Jeffrey A. Morgan, MD Joins Cardiothoracic Transplantation and Circulatory Support Team

Jeffrey A. Morgan, MD, professor of surgery, joins the Michael E. DeBakey Department of Surgery as the newly appointed chief of the Division of Cardiothoracic Transplantation and Circulatory Support and surgical director of the Advanced Heart Failure Center of Excellence.

Dr. Morgan specializes in treating patients with advanced heart and/or lung failure. His expertise includes implanting mechanical circulatory support devices for left ventricular, right ventricular, or biventricular failure as a bridge to transplant (BTT) or destination therapy (DT). These devices include left ventricular assist devices (LVADs), such as the HeartMate II, HeartMate III, and HeartWare HVAD, as well as the Syncardia Total Artificial Heart (TAH).

Dr. Morgan completed his General Surgery Residency at Mount Sinai Medical Center in New York and his Cardiothoracic Surgery Residency at New York University. He went on to complete fellowship training in cardiac transplantation and mechanical circulatory support at Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center.

Dr. Morgan comes to Houston by way of Michigan, where he was associate professor at Wayne State University School of Medicine, surgical director for Mechanical Circulatory Support and associate director for the Heart and Lung Transplantation Program at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit. Dr. Morgan played a pivotal role at Henry Ford in expanding the clinical program there, improving its quality outcomes, and increasing its case volume.

Dr. Morgan is section editor of Adult Mechanical Circulatory Support for the American Society of Artificial Internal Organs (ASAIO) Journal and is on the editorial board of The Journal of Heart and Lung Transplantation. Dr. Morgan also served on the International Society for Heart & Lung Transplantation (ISHLT) Standards and Guidelines.
Committee and was a task force chair for the ISHLT Guidelines for Mechanical Circulatory Support. He is also a previous chair of the Cardiac Track Programming Committee for the ASAIO Annual Conference. Dr. Morgan has moderated numerous sessions on mechanical support and transplant at ASAIO, ISHLT, and the American College of Cardiology.

Dr. Morgan is passionate about improving outcomes in patients with advanced heart or lung failure. He has participated in numerous clinical trials including Thoratec’s HeartMate II BTT and DT trials, Heartware’s HVAD BTT and DT trials, the HeartMate III trial, and Syncardia’s 50 cc TAH trial. Dr. Morgan is also investigating the utility of stem cells as an adjunct measure for myocardial recovery, as part of the LVAD MPC II trial.

Groundbreaking HeartMate III LVAD Implants

The Texas Heart Institute (THI) announced on September 30, 2015 that it has successfully implanted its first three Thoratec® HeartMate III® Left Ventricular Assist Devices (LVADs) at CHI St. Luke’s Health–Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center (Baylor St. Luke’s). The surgical team has since implanted six more devices, THI’s rich history in LVAD research and the success of the HeartMate III implants at Baylor St. Luke’s highlight the two organization’s dedication to combating heart failure and shaping the future of research and treatment in the field.

“LVADs have become the gold standard for the treatment of end-stage heart failure as destination therapy, or as a bridge-to-transplant,” says Steve Singh, MD, principal investigator for the HeartMate III clinical trial at Baylor St. Luke’s. “Texas Heart Institute and Baylor St. Luke’s have been at the forefront of innovating and driving the improvements in the technology to make these devices smaller, safer, and more effective for patients suffering from severe heart failure.”

“The HeartMate III is a paradigm shift in LVAD design, using modulated, full magnetic levitation of the propeller to improve blood flow and hemodynamics,” says Dr. Singh. “This hopefully will improve the long-term durability and safety for patients who are living with and benefiting from these devices.”

NEW CARDIOTHORACIC TRANSPLANT CHIEF
CONTINUED FROM COVER

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Dr. Morgan joins an outstanding team of physicians and healthcare professionals in the Division of Cardiothoracic Transplantation and Circulatory Support. Speaking to this, he commented:

“I am honored to be joining the country’s preeminent mechanical circulatory support and thoracic transplant program, which has grown and flourished under the leadership of Dr. O. H. Frazier for many years. Dr. Frazier is a pioneer, innovator, and an incredible surgeon who has directly and indirectly saved tens of thousands with his lifelong commitment to advancing the field of MCS. It is a real honor and privilege for me to be working at the Texas Heart Institute, Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center, and Baylor College of Medicine in working to advance the program.”

—Jeffrey A. Morgan, MD
Professor of Surgery
Chief, Division of Cardiothoracic Transplantation and Circulatory Support
Surgical Director of the Advanced Heart Failure Center of Excellence
Abdominal Transplant Has Banner Year

John A. Goss, MD, professor of surgery and chief of the Division of Abdominal Transplantation and Christine A. O’Mahony, MD, associate professor of surgery, along with the division’s faculty and staff this past year performed a record high 70 liver and 116 kidney transplants at Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center. This landmark achievement was in addition to the record high 217 liver and kidney transplants performed by the group across the Texas Medical Center, including programs at Texas Children’s Hospital and the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center (MEDVAMC). The new kidney transplant program at the MEDVAMC is one of only five VA programs in which kidney transplants are performed for veterans, and the only one to perform both liver and kidney transplants. In addition to this record volume, outcomes in terms of graft and patient survival remain at the highest level of any program nationally.

Said Dr. Goss of the program achievements, “It is really a team effort as all of the disciplines involved are coming together. Beyond the phenomenal ongoing work of our current faculty and staff, the addition of Ronald Cotton, MD, instructor in surgery, to our faculty this past year has also helped us in all aspects of the service, especially at the VA. Other contributors, such as Rick Link, MD, PhD, associate professor, from the Scott Department of Urology, who has been our primary surgeon for laparoscopic donor kidney procurement, have added significantly to our success. These collaborations, together with our world class tissue typing lab run by Ronald Kerman, PhD, professor of surgery, and Peter Jindra, PhD, assistant professor of surgery, give us great on-site service from the HLA world day or night and create an ideal scenario for success that continues to work well for us and our patients.”

![Dr. Christine A. O’Mahony and Dr. John A. Goss in the OR](image-url)
Promising New Treatment for Primary Biliary Cirrhosis, which Will Soon Change its Name

John M. Vierling, MD, FACP, FAAASLD, professor of surgery and medicine and chief of Hepatology at Baylor College of Medicine, and director of Advanced Liver Therapies at Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center, will soon be part of an expert group presenting formal phase 3 data on obeticholic acid (OCA) therapy for primary biliary cirrhosis (PBC) to an FDA Advisory Board considering this new treatment for PBC. If approved, this would be the first new therapy approved for treating PBC in nearly 30 years. Baylor was a study site for the phase 2 and 3 clinical trials of OCA.

“We are excited about this important step forward in the treatment of PBC. It is equally gratifying that, in part due to these efforts, other pharmaceutical companies have now begun studies of additional therapies in PBC, and we will be a study site for all of them,” says Dr. Vierling.

In addition to being a leading contributor to the development of a potentially new therapy for PBC, Dr. Vierling is also part of the transplant hepatology team that has led an ambitious international initiative to formally change the name of PBC from “primary biliary cirrhosis” to “primary biliary cholangitis.”

The rationale behind the effort to remove the word “cirrhosis” from the name is that “cirrhosis” is stigmatizing and is only present in a minority of patients when diagnosed. With therapy, 60 to 80 percent may never develop cirrhosis. The proposed name change also better defines the disease and should ultimately help patients, providers, and advocates move toward the next major advances in managing this disease.

Every international and national hepatology society and all relevant patient advocacy groups have already fully endorsed the name change. To make the new name official, Dr. Vierling and his colleagues will seek the endorsement of the World Health Organization. According to Dr. Vierling, optimism is high that primary biliary cirrhosis may be a disease of the past, not only in name, but hopefully one day in reality as well.

First Robotic Whipple Surgery at Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center

Pancreatic cancer patients now have the option of a less invasive surgical procedure: Whipple robotic surgery.

George Van Buren, II, MD, assistant professor of surgery, and William Fisher, MD, professor of surgery and director of the Elkins Pancreas Center, recently completed the first robotic Whipple surgery—or pancreaticoduodenectomy—at Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center. This procedure is offered in just a few hospitals in the country.

Dr. Van Buren is specially trained in robotic surgical techniques for the treatment of cancer and other pancreatic disorders. More than 50 pancreas robotic procedures have been performed at the Center, including distal pancreatectomies. Now, they also offer the robotic Whipple, which involves resection of the pancreas and multiple reconstructions of the biliary, pancreatic and upper gastrointestinal tract.
The Thoracic Surgery Residents Association (TSRA) recently launched a new travel fellowship, with the honor of hosting the inaugural travel fellow falling to Joseph S. Coselli, MD professor of surgery and chief of the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery – a reflection of the great standing and accomplishments of Dr. Coselli and his group. The following article describing the experience of Arminder S. Jassar, MD, the program’s first travel scholar, is excerpted from the December 2015 issue of the Journal of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery.

I was fortunate to receive the inaugural Thoracic Surgery Residents Association (TSRA) traveling fellowship award and chose to visit Baylor College of Medicine/Texas Heart Institute to observe Dr. Joseph Coselli.

Dr. Coselli has an unparalleled experience in the treatment of thoracoabdominal aortic disease, and I was thrilled when he agreed for me to visit. During 11 cases in 5 days (in various combinations), he performed 2 coronary artery bypass graft operations, 2 surgical aortic valve replacements, 1 transcatheter aortic valve replacement, 2 aortic root replacements, 1 valve-sparing root reimplantation, 5 ascending/hemiarch replacements, 3 ascending/total arch replacements, 3 elephant trunk operations, 2 open antegrade stent-graft deployments into the descending aorta, and a thoracoabdominal aortic aneurysm repair for a mycotic aneurysm—it was a whirlwind tour of the entire breadth of advanced aortic surgical techniques at the hands of a master surgeon. I participated in morning rounds and office hours with Dr. Coselli and got an insight into his decision making and surgical approach.

Dr. Coselli operates every day, heads a very busy clinical service, and has obligations toward several national and international academic societies—it was very instructive to watch him balance his time between all these commitments. At my request, Dr. Coselli’s staff arranged a meeting for me with Dr. Denton Cooley. To hear Dr. Cooley recount stories from his trip to India (where I was born and raised) is something that I will always cherish.

I visited Dr. Scott LeMaire’s laboratory; he shared his thoughts on how to set up a successful clinical and basic science research endeavor. On my last day, Dr. Coselli took me to his house and I got the chance to meet his family. During that conversation at his kitchen table, I felt that Dr. Coselli was truly interested in who I was and what my future aspirations are. I will certainly remember his words of advice as I work to build my career.

I thank Dr. Coselli and the TSRA for this tremendous learning opportunity and a spectacular mentorship program.
Student Simulation Society Prepares for National and International Competitions

The Baylor College of Medicine Student Simulation Society was created in 2013 by fourth-year medical student Shehni Nadeem when she organized a group of first-year medical students for the 2014 American Medical Student Association Simlympics competition. The team-based competition focuses on stabilizing a simulated critical patient. With guidance from their faculty mentor and medical director of the Simulation and Standardized Patient Program, Dr. Tyson Pillow, assistant professor of medicine, the then newly founded Baylor team took first place in the national competition. As U.S. champions, the team went on to compete in the inaugural International Simlympics at the Society in Europe for Simulation Applied to Medicine conference in Poznan, Poland. That team of mostly first-year medical students, which included Kayla Kumm, Amir Nikahd, Jake Valentine, Shehni Nadeem, and Sam Buck, took first place, besting more experienced teams from across Europe.

This past year, first-year Baylor medical students Andrew Kohner, Evan Strobelt, Saagar Patel, and Luis Fernandez and second-year student Lakshay Jain took first place at the 2015 AMSA competition in Washington, D.C. and at the SESAM competition in Belfast, Ireland, for back-to-back national and international championships.

The team attributes much of their success to the guidance from faculty mentors and the opportunity to practice in the world-class Baylor College of Medicine Simulation Center. Special recognition goes to Sim Lab assistant director Deborah Taylor, LAT, CerAT from the Department of Surgery for help in training the teams.

“Medical simulation has been a great tool for me to work on my own skills. It certainly helps with my medical skills and has influenced me to pursue emergency medicine as a specialty, but simulation also teaches leadership and critical thinking skills that are harder to find in a traditional classroom,” notes Samuel Buck, third-year medical student and president of the Student Simulation Society.

“I’m interested in pursuing a surgical residency, and after seeing the last year’s winning team perform a simulation in front of our class, and being blown away by how much they had learned and grown in just one year of medical school, I joined the team. Being part of the Sim Team, and being able to use the Sim Lab, has allowed me to greatly flourish as a medical student. It allows us students the opportunity to connect what we learn in the classroom to real-world scenarios where patient’s lives depend on our knowledge, teamwork, and communication,” says first-year Baylor medical student and Rice University alumnus Andre Cristinelis.

“Simulation helped me find my place in medicine. I realized I absolutely adore teaching and have a passion for education. It is humbling, challenging, and innovative in every way. It is a fantastic experience for future female leaders in medicine. It has led me to make friends around the world and to discover my love for taking care of the acutely sick, undifferentiated patient,” stated extracurricular student simulation program founder Shehni Nadeem.

Shehni recently authored a 150-page book for the Texas College of Emergency Physicians titled “Introduction to Simulation: an Educational Guide for Medical Students” and is director of the medical student “SimWars” track for the Texas College of Emergency Physicians. The team is looking forward to again representing Baylor and the United States at the 2016 SESAM Conference in Lisbon, Portugal.
2016 Surgical Jeopardy

In preparation for the American Board of Surgery In-Training Examination (ABSITE), the Department of Surgery held its third annual Surgical Jeopardy competition, a team-based surgical trivia competition between residents, faculty, and all-star resident teams. The two-round competition took place before the entire department and was moderated by chair of surgery Dr. Todd Rosengart. Once again, Drs. Mary Brandt, Bradford Scott, Matthew Wall, and Eric Silberfein participated as judges and scorekeepers.

The final round ended with Team 2 (Drs. Somala, Mohammed, Elaine Vu, Nader Zamani) and the Resident All-Star Team (Drs. Sara Fallon, Yan Shi, Aaron Scott) in a tie, both having 2400 points. Our faculty all-stars were clearly no match for the crackerjack resident teams. We are delighted that these superstars did as well on their ABSITE scores!

Resident Wellness Program

Our Resident Wellness Program continues to grow and expand. Recent activities sponsored by the program include our residents and faculty together taking in a Houston Astros vs. Boston Red Sox game at Minute Maid Park, and our residents enjoying an opening night screening of “Jurassic World: An IMAX 3D Experience” which included wonderful pre-event food and drinks at a local favorite Mexican restaurant. Over the holidays all of the residents got together for an ugly Christmas sweater party in which merriment and holiday cheer were had by all! This past month, the Department also sponsored a post-ABSITE breakfast celebrating another year of hard work and preparation by the residents.

Eric J. Silberfein, MD associate professor of surgery, associate program director of the General Surgery Residency and director of the Wellness Program, is very pleased with the results of this initiative.

“The wellness program helps to capture and improve the complex and multifaceted nature of our physicians’ physical, mental, and emotional health and well-being,” said Silberfein.

Residents attending the program said, “Kickball was a fun time. It was nice to see residents and attendings outside of work. There are tentative plans to repeat the kickball tournament, with Dr. Vera being the reigning faculty champion!”

As the program moves forward, plans are in the works for another movie night, a bike ride in the bayou, a jukebox night, and a golf outing. And, yes, residents will also continue working hard!
RESEARCH

Interdisciplinary Consortium on Advanced Motion Performance (iCAMP)

Led by Bijan Najafi, PhD, professor of surgery, iCAMP is an interdisciplinary research and development collaboration that engages creative teams from vascular surgery, orthopedics, podiatry, nursing, geriatrics, and engineering at Baylor College of Medicine.

The iCAMP team, part of the Division of Vascular Surgery and Endovascular Therapy, is an interdisciplinary group whose goal is to improve the analysis and treatment of individuals with gait and motor disturbances. More specifically, the group aims to improve stability, healing, and mobility in patients worldwide, especially for those suffering from diabetes, which affects more than one in four older adults in USA.

Amongst iCAMP’s many inventions and advances—many of them the first of their kind—the “smart” wearable technologies have shown enormous promise in identifying and preventing limb and life threatening gangrene as well as providing early-warnings to prevent life-threatening falls and fractures in older adults.

In addition to their local research initiatives, iCAMP team members partner with a host of businesses, analysts, and research teams worldwide to foster advances in the field of motion performance.

Drs. He Zhou, Bijan Najafi, Hyoki Lee, Ana Enriquez, Javad Razjouyan, and Ivan Marin

Early identification of at-risk patients: Using state-of-the-art technologies such as thermal imaging, Doppler systems, and wearable technology.
Surgery Faculty Well Represented in New Faculty Senate

Baylor College of Medicine launched a new 101-member Faculty Senate this past year, and the Department of Surgery faculty members were well represented amongst the newly elected faculty senators. In total, eight of the senators are members of our Department.

Oluyinka Olutoye, MD, PhD, professor of surgery, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology and co-director of the Texas Children’s Fetal Center, earned the great honor of being elected Chair-Elect of the Faculty Senate by the other newly-appointed senate members.

Our senators from the Department of Surgery are:

SHAYAN IZADDOOST, MD, PHD
Plastic Surgery

PANAGIOTIS KOUGIAS, MD
Vascular Surgery and Endovascular Therapy

ALLEN MILEWICZ, MD
Pediatric Surgery

BARBARA TRAUTNER, MD, PHD
Surgical Research

GEORGE VAN BUREN II, MD
General Surgery

MATTHEW J. WALL JR., MD
Cardiothoracic Surgery

Dr. David Berger Named Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center

David H. Berger, MD, MHCM, professor of surgery, has been named senior vice president and COO for Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center. His appointment was effective Dec. 9, 2015.

Dr. Berger has been serving as chief clinical officer at Baylor St. Luke’s for the past year. The senior vice president role has been newly created at the hospital. Reporting to Dr. Berger are the vice presidents of Operations, Ambulatory Care, Surgical Services, and Support Services.

Dr. Berger is a nationally recognized leader in patient safety and clinical outcomes. He is well known for his success in implementing process and quality improvements.

Dr. Berger was previously the operative care line executive at the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center. During his time at the DeBakey VA he helped build the Operative Care Line into the largest surgical service with the best outcomes in the nation.
Dr. Hollier Appointed to Duke Global Health Institute Board

Larry H. Hollier, MD, professor and chief of the Division of Plastic Surgery has been appointed to the board of the Duke Global Health Institute (DGHI). The mission of DGHI is to reduce health disparities in the local community and worldwide. Recognizing that many global health problems stem from economic, social, environmental, political and healthcare inequalities, DGHI brings together interdisciplinary teams to solve complex health problems and to train the next generation of global health leaders. Dr. Hollier joins Dr. Bill Frist ex-senator (TN) and Dr. Paul Farmer from Harvard Medical School on the board.

Dr. Izaddoost to Lead Network Development

Shayan Izaddoost, MD, PhD, associate professor of surgery, has been named director of network development for the Department of Surgery. In this role, Dr. Izaddoost will work with department and College leadership to help build surgical services and recruitment to the CHI Texas Division, and in hospitals beyond our CHI Network.

Dr. Izaddoost also serves as program director of the Plastic Surgery Integrated Residency and the DeBakey Summer Surgery Program, and is chief of Plastic Surgery at Ben Taub Hospital.

INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES

Lung Institute Forms International Partnership

Transforming the delivery of healthcare around the globe is one of the many ways CHI St. Luke’s Health is expanding its mission of creating healthier communities. The Baylor College of Medicine Lung Institute at Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center is forging ahead in this mission, thanks to anew collaborative program.

In August 2015, the Lung Institute launched its first international collaboration with the Instituto Nacional de Enfermedades Respiratorias (INER), or National Institute of Respiratory Diseases, a specialty hospital and research center in Mexico City. The program invites nine INER thoracic surgery residents to spend five weeks at the Lung Institute to observe highly complex thoracic procedures, such as heated intraoperative chemotherapy treatment for mesothelioma and other lobe and lung procedures. Residents also shadow the Institute’s physicians on how they evaluate, diagnose, and plan patients’ therapies.

From asthma to lung cancer to cystic fibrosis, the Lung Institute offers a multi-specialty team, advanced technology, and individualized treatment for patients suffering from lung disease. Led and directed by world-renowned surgeon David Sugarbaker, MD, professor of surgery and chief of the Division of General Thoracic Surgery, the Institute has garnered more than 1,100 clinic visits and has treated over 400 lung disease cases from around the world.

source: UpFront @ Baylor St. Luke’s
Global Surgery Initiative in Africa

Our PGY2 resident Rachel Davis, MD has taken the lead on a new global initiative in the surgery track, a result of a collaboration of the Texas Children’s Hospital (TCH), Catholic Health Initiatives, and Baylor College of Medicine.

Dr. Davis will spend the first of two global health years training to be a global rural health surgeon, including time spent at a Texas Children’s Hospital facility in Malawi, Africa. During this time, she will have the opportunity to gain tremendous experience in rural medicine, and train her skills in a number of specialties, such as obstetrics and gynecology; orthopedic surgery; urology; ear, nose, and throat; radiology, and burns. This initiative also opens the doors to obtain the qualifications to earn a Diploma in Tropical Diseases or a Master in Public Health.

Farewell to Dr. Faisal Bakaeen

We wish Faisal Bakaeen, MD much success as he departs Baylor College of Medicine and returns to Cleveland and new professional endeavors at the Cleveland Clinic.

Dr. Bakaeen was a professor in the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery, chief of cardiothoracic surgery at MEDVAMC, and chair of the Surgical Quality Data Use Group (SQDUG) within the VA National Surgery Office. During his time at Baylor, Dr. Bakaeen organized and advanced major thoracic aortic surgery programs at the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center, and enriched the Departments research and educational programs.

Dr. Bakaeen will maintain his ties to the department through an adjunct professorship which was granted to him at the time of his departure. In a farewell ceremony celebrating his time with the Department, Dr. Bakaeen noted his great regard for his many friends and colleagues at Baylor, and his fondness for the many enjoyable and productive years he spent training and practicing in the Department. We wish him the greatest continued success in his future endeavors.
Ben Taub Hospital Extends its Level 1 Status

Ben Taub Hospital, the largest hospital in the Harris Health System, received a two-year re-verification as a Level I Trauma Center by the Committee on Trauma of the American College of Surgeons. The 586-bed Ben Taub Hospital serves as a primary teaching hospital for all specialties at Baylor College of Medicine.

Through this reverification, Ben Taub will continue to extend its decades-long status as one of the busiest Level I trauma centers in the US with over 4,000 trauma patient admissions annually. The 27 percent rate of penetrating trauma seen at Ben Taub, typically the most lethal and challenging of injuries to treat, is one of the highest in the nation.

S. Rob Todd, MD, associate professor of surgery, chief of General Surgery, as well as director of the Ginni and Richard Mithoff Trauma Center at Ben Taub Hospital led efforts for the obtaining of the program’s verification. Said Dr. Todd of this initiative, “Ben Taub and its rich history and vast clinical and research opportunities is one of the reasons I chose to join Baylor College of Medicine. I envisioned my colleagues and me transforming Baylor’s Trauma, Emergency Surgery, and Surgical Critical Care into one of the preeminent programs in the country.”

Dr. Sussman on ABC News, reaches out to the community

Norman Sussman, MD associate professor of surgery, talked with Melanie Lawson of Crossroads ABC News about raising awareness on the risks hepatitis C poses to the African American Community.

Dr. Sussman explained what hepatitis C is, how it injures the liver, and how treatment has improved significantly over the last year. He also remarked that treatment is important to reduce the risk caused by hepatitis C-induced chronic liver disease, the leading cause of death among baby-boomer African Americans.

In his remarks, Dr. Sussman also introduced Project ECHO, which he directs. He enthusiastically explained that project ECHO is an outreach program that provides training on how to better treat hepatitis C. Through videoconferences with health service providers located in settings far away from specialized clinics, Dr. Sussman and his team provide the tools that allow providers to identify the disease and provide treatment.
IN THE OR LIGHT

Nader Massarweh, MD
Assistant Professor of Surgery

Providing surgical patient care is a wondrous thing. Patients can present with anything from a minor ailment to a life-threatening condition and will place their trust in us surgeons, often perfect strangers, to intervene.

Progressing through medical training in Tulane University School of Medicine, the burden of this trust has become ever-more apparent as I’ve gone from intern, to chief resident at the University of Washington, to fellow at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, and eventually to attending. In my surgical oncology practice at the Michael E DeBakey VA Medical Center, my goal is to engage my patients in their own care and make them feel that I am less of a stranger and more of a partner in their journey through their episode of care. Cancer care in particular, my field of expertise, has the potential to feel dehumanizing and impersonal at times. I believe that anything I can do to make our patients feel respected and cared about, goes a long way.

So, why the VA? I have been asked this question many times by family, friends, and colleagues since joining Baylor. I truly believe the VA is an often under-appreciated and unacknowledged treasure of our healthcare system, which provides a valuable service we frequently take for granted. The patients are amazing. For them it often doesn’t matter who you are, where you’ve trained, or how many degrees you have behind your name. If you demonstrate that you care, they will immediately accept you as their doctor—even if you are a medical student.

The VA is still a place where I have the opportunity to educate and offer residents the kind of independence I had during my training. From an academic standpoint, it is perhaps the best place to start your career because of the resources and time you have to conduct research and to educate. In terms of health services and outcomes research, the VA has always been ahead of the curve and continues to foster the academic endeavors of young investigators interested in this brand of research.

Being a part of the surgical tradition at Baylor is truly an honor. The energy and growth within the Department over the last year and a half have been truly amazing and I know are only a harbinger of more good things to come.

Phillip W. Bowden, MSN, ACNP-BC
Instructor in Surgery, Lead Physician Extender

I was born and raised right outside Birmingham, Alabama. My interest in nursing came to me at a young age, mostly from my mom. She worked as a secretary in a busy ER and frequently I would visit her at work and followed the nurses around. My great grandmother was also a nurse and due to my admiration for her, my interest grew. During high school I looked at nursing programs and settled on the one at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). Not only was this the most affordable option, which was
a big plus because I would have to pay for school myself, but also a great school—one of the top in the country—in my own backyard.

My first job in patient care was working the night shift as a nursing assistant in a Neuro Trauma ICU at UAB in 1990. I learned so much from the nurses that by the time I graduated from nursing school I immediately took a job there as a nurse and quickly became a charge nurse. My need and desire for continued learning took me to graduate school in 1994, also at UAB, while I continued to work night shifts as a float nurse in all the ICUs.

From trauma to transplant I learned it all. Upon graduation, my career took me in many directions, neuro, heart and lung transplant ICU, then cardiology and surgical ICU. I also continued to teach and foster other NPs as I grew professionally. In 1995, I was recruited by Methodist Hospital to join an intensivist in the Neuro ICU; from there I moved onto the surgical ICU intensivist team. In 2014 I was again looking for new challenges and as fate would have it, Baylor Department of Surgery needed mid-level help. After meeting the caring physicians and staff in the Department I knew my new home was with the Division of General Thoracic Surgery where I am now responsible for clinical care, and also help build a mid-level team.

I see patients in clinic, in-patient and, most recently, I am completing my training as an OR first assistant. Now, as lead physician – extender for the Department of Surgery, I am building a strong, first class departmental mid-level team of PA’s and NP’s. I envision this team providing continuity of care for patients and education for residents, mid-level students, and nursing staff in the clinic and in the hospital.

Sara Fallon, MD, MS
PGY-5

I am a general surgery resident in my chief year with plans for pursuing a pediatric surgery fellowship at Texas Children’s Hospital next year. Working at that hospital has been a dream of mine since high school. I grew up in Houston, and in high school was able to observe orthopedic and neurosurgical procedures at Texas Children’s. I loved the environment at that hospital, and since that time working in a medical capacity with children has been a goal of mine.

At the University of North Carolina, I helped organize the large annual fundraiser for the UNC Children’s Hospital, and left North Carolina for medical school at Baylor with the goal of becoming a pediatrics resident at Texas Children’s. However, Dr. Mary Brandt and Dr. Oluyinka Olutoye quickly enticed me with the world of pediatric surgery during their embryology lectures for first year medical students. During my pediatrics rotation, I had the privilege of presenting a case at Dr. Ralph D. Feigin’s rounds and still had pediatrics in mind, but then I did my core surgery rotation and realized my interests were more in the surgical direction.

I wanted to stay at Baylor for residency for a number of reasons, but the most important was my exposure to pediatric surgery during my years in Baylor’s program. Dr. Bradford Scott did let me do a trauma laparotomy during my sub-I rotation at Ben Taub, and I think that may have sealed the deal! During my residency, I have been fortunate to have many mentors from the Department of Surgery, but the guidance and help I received during my two years of clinical research at Texas Children’s were instrumental in
helping me focus my interests and work towards my ultimate goal of becoming a pediatric surgeon.

I truly enjoyed learning the many aspects of clinical research, and want to carry this forward after my training is finished. I still remember looking up to the chiefs of the trauma surgery service at Ben Taub when I was a medical student, and it is hard to believe that I am almost finished with my own chief year. I will miss many things about my general surgery residency, but I am very excited to start the next phase of training, and look forward to continuing my interaction with general surgery residents as a fellow.

Department Implements XYZ Compensation Plan

The Michael E. DeBakey Department of Surgery successfully completed its first year implementing a new XYZ compensation plan for faculty. The purpose of the compensation plan is to drive clinical and academic productivity and create an incentive for scholarly activities and successes.

The plan provides objective criteria for productivity-based financial rewards and establishes standards across the Department to award these bonuses. The plan also allows for investment in faculty, key programs and strategic priorities. It is based on an XYZ system with the X being a base salary and supplement based on individual clinical revenue, the Y a clinical incentive bonus based on individual and group clinical efforts, and the Z an academic productivity bonus, for which the department had developed an expansive individual academic productivity dashboard. Efforts by Drs. Scott LeMaire and William Fisher have led to the creation of an online elective database for those academic activities.

This past year, the department was able to reward faculty with over $230,000 in supplements based upon clinical and academic achievement.

Online Self-Scheduling Piloted

The Department of Surgery recently began piloting online scheduling via MyChart. This new system allows patients of Department faculty members to schedule their own appointments in MyChart as a convenient alternative to using the call center or basic web form to book appointments.
HONORS AND AWARDS
Dr. Frazier Honored with the William W. L. Glenn and the Julian Johnson Lectureships

O. Howard Frazier, MD, professor of surgery, was honored as the William W. L. Glenn lecturer and award recipient at the American Heart Association Scientific Sessions in Orlando. The William W. L. Glenn Lectureship was established in 1989 in honor of Dr. William W.L. Glenn, a pioneer cardiac surgeon who made important contributions to the treatment of congenital and acquired heart disease. Dr. Glenn was active in AHA programs from 1957, and was the spearheading force in the activities of the Council on Cardiovascular Surgery (now the Council on Cardiovascular Surgery and Anesthesia). He was the first surgeon to hold the position of president of the American Heart Association (1970-1971). Past recipients of this award include Dr. Denton A. Cooley, Dr. Norman Shumway, Dr. C. Walton Lillehei, Sir Magdi Yacoub, and Dr. Tirone E. David.

On February 2016, Dr. Frazier also presented the Julian Johnson Lectureship at the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Frazier’s talk was “Serendipity in the Science of Mechanical Cardiac Support and Total Heart Replacement.” For more than 30 years, Dr. Frazier has been a pioneer in the treatment of severe heart failure and in the fields of heart transplantation and artificial devices that may be used either to substitute for or assist the pumping action of the human heart. As a result of his work, the Texas Heart Institute has become one of the top transplantation and mechanical circulatory support programs in the world. Dr. Frazier has performed over 1,300 heart transplants and implanted more than 1,000 left ventricular assist devices, more than any other surgeon in the world.

Dr. Mattox Awarded 2015 EMS Journey of Excellence Award

Kenneth L. Mattox, MD, distinguished service professor, was awarded the 2015 Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Journey of Excellence Award for leadership and innovation in trauma care. The award was presented by the Texas Governor’s EMS and Trauma Advisory Council at the Texas EMS Conference in Dallas held this November.

Dr. Mattox is one of the most recognized surgeons in the world. He was recently named the second vice-president of the American College of Surgeons (ACS) and was further honored with the creation of an ACS program in his name, the Kenneth L. Mattox International Lectureship and Scholarship Program.

He is chief of staff/chief of surgery at Ben Taub Hospital. He helped develop the internationally renowned Ben Taub Hospital Emergency Center and its equally respected Trauma Center.
**Faculty Honors and Awards**

**Mary L. Brandt, MD:** Appointed to the American College of Surgeons Medical Student Education Committee.

**Jayer Chung, MD:** Elected to the editorial board of the Journal of Vascular Surgery.

**Steven A. Curley, MD; William E. Fisher, MD; Jed G. Nuchtern, MD; David J. Sugarbaker, MD:** Named Top Cancer Doctors for 2015 by Newsweek and Castle Connolly Medical LTD.

**Kristen Daniels, PA-C:** Awarded PA of the Year by the Texas Children’s Hospital.

**Charles D. Fraser Jr., MD:** Received the American College of Surgeons Dr. Rodman E. Sheen and Thomas G. Sheen Award.

**Charles D. Fraser Jr., MD; Iki Adachi, MD; Jeffrey Heinle, MD; Dean McKenzie, MD; and Carlos Mery, MD:** Received the John A. Hawkins Top Scoring Abstract Award at the 2015 Congenital Heart Surgeons’ Society Annual Meeting.

**Stephanie Gordy, MD:** Appointed to Baylor College of Medicine’s Medical School Curriculum Committee.

**Shawn S. Groth, MD:** Appointed medical director for the Department of Surgery and member of the Faculty Group Practice Clinical Practice Committee.

**Sundeep G. Keswani, M.D:** Received the 2016 International Visiting Professorship Award from the Association of Academic Surgery to attend the CSA congress in Bogotá, Colombia, in August 2016.


**Sohail Shah, MD:** Appointed to the American College of Surgeons Health Information Technology Committee.

**David Sugarbaker, MD:** Honored with the David J. Sugarbaker, MD Lectureship in Thoracic Surgery established by The Brigham and Women’s Hospital.

**Todd K. Rosengart, MD:** Honored with the Distinguished Visiting Professorship, Stanford University Cardiovascular Research Institute. Appointed Chairman, CHI National Cardiac Surgery Clinical Standards Committee.

**George Van Buren II, MD:** Appointed co-chairman of the BC Faculty Group Practice Medical Directors’ Committee.

**Sanjeev Vasudevan, MD:** Received the Baylor College of Medicine Alumni Association’s prestigious Young Alumnus Award.

**Fulbright & Jaworski L. L. P. Faculty Excellence Awards**

**Timothy C. Lee, MD:** Pediatric Surgery

**Scott A. LeMaire, MD:** Cardiothoracic Surgery

**Mónica E. López, MD:** Pediatric Surgery
Resident and Student Awards

**Meredith Mason, MD:** Received a CPRIT Training Grant for her research proposal “The impact of Institutional National Quality Forum (NQF) quality metric performance on short- and long-term outcomes in colon cancer.”

**Nicole Villafañe-Ferriol, MD:** Received a CPRIT Training Grant for her research proposal “Functionalizing Metabolic Pathway Driver Aberrations in Pancreatic Cancer.”

**Brandi Scully, MD:** Received a Women in Thoracic Surgery Scholarship, to fund her trip to the 51st Society of Thoracic Surgeons Meeting in San Diego on January 2016. Mentors: Drs. Charles D. Fraser Jr. and Jeffrey Heinle.

Received a 2015 Association for Academic Surgery Fall Courses Travel Grant to support registration and attendance to the AAS Fall Courses at Northwestern University in October 2016.

**Vivekkumar Patel, MD:** Received a 2016 STS Society of Thoracic Surgeons Looking to the Future Resident Scholarship. Mentor Dr. Todd K. Rosengart

**Rohan Shah:** Received a 2016 Society of Thoracic Surgeons Looking to the Future Medical Student Scholarship. Mentors: Dr. Faisal Bakaeen and Dr. Shuab Omer.

**Rachel Lee, Adriana Gamboa, Shawdon Molavi, and Matthew Grant:** Received a 2015 Michael E. DeBakey Department of Surgery American College of Surgeons (ACS) Travel Scholarship to support their travel to the clinical congress this year.

New Grants

**Sanjeev Vasudevan, MD:** The Macy Easom Cancer Research Foundation award to apply new imaging techniques to the study of intra-operative, real-time visualization of tumors and blood vessels in pediatric hepatoblastoma.

**Qizhi Cathy Yao, MD, PhD:** Barry Stephen Smith Memorial Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund Award “A Personalized Pre-Clinical Study of a Novel Pancreatic Cancer Immunotherapy.”

**Bijan Najafi, PhD, MSc:** NIH/National Institute on Aging SBIR Phase IIB (Biosensics) award: “Upper Extremity Frailty Assessment Tool”

NIH R21 award “Managing Chemotherapy Induced Neuropathy in Cancer Patients Using Exergaming”

United States General Services Administration (GSA) award: “Indoor Environment and Stress Study - GSA 1800F Street”

**Scott LeMaire, MD:** NIH R01 award: “Targeting the Inflammasome to Prevent Thoracic Aortic Aneurysms and Dissections”

**Bryan Burt, MD:** NIH, NCI award: “Allogeneic Antibody Therapy for Malignant Mesothelioma”
High-Impact Publications


