

# IMPACT

UAMS  
College of Medicine  
Internal Medicine

Issue 9, April 2022

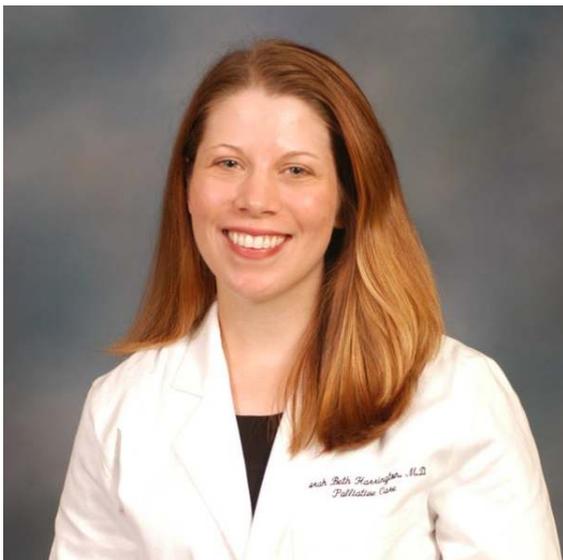


**Edward T. Yeh, M.D.**

## Message from the Chairman

The Department of Internal Medicine offers advanced specialty training in eleven ACGME-accredited fellowship programs. They include cardiovascular diseases, interventional cardiology, electrophysiology, endocrinology/diabetes/metabolism, gastroenterology/hepatology, hematology/oncology, hospice/palliative care medicine, infectious diseases, nephrology, pulmonary/critical care medicine, and rheumatology.

In this issue, five of the fellowship program directors are featured. The rest of the program directors will be introduced in the coming issues. Please join me in thanking them for their tremendous contributions to medical education.



**Sarah Harrington, M.D.**

## Sarah Harrington - A Pioneer in Palliative Care

Dr. Sarah Harrington knew Internal Medicine was the right path for her career. Dr. Harrington credits two of her mentors, Dr. Robert Bradsher and Dr. Susan Beland, for helping her find enjoyment in her medicine rotation while at UAMS. Although she initially wanted to go into geriatrics, she discovered palliative care during her fourth year of medical school during her hospice rotation under the direction of Dr. Reed Thompson. Dr. Harrington found the ability to help patients prepare for end-of-life and achieve a good quality of life brought her immense satisfaction.

When searching for residency programs, Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, VA stood out as it had one of six palliative medicine fellowships in the country. She matched with VCU, completed her Internal Medicine internship and residency, and Hospice and Palliative Medicine fellowship, then stayed as a faculty member for an additional year. With the help of terrific mentors, she learned how to start and run a palliative care program.

Dr. Laura Hutchins and Dr. Reed Thompson recruited Dr. Harrington back to UAMS in 2008 with the goal of starting a palliative care program at UAMS and expanding the program at the VA. They believed it would be difficult to get a true program running without a training program, thus a year later the Hospice and Palliative Medicine Fellowship was created. The program is the state's first and only Hospice and Palliative Medicine fellowship and will have graduated 36 fellows by the end of this year.

As a relatively young program, there are still many opportunities for growth. Dr. Harrington points out the realm of research opportunities in areas such as pain and symptom management, communication, and advance care planning. Over time she hopes to continue moving palliative care upstream, and for it to be seen as standard of care and integrated care for patients with serious illness.

When asked what advice she would give to trainees, Dr. Harrington says that taking time to sit and listen to patients goes a long way. She tells them if they are talking more than the patient, they are talking too much. Through listening and asking the right questions, physicians can allow patients to share their goals, and the team can create a plan of care that matches those goals and improve quality of life in the process.



**Nithin Karakala, M.D.**

## **Dr. Nithin Karakala, Fellowship Director in Nephrology**

As the son of two physicians, Dr. Nithin Karakala was inspired by his parents to enter the field of medicine. While growing up in a hospital centric environment, he saw the way his parents became a part of the community and the respect and affection they gained. Nephrology became an interest for Dr. Karakala from his professional curiosity in physiology.

Dr. Karakala applies what he observed from his parents to the Nephrology Fellowship program by running the program as a family. Creating an environment with a family-like atmosphere nurtures the fellows and faculty to become great learners and teachers.

Dr. Karakala notes the importance of having a good mentor to show how you can enjoy the academic side of the profession as he recalls the first time he met one of his own mentors during his fellowship, Dr. Arthur.

The strength of this program is proven by the continuously filled fellowship positions each year, a feat only accomplished by half of nephrology programs across the country. Dr. Karakala is excited to see the growth of the Nephrology Fellowship Program. In collaboration with the growth of the Cardiology program, Nephrology fellows will be able to have a hands-on experience using ECMO. The division is also seeing a growth in research interest with several fellows already publishing, a strength that will help recruit the best fellow applicants.



**Ryan Dare M.D.**

## **Dr. Ryan Dare, Fellowship Director in Infectious Diseases**

Dr. Ryan Dare knew he wanted to be an Infectious Disease doctor before he applied to medical school. While working as a microbiologist at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, he was able to travel across the world to implement programs for underserved third world countries. Seeing the impact ID physicians had on these vulnerable patient populations sparked an interest to incorporate his work with caring for patients.

Dr. Dare began his role as director of the fellowship program in April 2021. The UAMS ID fellowship program provides an exceptional training experience with frequent exposure to unique infections including invasive fungal and tick-borne disease common to our great Natural State.

Working in academics, Dr. Dare and his colleagues in the UAMS Division of Infectious Diseases are able to train future ID experts for our region, which has become a high profile and much needed specialty.



**Rajani Jagana, M.D.**

## **Dr. Rajani Jagana, Fellowship Director in Pulmonary & Critical Care**

Dr. Rajani Jagana took inspiration from her mentors to steer her career into academic medicine. She identified the colossal potential of the adult cystic fibrosis program at UAMS and her deep level of involvement in this program fed her desire to be an accomplished cystic fibrosis physician. She brings in her wealth of knowledge and experience in the areas of pulmonary and critical care medicine with great enthusiasm to help the next generation of physicians.

Dr. Jagana is very proud of the Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine Fellowship program. UAMS provides fellows with state-of-the-art training by being a tertiary care referral center and the only university hospital in the state of Arkansas enabling a diverse clinical experience.

Dr. Jagana shares that teaching a wide array of future physicians, treating complicated and critically ill patients as well as finding her passion, her forte that is chronic respiratory diseases and cystic fibrosis, encourages her to look forward to come to work everyday.



## **Dr. Heather Moore, Fellowship Director of Palliative Medicine**

Dr. Heather Moore, Program Director of the Hospice and Palliative Medicine Fellowship, entered medical school considering a career in Psychiatry but ultimately chose Internal Medicine when she found she enjoyed being the "captain" of a patient's care team.

As a student and during residency, Dr. Moore worked closely with the Palliative Care team and quickly found that the specialty combines all of her interests. She pursued fellowship immediately after Chief Residency and was fortunate to join the faculty at UAMS/CAVHS after graduation.

**Heather Moore, M.D.**

Dr. Moore encourages all of her trainees to sit down from time to time to ask patients basic questions about their lives and how their health condition has impacted their lives. This simple exercise humanizes the patient and reminds us why we chose this profession.



## **Dr. Srikanth Vallurupalli, Fellowship Director in Cardiovascular Medicine**

Dr. Srikanth Vallurupalli has always known medicine would be his career path. While growing up in India as the son of a physician, he saw the way his father managed to be there for his family while also providing exceptional care for his patients at all times. Dr. Vallurupalli has enjoyed teaching at various levels from a young age. His teachers in medical school kindled the desire to teach.

**Srikanth Vallurupalli, M.D.**

One thing Dr. Vallurupalli emphasizes is to not lose sight of general medicine when focusing on a specialty such as cardiology. The philosophy of training fellows lies in remembering that the heart exists within the human body in connection to other parts of health. With the growth of the cardiovascular service line, the fellowship is able to provide comprehensive training to fellows with the aim of having them stay back to practice in our great state.

Dr. Vallurupalli's goal of the fellowship program is to teach his trainees to be better than him. The impact his students will make on their patients will serve for many generations.

## **Dr. Michelle Krause Named Chief Clinical Officer**



Congratulations to Dr. Michelle Krause who will be stepping into the role of Chief Clinical Officer on May 1. In this role, Dr. Krause will be the chair of the Clinical Leadership Council and oversee the operations of the clinical service lines. On September 2, Dr. Krause will serve as interim Senior Vice Chancellor for UAMS Health and CEO of UAMS Medical Center when Dr. Steppe Mette retires.

Dr. Krause has been with UAMS for 10 years and served in a multitude of roles. She has been the director of the Integrated Medicine Service Line since 2015.

Congratulations, Dr. Krause!

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## Dr. Omar Atiq Wins the Benson Prize with a Landmark Paper on Patient-Physician Relationship



Dr. Omar Atiq alongside Ryan Crowley and Dr. David Hilden recently won the [John A. Benson Jr., MD Professionalism Article Prize](#) for the American College of Physicians' position paper "[Financial Profit in Medicine: A Position Paper from the American College of Physicians.](#)"

This honor is awarded to the best peer-reviewed articles facing the issues in the medical profession in 2021. This article focuses on the effect of corporate interests in the health care system and presents a set of recommendations for policies that can aid the patient-physician relationship.

Congratulations, Dr. Atiq!

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## NCAA March Madness Bracket Winners

Congratulations to Dr. Cayleigh Blumrick and Dr. Michael Cross for winning our March Madness bracket competition!



The Department of Internal Medicine is the largest department in the College of Medicine at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. The department is home to approximately 150 full-time faculty members, 81 residents, and 68 fellows serving two residency programs and twelve fellowship programs. Dr. Edward T.H. Yeh, a cardiologist and physician/scientist, is a pioneer in the field of onco-cardiology.

**Questions, comments, or suggestions for future newsletters? Email Shelby Shields at [smshields@uams.edu](mailto:smshields@uams.edu) or Natalie Moore at [NMoore@uams.edu](mailto:NMoore@uams.edu).**

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