of Nephrology at the Center for Immunity, Inflammation, and Regenerative Medicine. After completing his postdoctoral training, Dr. Morioka joined the Division and CIIR. His research primarily focuses on exploring the therapeutic potential of enhancing apoptotic cell clearance, a strategy that has garnered significant attention.

Since joining the Division, Dr. Morioka’s innovative work has been recognized through various grants and awards. He is the recipient of the NIH K01 DK123497 grant, which supports his research on removing apoptotic cells during acute kidney injury. Additionally, he has been honored with the American Society of Nephrology (ASN) Transition to Independence Award and an O’Brien Center Pilot and Feasibility Grant. Most notably, Dr. Morioka recently received an outstanding score on his NIH R01 submission, with a pending final decision. Dr. Morioka’s work represents a promising approach to treating kidney diseases, potentially paving the way for new therapeutic strategies that could significantly impact patient outcomes.



From Mice to Humans: Neuroimmune Control of Inflammation in Acute Kidney Injury

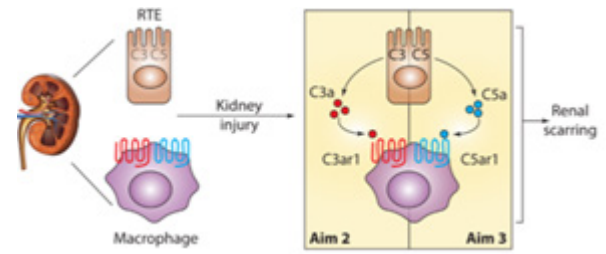
Dr. Mark Okusa’s lab discovered that ultrasound pulses can reduce inflammation and acute kidney injury (AKI). Through NIH support, his group has explored how the biomechanical effects of ultrasound initiate systemic anti-inflammatory responses. The accompanying diagram highlights key pathways in the inflammatory reflex, including the efferent and afferent vagus nerve, the sympathetic efferent nerve, and the splenic nerve. Dr. Okusa’s team has employed electrical stimulation and optogenetic techniques to map out these pathways. The lab is now moving these findings into human studies, launching clinical trials to test whether pulsed ultrasound can block inflammation in healthy volunteers. Pending NIH approval, Dr. Okusa, Dr. Mitchell Rosner, and collaborator Dr. Ourania Preventza, Chief of the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery, will explore pulsed ultrasound’s potential protective effects against AKI in high-risk cardiac surgery patients.



Research Update

Harnessing the Power of the Intracellular Complement System to Transform Kidney Disease Therapy

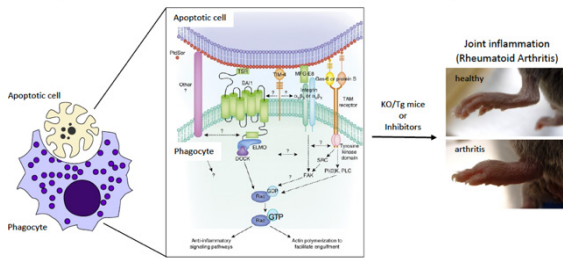
The complement system, an ancient part of the innate immune system, is known for recognizing and eliminating pathogens. However, recent findings reveal that complement also functions within cells, influencing key processes like cell survival, differentiation, and metabolism. **Dr. Didier Portilla**, Professor of Medicine, Division of Nephrology/CIIR, utilizes single nuclei RNA sequencing, spatial transcriptomics, and immunofluorescence demonstrates that complement components are compartmentalized in specific cell types and contribute significantly to kidney fibrosis. We propose that the intracellular complement system is a critical driver of kidney function loss and scarring. It is a promising target for therapies, some currently in clinical trials or already in use for treating certain kidney diseases.



Decoding the Role of Efferocytosis in Inflammation and Autoimmune Diseases

Research in the **Arandjelovic Lab** focuses on the process of apoptotic (dying) cell clearance, also known as efferocytosis (from Greek effero “bury” or “take to the grave”). Apoptotic cells are frequently observed at sites of ongoing inflammation, and inefficient clearance of apoptotic cells can lead to secondary necrosis and the release of their cellular contents, which can further fuel the inflammatory process. However, the nature of dying cells and phagocytes that clear them remains unclear. We aim to address the questions in this project: 1) Who are the phagocytes in inflamed tissues? 2) What are they “eating” (infiltrating leukocytes, dying tissue-resident cells)? How does modulation of efferocytosis pathways impact disease

Molecular pathways of apoptotic cell clearance in inflammation



parameters? These studies will identify new modulators of inflammatory and autoimmune disease and uncover novel pathways that can be targeted for therapeutic benefit.

Education Update

Graduation 2024

Memories from Graduation 2024, farewell to **Lalida Kunaprayoon, Ayman Alghamdi, Monarch Shah, and Ben Silverberg** as they embark on new adventures in life. We had a fantastic turnout, and I wanted to thank everyone for making it to this special day for fellows.



Celebrating Fellows Success

Our second-year fellows **Sindhu Krishna Marampudi, Michelle Tran, Abdallah Saleh Abdelrazeq, and Alexander Olegovich Gogoli** have made us proud! They showcased their research posters at the National Kidney Foundation Meeting, representing UVA Nephrology. Abdallah bagged a travel grant from ASN to attend the Home Dialysis University and participate in a virtual course. Michelle and Sasha diligently revised the 11th edition of the Nephrology Fellows Handbook for our new fellows, while Sindhu received a travel grant from Women in Nephrology and has been focusing on enhancing fellow wellbeing and UVA Nephrology’s social media presence.

Get To Know Our Fellows



Name: Alejandro Valdesuso

Hometown: Miami, FL

Undergrad college and major: Biology Major at Florida International University

Medical school: St. George's University School of Medicine

Hobbies: Hiking, traveling and watching movies.

What do you like about being a nephrology fellow at UVA?
Quality of training.

Favorite things to do in Charlottesville: Hiking the beautiful trails.

If you had to pick a fictional world to live in, what would it be? The Wizarding World of Harry Potter.

If you could have dinner with a celebrity, dead or alive, who would it be? Abraham Lincoln.



UVA Health

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Name: Sindhu Marampudi

Hometown: Gainesville, VA

Undergrad college and major: VCU- Biomedical Engineering

Medical school: VCOM- Blacksburg

Hobbies: anything to keep moving (Orangetheory, yoga), anything music-related (playing piano, karaoke, spending hours on Spotify), watching stand-up comedy, true crime podcasts, reading, also discovered paint-by-numbers during the pandemic (very relaxing).

What do you like about being a nephrology fellow at UVA?

Supportive faculty and co-fellows, having a large catchment area allows us to see a variety of conditions support for scholarly activity; the schedule at UVA is also unique, and having a swing fellow and night float makes a considerable difference for work-life balance.

Favorite things to do in Charlottesville:

Brunch, hiking, wineries, basketball games, Orangetheory.

Favorite nephrology trivia:

To date, the largest known kidney stone is the size of a coconut.

If you had to pick a fictional world to live in, what would it be?

The wizarding world of Harry Potter. Still waiting for my letter.



If you could have dinner with a celebrity, dead or alive, who would it be? J. Cole



Name: Czarina Teano

Hometown: Tampa, Florida

Undergrad college and major: University of Florida, Microbiology

Medical school: St. George's University

Hobbies: gardening, hiking, painting.

What do you like about being a nephrology fellow at UVA? to be determined!

Favorite things to do in Charlottesville: to be determined! so far, love the mountain views.

Favorite nephrology trivia: the heaviest kidneys recorded weighed 74 lbs!

If you had to pick a fictional world to live in, what would it be? Disney World.

If you could have dinner with a celebrity, dead or alive, who would it be? Queen Elizabeth.

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Name: Alexander “Sasha” Gogoli

Hometown: Born Chishinau, Moldova; moved to the U.S. in 1997, mainly in Tryon, NC

Undergrad college and major: Furman University, B.S. in Biology

Medical school: Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine - Carolinas Campus

Hobbies: Hiking, tennis, video games, and being a good Furdaddy: cat-Natasha and dog-Bucky.

What do you like about being a nephrology fellow at UVA?

You feel like you are part of a close-knit family. Everybody looks out for one another and is always willing to help. Not to mention, all the attendings are incredibly nice, very knowledgeable, and always willing to teach.

Favorite things to do in Charlottesville:

The food scene is impressive; there are too many places to mention, and we still have many places to try. Over 40 wineries, and there are a lot of niche dive bars and distilleries as well.

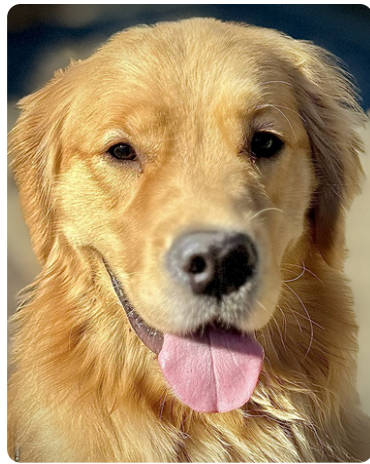
Favorite nephrology trivia:

Will state a joke instead of trivia: what do nephrologists say to non-compliant patients? Urine trouble!

If you had to pick a fictional world to live in, what would it be?

Take me to New Zealand, and put me in the Lord of the Rings world.

If you could have dinner with a celebrity, dead or alive, who would it be? Ryan Reynolds, hopefully in the character of Deadpool. Costume optional.



Name: Michelle Tran

Hometown: Clifton, Virginia

Undergrad college and major: Virginia Tech, Major: Biology, Minors: Engineering Science and Mechanics and Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering

Medical school: Virginia Commonwealth University

Hobbies: Spending time with loved ones, attending live music concerts, listening to true crime podcasts, cleaning/organizing.

What do you like about being a nephrology fellow at UVA?

I love how being a part of UVA Nephrology feels like a second family. I love the people I work with; they make all the difference. I couldn't ask for better, more supportive co-fellows who prove time and time again that we are all about being there for each other. Program leadership values us as people and individuals- they go above and beyond to ensure we are supported. We also have amazing ancillary staff (dialysis nurses, nephrology case management, etc).

Favorite things to do in Charlottesville: walking around my neighborhood and enjoying the outdoors, drinking coffee, Korean BBQ at Bulpan.

If you had to pick a fictional world to live in, what would it be? It's cheesy, but I think it'd be cool to live in Pandora (James Cameron version) just so whenever I touched the ground or plants, they'd light up.

If you could have dinner with a celebrity, dead or alive, who would it be? Kygo (I want a personal concert)



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A Warm Welcome To Our New Fellows

We are excited to welcome our first-year fellows- Craig Herrforth, Geoffery Nasuti, Czarina Teano, and Alejandro Valdesuso.



Craig Herrforth MD

Residency: Trident Hospital Charleston

Craig (CL) is originally from Milwaukee. He graduated from undergrad with a business degree and worked in management for a manufacturing company. His job took him overseas for a while, which he says was a fantastic experience. Eventually, he decided that more school was a 'great' idea and worked his way to a fellowship.

Fun Fact: He was drafted by the Houston Astros in high school, albeit in the 45th round (they no longer have a 45th round because it's excessive).

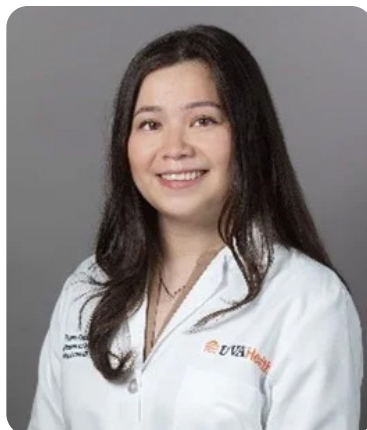


Geoffery Nasuti MD

Residency: Morristown Medical Center

Geoffrey completed his bachelor's degree in Biology from Alvernia University, where he decided to pursue a degree in medicine at St. George's University. His interest in nephrology stemmed from the wide range of disease states and the special connection formed with patients in this field.

Fun Fact: He learned how to DJ in college and continues to do so now and then.



Czarina Teano MD

Residency: HCA Florida Aventura Internal Medicine

Czarina graduated from St. George's University School of Medicine and obtained my Master's in Public Health afterward. I trained at Aventura Hospital in sunny Florida for Internal Medicine.

She is originally from the Philippines and can speak four languages.

Fun Fact: She enjoys yoga, cooking, and gardening.



Alejandro Valdesuso MD

Residency: Landmark Medical Center/New York Medical College

Alejandro completed his bachelor's degree in Biology from Alvernia University, but he decided to pursue a degree in medicine at St. George's University. His interest in nephrology stemmed from the wide range of disease states and the unique connections he formed with patients in this field.

Fun Fact: He is a die-hard foodie and loves to cook. He enjoys hiking and traveling. Despite growing up on an island, He only learned to swim when he was twelve.

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DIVISION OF NEPHROLOGY

STAFF PROFILE - Alice Zeigler McClain



Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I am new to the University of Virginia, serving as the Senior Grants and Contracts Administrator for the Division of Nephrology. I have worked in research administration for over ten years and am thrilled to further my career here.

Why Research?

I started my career in higher education because I found joy in working with students. Witnessing their growth throughout college and supporting their journey has been incredibly rewarding. Like many in research administration, I didn't initially plan to enter this field but discovered a passion for it. It's a profession that promotes continuous learning and growth.

What brought you to Charlottesville?

When I came across this opportunity, it felt like the ideal next step in my career. Although I work remotely from Alabama, my visit to Charlottesville was fantastic. The campus and community are amazing.

What excites you about your work?

I've always found research administration. I've worked in pre-award, post-award, and financial management for different grants and genuinely enjoyed every facet.

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

My greatest accomplishment is my daughter. She embodies kindness, humility, and respect; I am immensely proud to be her mother.

Describe yourself in one word.

Introvert.

What do you enjoy doing on the weekend?

Doing absolutely nothing! I rarely have free time, so when I do, I just relax.

How did you meet your partner?

I met my husband through a blind date, and it felt like fate. He turned out to be the kindest person I've ever encountered. Now, we've been happily married for fourteen years!

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

Chobani Caramel Coffee Creamer and Zero Sugar Root Beer.

Do you have any pets?

Yes. I have a twelve-year-old Yorkie named Sparkle.



What is your favorite vacation/activity spot?

Las Vegas, NV, and Durham, NC

What is the best advice anyone ever gave you?

It was "Give yourself grace." The perfectionist in me has a hard time doing this.

What about you would surprise us?

I am a huge fan of BTS. I absolutely love their music and am a proud ARMY! Borahae! Apobangpo!

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

Singing. I know so many great singers personally, and I would love to have this skill. I am a terrible singer.

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

Ten things admirably well. I would rather be well-rounded so that I can benefit as many people as possible.

What is the last book you read for pleasure?

"This Thread of Gold" by Catherin Joy White.

Do you collect anything?

BT21.

DIVISION OF NEPHROLOGY

STAFF PROFILE - Yadira Weaver



Tell us a little bit about yourself.

My name is Yadira Weaver, but I go by Yadi. I have been a respected member of the University of Virginia community for nineteen years and have made noteworthy contributions. I started as the Spanish Interpreter/Office Coordinator at the Medical Center and later transitioned to the Engineering School. In the latter role, I managed various responsibilities, first as a graduate coordinator and then as the grant administrator for the IFAB Lab. My commitment to ongoing learning and embracing new opportunities demonstrates my exemplary qualities, benefiting the UVA community. I have two daughters, one ten years old and the other soon to be 21. My youngest is a dedicated soccer player, and you can often find me cheering her on from the sidelines. When not doing that, I enjoy tending to my flower gardens or going on long hikes/walks with family and friends. I love to travel and explore new places and am fond of being near water, particularly the beach!

The field of research has always fascinated me due to its connection to attention, deep processing, and the use of effortful strategies for learning. Research has driven advancements that have significantly improved and even saved lives. In universities, the research component provides students with a more comprehensive educational experience, allowing them to explore the impactful effects of applying new ideas. Being an active part of this dynamic process is truly rewarding.

I have a strong connection to Charlottesville because my parents relocated there when I was around ten years old. Although I moved away for college, I longed for the distinct seasons and the overall charm of the area, prompting my decision to return and raise my family here. I am passionate about the opportunity to assume the Grants and Contracts Administrator role within the Nephrology department. This role offers the compelling prospect of continuously acquiring new knowledge, broadening my skill set, and venturing into unexplored domains.



DIVISION OF NEPHROLOGY

STAFF PROFILE - Sheryl Willison



Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I came to the University of Virginia to help my daughter and son-in-law after I retired from nineteen long years at Purdue University, where I have had the pleasure of working in the College of Education, Discovery Park Administration, the Office of the Executive Vice President for Research, and Purdue for Life Foundation supporting the Schools of Mechanical and Aeronautics & Astronautics for the last six years.

Why Research?

There are so many discoveries that we haven't even thought of yet. Medicine alone will change beyond our way of thinking today.

What brought you to Charlottesville?

I came to be near family and any grandkids yet to come. I've been in training for that role for way too long.

What excites you about your work?

The possibilities of new discoveries that our team can provide to our patients and community. Being a positive influence on all those I encounter.

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

Supporting Cocktails & Caregivers.org as an ambassador. Most caregivers are not noticed or encouraged. Acknowledging caregivers by opening the door, giving them encouraging words, or even a smile gives them strength. Cocktails & Caregivers.org gives caregivers a medium to talk among themselves for support and monthly care packages to encourage those nominated. Providing a small amount of funding to families needing financial support. Cocktails & Caregivers is growing, and I hope they will have a luncheon for local caregivers in the Charlottesville area one day.

Describe yourself in one word.

Servant-hearted.

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

Chocolate and sweet wine and ciders. The work fridge? Chocolate.

What do you enjoy doing on the weekend?

Anything but housework. Going shopping, getting a massage, meeting people, just getting outside and going to wineries.



Are you a hunter or a gatherer?

I'm a gatherer.

What is the most unusual thing you have ever eaten?

I have eaten black bear burgers that my father-in-law fried in butter in an iron skillet.

What is your favorite vacation/activity spot?

Disney World, New York City, being with my family, and my friend's cabin in Gatlinburg, TN.

What about you would surprise us?

I owned and operated "Sheryl's Old Fashioned Soda Fountain" for eight months. The best breakfast for an 18-year-old was french fries and ice cream. It didn't last long, but I have great memories as my mom taught me to make green rivers and real root beer using syrup.

What is the best advice someone ever gave you?

Always be the better person. Do things for others that they would never expect.

What is the last book you read for pleasure?

I am still reading "Own Your Past Change Your Future" by Dr. John Delony.

Do you collect anything?

Good chocolates. Ghirardelli, Godiva, No Chew Chocolates and European chocolates. I don't care for Snickers or Hershey bars. Usually, I keep my chocolates in the freezer so they last longer.

DIVISION OF NEPHROLOGY

STAFF PROFILE - Lindsey Danburg



Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I joined the University of Virginia in November 2023. I have previously worked in higher education at the University of Florida and the University of Connecticut.

What brought you to Charlottesville?

I came to Charlottesville to be closer to family. We originally left Connecticut to get out of the cold winters. After 5 years in Florida, we had enough of the heat and wanted to be close to family again. Virginia is the happy medium we were looking for! We love the mountains and mild winters. My husband and I were born and raised in Connecticut, and most of our family live there. We are now only a day's drive away from family. In addition, our daughter and her husband are stationed in Norfolk, VA, so it is great to be close to them.

What excites you about your work?

I am genuinely passionate about working in healthcare administration. I feel privileged to work with such a wide variety of people, from physicians to researchers to APPs and nurses, staff, and more. I love every aspect of the complex world of academic medical centers.

What do you consider to be your greatest achievement

outside the professional realm?

Even though this might be regarded as part of the professional realm.... Pursuing a doctorate while working full-time and raising a family is one of my greatest achievements. This past December, I earned the title "Doctor" and graduated with an EdD in Higher Education Administration. As proud as I am, I can honestly say, "Wow, I'm glad that's over!"

What do you enjoy doing on the weekend?

Weekends are a new beginning and a weekly reset. They are a time for my husband, my children, and me to spend together. Weekends are usually a nice balance of running errands, relaxing, and enjoying each other's company. There is something satisfying about ending the weekend with a fully restocked fridge, memories made with a fun outdoor activity, and a good movie night to prepare you for the week ahead.

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

Asparagus. It is a staple food in our household.



Who is the person you admire most, and why?

I admire my husband. He is the strongest person I know. In 2014, he fell 50 feet out of a tree and endured many surgeries and years of rehab. Throughout it all, he kept pushing, healing, and thriving. Watching him go through so much shows me that nothing in life is insurmountable.

What about you would surprise us?

In 2018, my husband and I downsized everything we owned and moved to Florida. For almost a year, we lived full-time in an RV with our four children. We loved meeting people from all over the world and the freedom that the RV gave us.

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

Many people in my family can sing, but I am terrible. I wish I had the talent to sing well.

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

Hmmm, this is a tough one. Can I meet this question in the middle and say I would do five things extraordinarily well instead?



FELLOW PROFILE - Ben Silverberg



Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I've been at the University of Virginia for five years, and my wife and I matched at our respective residencies in Charlottesville in 2019. I completed my internal medicine residency here and was lucky enough to stay for a nephrology fellowship. I was born in Rochester, MN, and grew up in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. I attended the University of Georgia for my undergraduate degree and returned to Louisiana for medical school at LSU Medical School in Shreveport.

My wife and I met during our first medical school year and married before moving to Virginia. She just graduated from her radiology residency and will complete a breast radiology fellowship this year. We have enjoyed the beautiful outdoors and food scene over the past five years. UVA has provided excellent training and comradery. I am very fortunate to have stayed in Virginia and begun my nephrology career at UVA!

Why Healthcare?

I have multiple family members in healthcare and have always admired their impact on their patients' lives. As a result, service to others was always emphasized in my home growing up. At Georgia, I pursued my early interest in math and economics, graduating with a degree in economics focusing on health policy. During an internship in Washington, DC, I realized the unfortunate barriers one must overcome to enact positive changes. I recognized that a career at the bedside with patients would be more fulfilling while also having the opportunity for a similar type of advocacy. I enjoy that the primary focus in healthcare is continually improving patient well-being. Additionally, there are many avenues within healthcare to pursue your interests while contributing to better patient outcomes overall.

What brought you to Charlottesville?

We interviewed nationwide for residency, looking to get out of the "Deep South" for a change. After interviewing further north, my wife soon realized she couldn't be too far from home (and we couldn't be around too much snow). Charlottesville was the sweet spot. The training programs and medical center had the perfect blend of academic and clinical excellence and provided a supportive, friendly environment.

For a small city, we are rarely at a loss for something to do with most of the desired amenities of a bigger city. I have been happy to call Charlottesville home.

What excites you about your work?

There is a lot of unknown and anxiety for patients with chronic kidney disease. Daily, I am excited to comfort patients, hoping to provide answers or be a partner in the uncertainty. In the dialysis unit, I am most excited to get to know each patient personally and help them accomplish their goals.

Otherwise, as a nerd, I enjoy the wide range of pathology in nephrology. Each day can be different, which is always exciting. As our understanding of pathophysiology evolves, we discover new treatments for our patients, with more on the horizon.

What do you enjoy doing on the weekend?

Usually, it is an outdoor activity- kayak fishing, golfing, or enjoying the wineries/ breweries in the area, followed by trying a new restaurant. Additionally, I am a big LSU and F1 racing fan.

How did you meet your partner?

In medical school, at a post-test party during our first year.

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

Always some olive, capers or other pickled item, at least five varieties of cheese, tinned or smoked fish. I'm known for my unique (weird) taste.

Do you have any pets?

My wife rescued our cat, Bynx, right before we met. As someone who grew up with dogs, I may have been converted to the dark side.

What is your favorite vacation/activity spot?

Sicily, which has a unique culture, rich history, fantastic seafood, and beautiful scenery.

What is the best advice anyone ever gave you?

Take small steps in the right direction.

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

The ability to speak multiple languages.

Favorite fictional characters?

Tony Soprano.

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

Watching the Olympics right now is influencing this answer, but one thing extraordinarily well.

What is the last book you read for pleasure?

If audiobooks count, "The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress" by Robert Heinlein.

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

Typical Louisiana answers- alligator, squirrel etc. I do recommend getting turtle soup if ever in New Orleans.

