



IMPACT

UAMS
College of Medicine
Internal Medicine

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In the coming issues, we will go back in time to feature faculty who have made great impact to the department in the past. Finally, let's celebrate the returning of cooler days!

Message from the Chairman

Impact is one year old! Over the last year, we celebrated the achievements of our faculty, staff, and trainees; we covered the challenges of the COVID-19 epidemic and our department's contribution to blunt its impact; we also introduced new faces who have joined the family of internal medicine.

In this issue, we memorialize the passing of Peggy Ackerman, wife of Dr. George Ackerman who was chair of internal medicine from 1976-1977 and 1985-1988. The memorial was written by Dr. Richard Wheeler, a former medicine faculty who retired as the executive associate dean of academic affairs in 2020. (Click here to read: [*In Memoriam: Peggy Ackerman*](#))



Dr. Paula Podrazik, Baptist Health-UAMS IM Residency Program Director

The Baptist Health-UAMS Internal Medicine Residency Program recently celebrated the graduation of their first class of residents. Paula Podrazik, M.D., Professor of Medicine, holds the position of Program Director. Upon her arrival to the Baptist Health Medical Center on the North Little Rock campus in January 2018, Dr. Podrazik learned how the program could cover gaps in primary and adult specialty care. The residency program has since allowed the outpatient clinic to include subspecialties such as endocrinology, infectious diseases, and

rheumatology that were not at the degree needed. The residents have been able to assist with the expansion of inpatient care and pulmonary critical care with the COVID-19 pandemic and surge.

Beginning a program in a system that has never had a residency can be a challenge. Dr. Podrazik has worked hard to engage private practice faculty members and help them realize that they are talented teachers as well as physicians. A key to overcoming this obstacle has been to inspire them and remind them that their graduates are their legacies and the future of medicine.

In the future, Dr. Podrazik would like to expand faculty development and continue to grow the Baptist Health North Little Rock community-based campus as a tertiary care center. The Baptist Health-UAMS Medical Education Program currently houses three other residency programs aside from internal medicine consisting of family medicine, a transitional year program, and psychiatry. Dr. Podrazik would love to see the inclusion of additional residencies as the Baptist Health-UAMS educational consortium programs continue to grow.

As of June 2022, the Baptist Health-UAMS Internal Medicine Residency Program is a full thirty-six resident program. Dr. Podrazik is very proud of the first graduating class of twelve residents who have gone on to pursue fellowships and begin their careers as hospitalists in places such as Orlando, Detroit, California, as well as eight resident graduates remaining in state. Three graduates are joining our faculty in Internal Medicine including Dr. Ramya Bachu (Myeloma Hospitalist), Dr. Heba Mousa (General Internal Medicine), and Dr. Tanvi Patel (Myeloma Hospitalist). In addition, Dr. Jahanzeb Khan is joining as a Nephrology Fellow.



Dinesh Edem, M.D., Director of the Weight Management Program

Dinesh Edem, M.D., DABOM, serves as an Assistant Professor in the Division of Endocrinology and the director of the UAMS Medical Weight Management (MWM) program located on Financial Center Parkway. Since childhood, Dr. Edem was encouraged by his parents to follow a career path that utilized his caring abilities and empathy for other people. He was intrigued by the discussions in his high school biology class that centered on the pituitary gland and hormones leading him to his interest in

endocrinology. Dr. Edem completed his endocrinology fellowship at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, which has intensive obesity medicine training; where he was inspired to improve patient's numerous obesity related comorbidities, including diabetes reversal and sleep apnea reversal with the help of weight loss. This led him to get a special certification as a Diplomate of American Board of Obesity Medicine (DABOM), and setup the UAMS MWM Program

Obesity is the most common chronic disease in the country, with a prevalence around 40%, including numerous comorbidities and increasing mortality. With the opening of the MWM program, Dr. Edem strives to work with physicians and patients to improve their weight, health, and lifespan. The program focuses on teaching and motivating patients to indulge in healthy lifestyle behaviors as a first step. Next, they discuss how to create and maintain a sustained healthy eating plan and options for increased physical activity. Dr. Ede is also trained in dispensing appropriate FDA approved and off label medications necessary for long term medical weight loss. Their clinic also partners with Baptist Bariatric surgery program and refers appropriate patients who meet criteria for bariatric surgery.

Dr. Edem has a keen interest in education and propagation of obesity medicine and has given Grand Rounds presentations for the department and diabetes conferences and plans to present to other departments as well. He would like to train and include more internists (internal medicine and family medicine) in obesity medicine who can be a part of the program. The MWM program is currently comprised of an APRN, a dietician, and Dr. Edem. He hopes to include more APRNs and train more physicians to become board certified in obesity and join the program. Obesity management involves many stakeholders as many departments and divisions want to help their patients achieve weight goals and overcome weight related issues. Dr. Edem is ready to work with all stakeholders to enroll patients in his MWM program.



Dr. Mehta Appointed to International Board

Congratulations are in order to Dr. Jay Mehta who has been appointed as a member of the Board of the [Giovanni Lorenzini Medical Foundation](#) in New York. He was collectively voted by the Board of the Fondazione Giovanni Lorenzi Medical Science Foundation in Milan, Italy to serve as a member of the U.S. Board.

The foundation works with researchers from across the globe to "translate the latest findings in translational and evidence-based science and medicine."



Dr. Hakan Paydak Featured in Mentor Student Spotlight Podcast

Dr. Hakan Paydak, Professor in the Division of Cardiology, is consistently lauded for his teaching and mentoring work with students and trainees making him an excellent first interviewee for a new student run podcast.

Medical students Jasmin Cotoco, Hannah Hubbard, Weijia Shi, and Manasa Veluvolu have created the Mentor Spotlight Podcast to help connect students with faculty members and learn more about their career paths.

In their first episode, Dr. Paydak shares his story of getting into medicine, electrophysiology, and his research. Click [here](#) to listen to Dr. Paydak's interview and click [here](#) to learn more about the student-run podcast.



Mariah Camp, MHA, Division Administrator of Cardiology

Mariah Camp, MHA, graduated from the UAMS Fay W. Boozman College of Public Health's Master of Health Administration program in 2019. After graduation, Mariah worked for the Cancer Service Line at UAMS before moving to Conway Regional to manage specialty clinics. Mariah came back to UAMS in August 2021 serving as the Division Administrator for the Division of Cardiology and the Assistant Cardiovascular Service Line Administrator. In her role, she is dually split between the College of Medicine and the Integrated Clinical Enterprise (ICE). Mariah handles the administrative operations for all things Cardiology on the COM and ICE sides including budgets, contracts, and HR as well as the research and fellowship programs.

In July 2021, the Cardiovascular Service Line was fiscally split to form its own service line. The new service line allowed for additional focus and resources to be allocated to Cardiology to expand services. One of Mariah's favorite parts of her position is the faculty members and team she gets to work with to facilitate growth for Cardiology services within UAMS and the state. She has enjoyed working with an engaged group of faculty members who make collaborating a fun process. Mariah's endeavors within the department include her participation in the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. She is currently working with the committee on a project to bring recognition to those who advocate for DEI initiatives.

After working in public health for four years, Mariah realized that she appreciated and enjoyed the administrative components of her job. She knew she wanted to work in healthcare and found the MHA program at UAMS. Outside of work, Mariah loves to spend time with her husband, Kyle, and their dog, Macie. They spend their time visiting different parks and trails in Little Rock and visiting restaurants with patios.

In Memoriam: Peggy Ackerman



It is with sadness that I inform you of the death, on August 9, 2022, of someone very important to the history of the Department of Medicine, Peggy Thomasson Ackerman, wife of Dr. George Link Ackerman. Dr. Ackerman was a previous Chair of the Department and died in April 2019. During Dr. Ackerman's time on the faculty, from 1961 to his retirement in 2000, the Ackermans were well known to the faculty as well as the trainees in the Department. Students, residents, and faculty members were frequent guests in their beautiful West Little Rock home for many events and parties, which contributed to wonderful collegiality among all participants. Ms. Ackerman was ever the gracious hostess. The Ackermans doted on the family dogs, a succession of terriers and Welsh corgis who roamed their property and helped to entertain all of their guests.

However, Ms. Ackerman was much more than just a hostess and partner to Dr. Ackerman, she was a very productive academician in her own right. Until 2000, Ms. Ackerman was a Research Associate in the Department of Psychiatry, working also at Arkansas Children's Hospital. Collaborating with others in the Department, principally Dr. Roscoe Dykman, she contributed to 80 publications in numerous journals such as the Journal of Learning Disabilities, the Journal of Clinical and Experimental Neuro Psychology, the Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, and the Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology. She was listed as first author on 37 of these publications.

The kindness and professionalism shown by the Ackermans to students and residents undoubtedly influenced many to enter the field of Internal Medicine. That fact is certainly true of this author. Their combined influence on the history of the Department of Medicine, and the landscape of Internal Medicine being practiced today in our state and elsewhere cannot be overstated. They will both be missed.

Written by Richard Wheeler, M.D., FACP
Professor Emeritus, UAMS

Soiree Top Docs

Each year, Soiree Magazine publishes their "Top Docs" list showcasing the top doctors on central Arkansas. We are proud to have several of our Internal Medicine faculty members recognized with this honor. To see the full list of UAMS members named and learn about the selection process click [here](#).

- Elena Ambrogini, M.D., Ph.D., *Endocrinology*
- Konstantinos Arnaoutakis, M.D., *Hematology/Oncology*
- William Atchley, M.D., Ph.D., *Pulmonary and Critical Care*
- Omar Atiq, M.D., *Hematology/Oncology*
- Seth Berney, M.D., *Rheumatology*
- Sajjad Bhatti, M.D., *Hematology/Oncology*
- Jose Diego Caceres, M.D., *Pulmonary and Critical Care*
- Ryan Dare, M.D., *Infectious Diseases*
- Matthew Deneke, M.D., *Gastroenterology*
- Mauricio Garcia Saenz de Sicilia, M.D., *Gastroenterology*
- Sarah E. Harrington, M.D., *Palliative Medicine*
- Joseph Henske, M.D., *Endocrinology*
- Robert Hopkins, M.D., *General Internal Medicine*
- Sumant Inamdar, M.D., *Gastroenterology*
- Larry Johnson, M.D., *Pulmonary and Critical Care*
- Khaled Khasawneh, M.D., *Pulmonary and Critical Care*
- Emily Kocurek, M.D., *Pulmonary and Critical Care*
- Michelle Krause, M.D., *Nephrology*
- Riley Lipschitz, M.D., *General Internal Medicine*
- Sindhu Malapati, M.D., *Hematology/Oncology*
- Nikhil Meena, M.D., *Pulmonary and Critical Care*
- Heather Moore, M.D., *Palliative Medicine*
- John Paul Mounsey, M.D., Ph.D., *Cardiology*
- Akash Mukherjee, M.D., *Hematology/Oncology*
- Hakan Paydak, M.D., *Cardiology*
- Mary Katherine Rude, M.D., *Gastroenterology*
- Michael Saccente, M.D., *Infectious Diseases*
- Manisha Singh, M.D., *Nephrology*
- Sara Tariq, M.D., *General Internal Medicine*
- Srikanth Vallurupalli, M.D., *Cardiology*
- Tobias Vancil, M.D., *General Internal Medicine*
- Muthu Veeraputhiran, M.D., *Hematology/Oncology*
- Keyur Vyas, M.D., *Infectious Diseases*

Castle Connolly Top Doctors in Arkansas

Congratulations to our faculty members who have been named to the Castle Connolly's Top Doctors list. To see the full list of UAMS members included and learn more about the selection process click [here](#).

- Konstantinos Arnaoutakis, M.D., *Hematology/Oncology*
 - Omar Atiq, M.D., *Hematology/Oncology*
 - Seth Berney, M.D., *Rheumatology*
 - Ryan Dare, M.D., *Infectious Diseases*
 - William Golden, M.D., *General Internal Medicine*
 - Robert Hopkins, M.D., *General Internal Medicine*
 - Emily Kocurek, M.D., *Pulmonary and Critical Care*
 - Allison Shaw-Devine, M.D., *Cardiology*
 - Sara Tariq, M.D., *General Internal Medicine*
 - Muthu Veeraputhiran, M.D., *Hematology/Oncology*
 - Robert Weinstein, M.D., *Endocrinology*
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Residents in Research

Our Internal Medicine residents continue to excel in research with recent publications.

Residents Dr. Vignesh Chidambaram (PGY-2) and Dr. Amudha Kumar (PGY-3) are co-authors on two papers with Dr. Jay Mehta. Their papers titled "[HDL cholesterol levels and susceptibility to COVID-19](#)" was published by *The Lancet* alongside Cardiology faculty member Dr. Subhi Al'Aref and fellow Dr. Dinesh Voruganti and "[Vegetarianism, microbiota, and cardiovascular health: looking back, and forward](#)" was published in the *European Journal of Preventive Cardiology*.

Dr. Alex Belote, UAMS Northwest Internal PGY-3 resident, is credited as first author on "[Noninferiority of subcutaneous versus intravenous casirivimab/imdevimab for outpatient treat of Sars-COV-2 in a real-world setting](#)" in partnership with Washington Regional. Coauthors include Dr. Sheena CarlLee (Community Health and Research), Dr. James Newton (Washington Regional, Infectious Diseases adjunct), and second year UAMS Northwest medical students Megan Clark, Spencer Parnell, and Caroline Geels.



Vignesh Chidambaram,
M.B;B.S.
PGY-2



Amudha Kumar M.D.
PGY-3



Alex Belote, D.O.
UAMS NW, PGY-3

2022 New Faculty



Cesar Gentile Sanchez, M.D.
Assistant Professor
Hematology/Oncology



Emily Holthoff, M.D.
Assistant Professor
General Internal Medicine



Venkata Manchala, M.B;B.S.
Assistant Professor
Nephrology



Tanvi Patel, M.D.
Assistant Professor
Hematology/Oncology



Trilok Shrivastava, M.B;B.S.
Assistant Professor
Hematology/ Oncology

New Faces of Administration



Brandy Griffin
Research Coordinator
Brandy Griffin



Kelly Pollnow
Fellowship Coordinator
Pulmonary & Critical Care



Hailey Rogers
Fellowship Coordinator
Gastroenterology



Leah Timmons
Program Manager
Endocrinology



Janeelle Whitfield
Program Manager
Endocrinology

UAMS Internal Medicine Alumni Association

The Department of Internal Medicine is excited to announce the creation of an alumni association for all of its former residents, fellows, and faculty.

The purpose of the association is to foster a strong connection between the department and its alumni. These connections will hopefully facilitate additional opportunities for mentorship, employment, and research between alumni and current members of the department. The association will also share regular updates with alumni through this newsletter. All former residents, fellows, and faculty are automatically granted membership.

If you know alumni who would like to share their contact information with the association to receive the departmental newsletter, please ask them to email TPSpradley@uams.edu.

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 or Natalie Moore at NMoore@uams.edu.

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