

# IMPACT

UAMS  
College of Medicine  
Internal Medicine

Issue 16, November 2022



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

## **Message from the Chairman**

In the midst of the Holiday Season, I would like to thank all of you for making the Department of Internal Medicine a great place to work. Your devotion to education, research, and patient care has carried us through three years of pandemic challenges.

May this holiday season bring joy, peace, and health to you and your loved ones.



## **Dr. Gaurav Dhar, Director of Interventional Cardiology**

Gaurav Dhar, M.D., Professor in the Division of Cardiology, was recruited to UAMS in January 2021 with the goal to initiate a structural heart program. As Director of Interventional Cardiology, Dr. Dhar performs catheter-based procedures that prevent patients from undergoing open-heart surgery. Under his leadership and expertise, services such as mitral valve repairs were up and running by March of 2021.

To continue the growth in cardiology at UAMS, Dr. Dhar has a goal to participate in

clinical trials for services that are not offered in the state. These trials include tricuspid valve replacement and repair and mitral valve catheter-based replacement. In addition to the advancements Dr. Dhar has brought to the division, he is providing fellows and trainees with hands-on opportunities to train with these interventions and gain experience with state of the art procedures. He says the ability to train the next generation of physicians is one of the driving forces behind his teaching. Dr. Dhar's engagement and leadership recently earned him a new role as the Program Director of the Interventional Cardiology Fellowship.

Most recently, Dr. Dhar was requested to speak at PGI Chandigarh in India. He lectured and networked with the institution's leadership, faculty, and trainees about advancements and clinical trials within structural heart. PGI honored Dr. Dhar with a Visiting Professorship.

Overall, one of Dr. Dhar's favorite parts of his job is seeing the emotions of the patient after their procedure. Dr. Dhar enjoys seeing how happy are after a procedure when they realize they are able to get off blood thinners and start to feel better. Thanks to Dr. Dhar and the Interventional Cardiology team, our patients are able to improve their quality of life without undergoing open-heart surgery.



### **Dr. Kalaivani Sivakumar, Director of Heart Failure Program**

Dr. Kalaivani Sivakumar knew she wanted to be a doctor at a young age. Inspired by the impact that doctors left on her family and viewing the need for specialist doctors in her hometown, she became one of the first female Cardiologists from her town in India. Dr. Sivakumar wants to use her knowledge and skills to serve the underserved. With the increase of cardiovascular disease in South India, her specialty in Cardiology will allow her to serve the population. She is trained in advanced heart failure and cardiac transplant. She also specializes in Cardio-obstetrics, cardio-oncology and has her

passion in cardiac critical care and interventional heart failure including mechanical circulatory support devices like ECMO, impella and tandem heart.

After finishing her Advanced Heart Failure Fellowship training at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, Dr. Sivakumar joined UAMS in October 2021 to initiate the Advanced Heart Failure Program in the Cardiovascular Service Line and was appointed as the medical Director of the Heart Failure and Mechanical Circulatory Support Program. Within four months of her arrival, the first Left Ventricle Assist Device (LVAD) procedure was able to take place. Patients with end stage of heart disease who have a high mortality can benefit from LVADs or transplants. These therapies can improve survival and quality of life. In addition, Dr. Sivakumar also specializes in pulmonary hypertension and women's cardiovascular health.

The success of the Advanced Heart Failure Program is a testament to Dr. Sivakumar's skills and leadership. While it usually takes years to get a program like this running, she was able to achieve it in a matter of months. In the future, Dr. Sivakumar has a goal for UAMS to become an accredited LVAD program and eventually offer heart transplants. Arkansas has the second highest rate of cardiovascular disease and related deaths in the country, so the opportunity to offer these services under Dr. Sivakumar's leadership will be a gift to the state of Arkansas.



**Dr. Allison Shaw-Devine,  
Cardiologist and member of the DEI  
Committee**

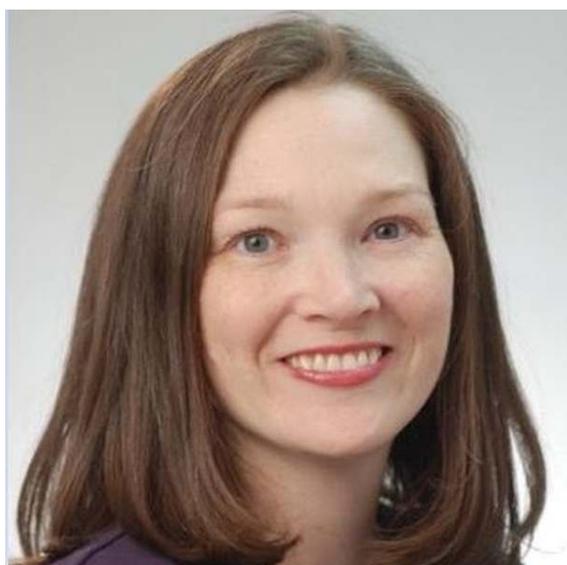
Dr. Allison Shaw-Devine always knew she wanted to be a doctor. After experiencing the loss of family members early on, she began to shadow physicians in her family. Dr. Shaw-Devine completed her medical degree, residency, and cardiology fellowship all at UAMS and was always interested in cardiology and physiology throughout her training. Dr. Shaw-Devine has been a member of the UAMS Internal Medicine faculty since 2011.

Dr. Shaw-Devine has provided her expertise

to the community as a committee member of the Arkansas Maternal Mortality Review Committee (MMRC) since it began in 2019. The committee reviews cases of maternal mortality across the state and identifies preventable deaths. They utilize the data collected to help improve the health of the population and summarize their findings to submit to state legislature. Dr. Shaw-Devine is a tremendous asset to this group as many of the cases are cardiovascular related issues.

This year UAMS was ranked fourth by Forbes magazine on their annual Best Employers for Diversity list among educational organizations nationally and first in the state. Dr. Shaw-Devine is a member of the Internal Medicine Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee and shares that this is a great achievement for our institution and community, but we still have room to continue growing by increasing diversity among higher-ranking physicians and leaders. Dr. Shaw-Devine has also been a key contributor to the DEI subcommittee creating a DEI award for the department. This award will recognize an individual or group that has made an impact in furthering diversity within the institution or the community.

We are thankful for Dr. Allison Shaw-Devine and all of the contributions she has made to the department, UAMS, and the state of Arkansas!



**Dr. Jennifer Callaghan-Koru,  
Improving Maternal Mortality in  
Arkansas**

On October 3rd, the Arkansas Senate and House Committees on Public Health, Welfare and Labor held their public meeting at UAMS. Dr. Jennifer Callaghan-Koru, Associate Professor in the Division of Community Health and Research, presented to the committees on maternal health in the state. She shared statistics on the growing rate of maternal mortality and related morbidities and how a majority of these cases are preventable. After her presentation, Dr. Callaghan-Koru answered questions from legislators in attendance and gave more information that they can use.



## **Preparing Medical Students for Success**

Thanks to several of our incredible faculty members, senior medical students are prepared for their residency applications and interviews. Twelve of our faculty members assisted in mock residency interviews as part of the innovative residency prep course co-led by Dr. Nicholas Gowen, Assistant Professor in the Division of General Internal Medicine. Thank you to Drs. Sajjad Bhatti, Robert Bradsher, Dinesh Edem, Franklin Gray, Robert Hopkins, Emily Newsome, Burcu Ozdemir, Juan Carlos Rico, Allison Shaw-Devine, Manisha Singh, and Sara Tariq for their contribution to preparing our medical students for the next step in their careers.



## **Hematology/Oncology Fellow Published in *JCO Oncology Practice***

Second year Hematology/Oncology fellow, Dr. Alan Baltz, recently had an article published as first author in the American Society of Clinical Oncology's *JCO Oncology Practice*. The article, titled "Clinical Impact of ASCO Choosing Wisely Guidelines on Staging Imaging for Early-Stage Breast Cancers: A Time Series Analysis Using SEER-Medicare Data," was written for the ASCO Quality Publications Task Force. Dr. Baltz coauthored the article with Dr. Issam Makhoul, Adjunct Clinical Professor, and Eric Siegel, M.S., Department of Biostatistics.

Click [here](#) to read the article.

## **Three Community Health and Research Faculty Members Receive Extramural Grants**



**Britni Ayers, Ph.D**  
*Exploring the Preliminary  
Efficacy of Centering  
Pregnancy with Care  
Navigation to Reduce  
Maternal Health Disparities  
among Marshallese Women*  
NIH Institute of Nursing  
Research



**Jennifer Callaghan-Koru,  
Ph.D**  
*The Arkansas Perinatal  
Quality Collaborative*  
Centers for Disease Control  
and Prevention



**Pearl McElfish, Ph.D**  
*Transforming Health  
Outreach for Infants and  
Children (P-5) through Vital  
Community Engagement  
(THRIVE P-5)*  
Health Resources and  
Services Administration

## Internal Medicine Residency Cultural Day - Brazil

At the end of October, the Internal Medicine residents the culture of Brazil. The presentation was given by Dr. Juarez Braga (PGY-1) who shared about his home country. Dr. Braga discusses the climates and ethnicities in Brazil, the Portuguese language, the Amazon rainforest, Rio de Janeiro carnival, and the country's health system. The presentation included a meal from Cafe Bossa Nova that included Pao de Queijo, Chicken Heart of Palm soup, Mista salad and Scallopini.



## December Grand Rounds

Please join us in December for Internal Medicine Grand Rounds Thursdays at noon in the Pauly Auditorium (Rahn Building, G19).

- December 1st: Dr. Keyur Vyas, "Monkeypox"
- December 8th: Dr. Robert Hopkins
- December 15th: Division of Nephrology
- December 22nd and 29th: Canceled

## New Faculty



**Auras Atreya, M.D.**  
Assistant Professor  
Cardiology



**Nazish Malik, M.D.**  
Assistant Professor  
Hematology/Oncology



**Muhammad Nazir, M.D.**  
Assistant Professor  
Hospital Medicine

# House of Delegates

## Holiday Drive

### **DROP-OFF LOCATION:**

If you would like to donate an item, cash or check, please deliver to Sarah Woodall or Natalie Moore

Venmo: @Sarah-Woodall-9

*Last day is Dec. 9th!*



This year we have 347 children, ages 3 and 4, that we have adopted and will be providing gifts to. The gifts usually include coloring books and crayons, toothbrushes, hats and gloves, pajamas, and a stuffed animal.



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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