DFCon Diabetic Foot Global Conference Finds New Home in Houston

Over 350 clinicians, scientists and exhibitors from 50 nations attended the 17th Diabetic Foot Global Conference (DFCon), hosted by the Division of Vascular Surgery and Endovascular Therapy. This remarkable global event, held March 23-25, 2017 at the Royal Sonesta Houston Galleria in Houston, Texas, was an enormous success thanks to the energetic leadership of our vascular division faculty and the hard work done by the department staff planning committee.

DFCon was co-chaired by Dr. Joseph L. Mills, Sr., professor and chief of the Division of Vascular Surgery and Endovascular Therapy and medical director of STEP (Save the Extremity Program) at Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center, and DFCon cofounder Dr. David G. Armstrong, professor of surgery and deputy director of the Arizona Center for Accelerated Biomedical Innovation (ACABI) at the University of Arizona. Course directors included associate professor Dr. Miguel Montero-Baker and professor and director of clinical research for the division Dr. Bijan Najafi.

DFCon is the world’s premier interdisciplinary diabetic foot conference, offering participants the opportunity to review state-of-the-art concepts and techniques in limb salvage and diabetic foot management. DFCon is designed to educate a wide spectrum of generalists and specialists who diagnose and manage diabetic foot problems. The conference is comprised of didactic talks, panel discussions, Q&A sessions, specialty symposia, hands-on workshops and exhibitors that explore diagnostic and interventional strategies for diabetic foot ulcers and amputation prevention. This year’s medical education program was designated by the ACCME-certified Texas Heart Institute in partnership with Baylor College of Medicine, and Council on Podiatric Medical Education-approved UT Health Science Center at San Antonio.

The conference opened with a well-attended international panel on “Strategic Amputation Limitation” addressing topics that included the global diabetes burden, the National UK Diabetic Foot Audit, amputation prevention in Native American nations, the evolution of the disease, and specialty care in Romania. In the “Devices” panel, Dr. Miguel Montero-Baker delivered the presentation, “Wearables Are Passé: How about Injectables?”

Dr. Benjamin Lipsky from Oxford University Hospital debuted a new Cochrane review on topical therapy for infections during the panel titled, “A Topical Discussion on Topical Therapy.”

An attendee visits some of the scientific posters presented at the meeting.
The 13th Annual Edward James Olmos Award – For Advocacy in Amputation Prevention recipient was Dr. George Andros, Diabetic Foot Professor Emeritus affiliated with Valley Presbyterian Hospital in California. Edward James Olmos presented the award.

Moderated by Dr. Mills, the “Videos” session featured demonstrations by associate professor Dr. Neal R. Barshes and Dr. Montero-Baker on complex open revascularization and endovascular techniques; Dr. Najafi on new frailty diagnostics; and Dr. Mills and associate professor Dr. Jeffrey Alan Ross on high-tech imaging techniques for foot salvage.

In a panel on “Limb Salvage Maintenance,” Dr. Najafi delivered a presentation colorfully entitled, “Sensors and Sensibility: Romantic or Pain Jane? Pride or Prejudice?,” where he discussed the latest innovative research in wearable sensor technology to improve patient self-care and post-intervention outcomes.

Dr. Montero-Baker and Dr. Mills delivered lectures on new approaches to treating “Peripheral Artery Disease” during a panel dedicated to the topic.

Other division faculty lecturers included assistant professor Dr. Jayer Chung who gave a lecture entitled, “To Stent or Not to Stent? What Lesions Require Stenting and What Stent Should Be Chosen?” during the “Vascular” panel, and Dr. Barshes who delivered a talk entitled, “How can We Collectively Raise Our C Average? Improving Care for a Common, Costly and Complex Condition.”

The wrap-up Saturday morning industry-sponsored workshops immersed attendees in the areas of noninvasive testing, offloading, pedal access and skin substitutes and were led by Dr. Mills, Dr. Ross, Dr. Najafi, Dr. Montero-Baker, and assistant professor Dr. Brian D. Lepow.

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The fourth annual Surgical Skills Olympics were held in the Baylor College of Medicine Simulation Center on April 12, 2017. During the event, general surgery residents participated in a friendly, team-based competition to demonstrate their surgical dexterity, skill and speed.

Seven resident teams participated. Competitors were timed as they competed in seven surgical skills activities. The exercises featured laparoscopic skills, including peg transfer, pattern cut, and intracorporeal suturing, and open surgery skills including open knot tying, suturing, and bowel and vascular anastomosis.

Scores received individually and as a team enabled residents to quantify their surgical skill development. Competitors earned points in each of the individual competition heats to place their respective teams in medal contention.

Competition medals were awarded to the team scoring the most points across individual events.

The Olympics comprised of two individual competition heats as well as a final team relay. The team relay featured open and laparoscopic skills as well as a “Mystery Box Challenge,” where residents were required to identify an instrument found in the OR by touch alone.

The winning team for the relay consisted of Drs. Zachary Pallister (captain), Somala Mohammed and Nicole Villafane-Ferriol.

**2017 MEDAL WINNERS**

- **Gold Medal**
  Drs. Paul Albini (captain), Aaron Scott, Genna Lubrano, Megan Vu, Kathryn Capasso, and Alexander Ochoa

- **Silver Medal**
  Drs. Michael Kueht (captain), Jason Ho, Eric Rachlin, Erin Corsini, Elaine Vo, and Sean Bender

- **Bronze Medal**
  Drs. Yan Shi (captain), Meredith Mason, Emily Steen, Vamsi Aribindi and Rodrigo Campana

One of the faculty judges, Dr. Stephanie Gordy, keeps score as residents compete.
The Fifth Annual Michael E. DeBakey Department of Surgery Resident Research Day Symposium was held Wednesday, June 7, 2017. Over 240 faculty, residents, students and staff gathered in the Denton A. Cooley Auditorium. After introductory comments by Dr. Todd K. Rosengart, chair of the Department of Surgery, and Michael Covert, president and CEO of CHI St. Luke’s Health, keynote speaker Dr. Karl Y. Bilimoria, director of the Surgical Outcomes and Quality Improvement Center, John B. Murphy Professor of Surgery, vice chair for quality in the Department of Surgery at the Feinberg School of Medicine at Northwestern University, presented, “Informing Policy with Evidence: The FIRST Resident Duty Hour Trial.”

This year, 114 abstracts by resident and student authors were selected from a record-setting field of 136 abstracts submitted. The top 24 were presented as oral presentations during the symposium and 52 were presented as posters. An additional 38 project plans were featured in the program.

**Best Quick Shot Presentation** – Dr. Bradley Jacobsen  
“Rabbit Model of Ocular Indirect Photodynamic Therapy”  
Mentor: Dr. Charles Gomer

**Best Clinical Research Presentation** – Dr. Yangyang Yu  
“A Prospective Same Day Discharge Protocol for Pediatric Appendicitis: Adding Value to a Common Surgical Condition”  
Mentor: Dr. Monica Lopez

**Best Basic Science Presentation** – Dr. Sarah Woodfield  
“MDM4 Inhibition as a Therapy to Reactivate p53 in Liver Cancer”  
Mentor: Dr. Sanjeev Vasudevan

**Best Student Quick Shot Presentation** – Phoebe Lewis  
“Blocking CTLA-4 Enhances HIV-specific B-cell Responses in HIV VLP Vaccination”  
Mentor: Dr. Cathy Yao
About the Research Day Keynote Speaker

Dr. Karl Y. Bilimoria is a surgical oncologist and a health services and quality improvement researcher at Northwestern University. He directs the Northwestern Surgical Outcomes and Quality Improvement Center, a collaborative health services outcomes, patient safety, and quality improvement research enterprise.

His research agenda focuses on improving healthcare quality measurement and delivery. He has a particular interest in large, pragmatic cluster-randomized trials examining hospital quality initiatives and healthcare policies. He is the director of the Illinois Surgical Quality Improvement Collaborative and the principal investigator of the FIRST Trial.

Dr. Bilimoria is a faculty scholar at the American College of Surgeons. He has published more than 250 scientific articles with multiple recent studies in JAMA and the New England Journal of Medicine, and his research is funded by the NIH, AHRQ, ACS, NCCN, ACS, ABS, ACGME, and HCSC. He was recently listed by Becker’s as one of the “Top 50 Experts Leading the Field of Patient Safety” in the U.S.

Baylor College of Medicine Selected as Core Clinical Center for the NIH-funded CTSN

Baylor College of Medicine was selected as a Core Clinical Center (CCC) for the NIH-funded Cardiothoracic Surgical Trials Network (CTSN), with the department’s Research Core and the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery serving as one of 30 highly experienced cardiothoracic surgical centers participating in the CTSN Tricuspid Repair Trial titled “Evaluating the Benefit of Concurrent Tricuspid Valve Repair during Mitral Surgery,” and invited to participate in the design, conduct and analysis of other CTSN trials.

Currently, the medical community has conflicting views on whether tricuspid valve (TV) repair in patients with mild to moderate tricuspid regurgitation (TR) who are undergoing planned mitral valve surgery (MVS) improves heart health compared to that of MVS patients who do not receive concurrent TV repair. With its proposed rigorous scientific methods, the CTSN Tricuspid Repair Trial’s international randomized, double-blinded multicenter study should provide an answer to this question with a very high level of certainty. In collaboration with other Network CCCs, the department and its affiliated hospitals will conduct the above-noted trial that evaluates management practices and determines the best surgical approaches for cardiac patients with this condition.

Supported by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) at the NIH, and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the CTSN provides comprehensive infrastructure to develop, coordinate to conduct multiple collaborative proof-of-concept studies and interventional protocols to improve cardiovascular disease outcomes. The Network trials reflect the collaboration of many of the foremost cardiac surgeons, cardiologists and neurologists in North America. The participating sites are all highly experienced cardiothoracic surgical centers with established expertise conducting trials in this area. Since its inception, the Network has developed a portfolio of trials that evaluate clinically meaningful questions and address important public health issues.

Dr. Karl Bilimoria and Dr. Scott LeMaire at Research Day.
Just last year, 86 organ transplants were performed at Texas Children’s—32 kidney transplants, 25 heart transplants, 21 liver transplants and 8 lung transplants—making Texas Children’s one of the most active pediatric transplant program in the nation, per the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network.

Behind the statistics, there’s an exceptionally experienced and well-coordinated transplant program that draws on numerous medical, surgical and support specialties, and transplant coordinators who play an essential role in connecting recipients with prospective donors.

“I believe our success is a testimony to the skill and commitment of our multidisciplinary team,” Goss said. “Our team offers an interdisciplinary approach to all aspects of the transplant process, from initial referral to hospitalization and outpatient management. We also work closely with patients, families and referring physicians to help make the evaluation process as convenient and efficient as possible.”

Goss added that transplants are possible only because of the generous and selfless decisions made by donors and donor families. Without them, people like Joseph would run out of options.

“I can’t wait to play basketball again,” said the teenager, adding that anyone who can should become an organ donor. “I can’t wait to have a full day of school again as crazy as that sounds.”

An important milestone was recently reached at Texas Children’s Hospital that has one 17-year-old extremely grateful.

Joseph McCullough received a new liver on May 21, giving him a chance at a new life after battling primary sclerosing cholangitis, a life-threatening disease that causes end-stage liver disease. McCullough’s transplant was the 1,500th transplant performed by the Texas Children’s Transplant Services team.

“That’s fascinating,” Joseph said about being the 1,500th transplant recipient. “That’s unbelievable that I’m that number.”

Texas Children’s Surgeon-In-Chief Dr. Charles D. Fraser, Jr. said the milestone—and the immeasurable service to children and families that it represents—is due to the hard work of the entire Transplant Services department and the multitude of other departments that support Transplant Services.

“I would like especially to thank to Dr. John Goss, medical director of Transplant Services and surgical director of the Liver Transplant Program at Texas Children’s, for providing strong leadership for the program and all of the medical and surgical directors of Transplant for their guidance, resilience in growing their programs and excellence in every aspect of patient care,” Fraser said. Transplantation began at Texas Children’s in 1984 with a pediatric heart transplant that was performed by Dr. Denton Cooley. Since that time, liver, kidney and lung have been added and countless lives have been saved.
Group Led by Dr. Joseph Mills Approved for a Competitive Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute Award

Dr. Joseph L. Mills, Sr. has been approved for a $50,000 award by the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) to support a project on “Improving Delivery of Diabetic Foot Care to Prevent Amputations: A Comparative Effectiveness Trial.” Dr. Mills’ proposal was among the approximately 16 percent of applicants selected for funding by PCORI in this competitive award cycle. Dr. Mills will use the funds provided through PCORI’s Pipeline to Proposal Awards program to build a partnership of individuals and groups who share a desire to advance patient-centered outcomes research focused on Diabetic Foot Care.

This multidisciplinary research project includes as co-investigators: Dr. Barbara W. Trautner, associate professor of surgery and medicine and director of clinical research for the Department of Surgery, Dr. Ramyar Gilani, assistant professor in the Division of Vascular Surgery and Endovascular Therapy, Dr. Gina L. Evans-Hudnall, assistant professor of medicine and research health scientist for the Mental Health Care line at the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center (MEDVAMC), Dr. Lindsey A. Martin, assistant professor of medicine and research health scientist specialist at MEDVAMC, and Dr. Nader Zamani, general surgery resident.

The PCORI grant will support the patient-centered engagement of Dr. Mills’ team with diabetic foot ulcer patients, their caregivers and community stakeholders, who will provide crucial input on how to best deliver multidisciplinary diabetic foot care in Harris Health System’s clinics, serving primarily low income and minority populations, to prevent non-traumatic lower extremity amputations. This project will consist of monthly focus group meetings on topics including living with a diabetic foot ulcer, healthcare delivery preferences, barriers to healthcare, and patient-centered priorities and outcomes. These focus group meetings will ultimately help Dr. Mills and his team define the aims, determine the right outcomes and select a patient-centric implementation plan for a large-scale community-engaged proposal to implement a coordinated referral system for diabetic foot ulcer patients in Harris Health System.

Pipeline to Proposal Awards enable individuals and groups that are not typically involved in clinical research to develop the means to develop community-led funding proposals focused on patient-centered comparative effectiveness research (CER). The program funds three tiers of awards that help individuals or groups build community partnerships, develop research capacity, and hone a comparative effectiveness research question that could become the basis of a research funding proposal to submit to PCORI or other health research funders.

“The Pipeline to Proposal Awards program is a manifestation of PCORI’s commitment to the meaningful involvement of patients, caregivers, clinicians, and other stakeholders in all our research endeavors,” said Jean Slutsky, PA, MSPH, PCORI’s Chief Engagement and Dissemination Officer. “It provides support to those who may not otherwise have an opportunity to contribute to the field of comparative effectiveness research.

“We’re pleased to follow the awardees’ progress as they develop partnerships and begin to form research questions.”

PCORI was authorized by Congress in 2010 to fund comparative effectiveness research that will provide patients, their caregivers, and clinicians with the evidence needed to make better-informed health and healthcare decisions. PCORI is committed to seeking input from a broad range of stakeholders to guide its work.
Seed Grants Awarded to PAs and NPs

The first Michael E. DeBakey Department of Surgery Quality Improvement Seed Grant award for Physician Assistants and Nurse Practitioners were awarded on April 5, 2017. The quality improvement merit and impact on patient care of every proposal was carefully evaluated and scored by a panel of experts from within and outside the department.

Holly Clayton, MS, PA-C, Kathryn King, MS, PA-C, Chanda Sou, MS, PA-C, Michelle G. Roy, MPAP, PA-C, Sarah Allen, PA-C, and Carrika Williams, NP-C, received funding for their proposals:

- **Midlevel Postoperative Phone Call Standardization and Evaluation**
- **Cleft Care Package**
- **Ward Based Integrated Multidisciplinary Care**
- **End Stage Renal Disease: the Road to Permanent Dialysis Access Within a Nurse Practitioner Driven Clinic.**

MacDonald Research Fund Grants Awarded to Department Faculty

**Dr. Scott A. LeMaire**, professor in the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery and vice chair for research in the Department of Surgery, and **Dr. Ying H. Shen**, associate professor in the Division of Surgical Research, were awarded funding of $45,000 for their proposal, “Effects of Ciprofloxacin Use on the Susceptibility to Aortic Aneurysm and Dissection Development” from the Roderick D. MacDonald Research Fund.

**Dr. Ayse L. Mindikoglu**, associate professor in the Division of Abdominal Transplantation, was awarded $16,000 from the MacDonald Fund for her proposal, “Metabolomic Signature of Altered Hemodynamics in Subjects With Cirrhosis.”

The MacDonald Fund at Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center customarily bestows financial support of up to $50,000 to investigators in conducting original research or collecting preliminary data leading to external funding for a one-year period. MacDonald Fund grants aim to facilitate research at Baylor St. Luke’s and support investigators working in the Baylor St. Luke’s setting to develop fundable and innovative research programs. The clinical investigations must take within Baylor St. Luke’s and its affiliated institutions or with Baylor St. Luke’s patients.

Dr. Ross President-Elect of Texas Podiatric Medical Association

**Dr. Jeffrey A. Ross**, associate professor of surgery in the Division of Vascular Surgery and Endovascular Therapy, was elected as president-elect of the Texas Podiatric Medical Association at the 100th Texas Podiatric Medical Association Meeting in Austin, Texas on June 24, 2017. He will assume the mantle of president at the 2018 annual meeting in Galveston, Texas.

Since 1985, Dr. Ross has served as the podiatric attending chief for Ben Taub Hospital and the Quentin Meese Diabetic Foot Clinic. He has also served as the associate chief for the foot service at Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center (1995) and a clinical associate professor in the Department of Medicine at Baylor College of Medicine since 2006.
NEW GRANTS


Ravi K. Ghanta, M.D.: AATS Graham Foundation: “Improving Stem Cell Engraftment by Optimization of the Mechanical Microenvironment in Ischemic Myocardium.”


Bijan Najafi, Ph.D.: Qatar National Research Fund: “Therapeutic Plantar Electrical Stimulation Intervention During Hemodialysis to Improve Balance and Mobility.”

Matthew Ware, M.D.: St. Luke’s/Salem Award: “Novel Strategies for Local Tumor Control in Borderline Resectable Pancreatic Cancer Patient.”

HIGH IMPACT PUBLICATIONS


LEADERSHIP NOTES

Dr. S. Rob Todd Elected Vice President of the SWSC

Dr. S. Rob Todd, professor and chief of the section of acute care surgery in the Division of General Surgery, was nominated and elected Vice President of the Southwestern Surgical Congress (SWSC), a position that will ascend to President in three years.

Dr. Todd Rosengart to Lead NIH Scientific Review Committee

Dr. Todd K. Rosengart, chair of the Michael E. DeBakey Department of Surgery, professor in the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery and DeBakey-Bard Chair of Surgery, will serve a two-year term as chair of the Bioengineering, Technology and Surgical Sciences (BTSS) Study Section for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Center for Scientific Review (CSR) beginning July 1, 2017.

The NIH is the largest funding source in the world for biomedical research. The BTSS Study Section reviews grant applications in the interdisciplinary fields of surgery and bioengineering to develop innovative medical instruments, materials, processes, implants and devices to diagnose and treat disease and injury. Scientific review groups are tasked with assuring that the peer review process is fair, independent, expert and rigorous. Study Section chairs are responsible for ensuring that research funding is awarded to the most meritorious applications, so that the NIH can fund the most promising research.
My family members and mentors played a vital role in my career path. My extended family members are primarily blue-collar workers in the Midwest. My grandfather was a cattle farmer who worked hours that would rival any surgery resident before the 80-hour work week. I admired his work ethic and ability to balance life—always able to carve out quality time for his family.

My mom was an office manager for a small group of private practice general surgeons in a suburb of Minneapolis. I literally grew up with that group, spending time with them from the time I was in elementary school until I went off to college. My dad was the first in his family to go college, and I followed in his footsteps to his alma mater—St. Olaf College, a liberal arts college in Northfield, Minnesota. St. Olaf was the perfect fit for me and allowed me to continue my broad extracurricular interests. I was a two-sport varsity athlete (football and track), played saxophone in the jazz band (and even recorded a CD!), volunteered at a nursing home, had the opportunity to study abroad in Martinique during a cold Minnesota winter, and received a top-notch education that prepared me for medical school.

I also had my introduction to the ups and downs of basic science research while working on my senior thesis project on cell membrane flip-flop. Through connections I had with the surgeons in my mom’s office, I spent a few months during the summer of my sophomore year of college at Hennepin County Medical Center, the level 1 trauma center in downtown Minneapolis. Those experiences, in the trenches of that hospital, solidified my desire to become a surgeon.

Though I entered medical school with the goal of becoming a surgeon, I had no idea exactly what type of surgeon I was going to be. During the summer after my first year of medical school at the University of Minnesota, I had a very serendipitous experience that forever changed my career path. Although I initially had no interest in doing research during my first two years of medical school, I decided to respond to a research opportunity in Dr. Michael Maddaus’ thoracic oncology basic science lab, which was the lead lab for a multi-institutional cooperative group trial (CALGB 9761), and I was lucky enough to get the job. Dr. Jon D’Cunha’s and Dr. Maddaus’ mentorship was tremendous. Without question, they are the reason I became a thoracic surgeon. I stayed at Minnesota for my general surgery training and continued to work in Dr. Maddaus’ lab, where he helped me lay the foundation for academic success.

With the goal of wanting to take the best possible care of my future patients, I wanted to train with the best during each step of my education. At the time I was looking at thoracic surgery residency programs, the Brigham and Women’s Hospital was the best thoracic surgery program in the country. I was fortunate to match at the Brigham and work with Dr. David Sugarbaker, one of the giants of thoracic surgery, and learn about all aspects of the essence of excellence in patient care.

After finishing my residency, I spent a little over a year in Pittsburgh with Dr. Jim Luketich, a pioneer in minimally invasive foregut surgery, before moving to Houston. My mentors—Dr. Maddaus, Dr. Luketich, Dr. Sugarbaker and my other former attendings at the Brigham—taught me about continually striving to improve the care of our patients. With the goal of improving patient
outcomes, I’ve worked to bring new techniques to Baylor, including per oral endoscopic myotomy for achalasia, robotic lobectomy, and minimally invasive esophagectomy.

After Dr. Sugarbaker was recruited to Baylor, moving to Houston was an easy choice, especially with the addition of Dr. Bryan Burt, who was a year ahead of me at the Brigham. As a young attending, I couldn’t ask for better partners than Dr. Sugarbaker and Dr. Burt and can’t imagine better opportunities than those are available at Baylor College of Medicine.

More than anything else, I’m most proud of my family—my amazing wife Ashley and three beautiful children, Xaviera, Christian and Ascher. We’re excited to be in Houston!

ALAN P. STOLZ, M.ED.
Division Administrator
Cardiothoracic Surgery

I was privileged to join the Michael E. DeBakey Department of Surgery in 2002 as Division Administrator, Cardiothoracic Surgery under its Chief, Dr. Joseph Coselli. My previous career was spent in retail, at Neiman Marcus for over 20 years in store operations and merchandising, as well as Macy’s New York (including serving on the Thanksgiving Day Parade Committee as Band Captain for many years). I grew up in New York and my father, uncle and cousins were all physicians, so I grew up with an affinity for medicine. Thus I consider myself very fortunate to have found this second fascinating career.

In my role, I support the faculty and staff of the Division in all three missions of the College: education, research and patient care. We have a presence at Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center, Ben Taub Hospital and the VA Medical Center with 13 clinical and research faculty, as well as many mid-level NP’s and PA’s. My educational background includes a bachelor’s degree from Pace University in New York in Literature and Communications as well as a master’s degree in Counseling from the University of Houston. When interviewing with Dr. Coselli, he was keenly interested in how I had strategically raised funds, both in my professional career as well as for charitable events I had been involved with. We spoke about his desire to create an educational meeting for the Division. One year later, our first Current Trends in Cardiothoracic Surgery was a success—and was profitable—as have, I’m proud to say, all 10 Current Trends events produced during the last 15 years (our 11th will take place in September, 2017).

What has never escaped me are the numerous similarities between working in luxury retail and managing a cardiothoracic surgery division. They both take professionalism, dedication and patience. Most importantly they take a genuine desire to listen and respond to your customers, both internal and external. The patient is always at the center of what we do and details matter. I’m lucky to have a highly skilled staff to fully support my efforts.

What is my greatest accomplishment of working in the Division? I can think of two. First, I was on the team of individuals during our combined 6th Current Trends—DeBakey Society Conference in May, 2008, that solidified the reconciliation of Dr. Michael DeBakey and Dr. Denton Cooley after almost 40 years. I will always remember the sheer joy that I experienced being involved in that milestone. The other accomplishment is working with Dr. Coselli to make a difference in his surgical practice that I believe has enhanced our global reputation as a center of excellence for the treatment of aortic and cardiac disease. There is no one who I respect more as both a colleague and friend, and I will always cherish this relationship.
DR. BRANDI SCULLY
General Surgery Resident (PGY-5)

I was born in Houston and attended Rice University, where I was in the Rice/Baylor Medical Scholars Program. I received a B.A. in English, and spent a year abroad at Oxford University in England studying Milton and Shakespeare (my senior thesis was on John Milton’s indebtedness to William Shakespeare). I attended Baylor College of Medicine for medical school and stayed on as a general surgery resident. I have now been at Baylor for over a decade!

My mother is the oldest of four children, the next two being twins who died from heart failure secondary to congenital heart disease. I grew up fascinated with the field of congenital heart surgery, because it had transformed the care of children like my aunt and uncle, who had no treatment options just a generation ago. I started doing research in the field with Dr. Charles D. Fraser, Jr., surgeon-in-chief at Texas Children’s Hospital, the summer after my freshman year in college. I was a student in the Michael E. DeBakey Summer Surgery Program—where I first met Dr. Gala Barden, who was also a DeBakey student in 2004!—and have been doing research in the department ever since.

The most significant initial project I undertook was the creation of the first heart transplant database at Texas Children’s Hospital and a retrospective analysis of its 20-year experience since Dr. Denton Cooley performed the first successful infant heart transplant in 1984. Surprisingly, we found that long-term outcomes had not improved over this time period, and it was this study that prompted me to begin a dedicated basic science research project investigating tissue engineering of cardiac patches. While completing this work as part of the Medical Student Research Track at Baylor, I also received an M.S. in Bioengineering from Rice, with funding from the AATS and industry.

I stayed at Baylor for my general surgery residency, and will be a chief resident this upcoming year. During my residency, I have expanded the scope of my research. Recently, I spent a year with Dr. Jeffrey Heinle researching pediatric lung transplantation and building the first transplant database at Texas Children’s Hospital that mines the electronic medical record and updates data in real time. We also collaborated with Dr. Abbas Rana from abdominal transplantation to examine waitlist mortality and outcomes in pediatric transplantation.

My research interests also include surgical ethics, and I am currently collaborating with Drs. Todd Rosengart, S. Rob Todd, and Savitri Fedsch on a project on futility and massive transfusion protocol in trauma. I have taught a small group for the ethics course at the College for the last four years, and am a member of the Center for Medical Ethics and Health Policy at Baylor as well as an ethics committee member at Ben Taub Hospital.

I recently matched at Johns Hopkins for my cardiothoracic surgery fellowship, and am looking forward to many new adventures with my husband, Peter (a pediatric ICU fellow at Hermann) and our two children, Thomas and Matilda. I am so grateful for the phenomenal mentors I have had in the Michael E. DeBakey Department of Surgery, and I am excited to be an upcoming chief!
Dr. Joseph Coselli
Honored by Marfan Foundation

Dr. Joseph S. Coselli, vice chair of the Michael E. DeBakey Department of Surgery, professor of surgery and chief of the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery and Cullen Foundation Endowed Chair at Baylor College of Medicine, was honored with The Marfan Foundation’s prestigious Hero with a Heart Award at the Heartworks Gala in New York City on May 10, 2017. Each year, The Marfan Foundation honors leaders from medical, philanthropic and corporate worlds for their contributions to the Marfan syndrome community.

Dr. Coselli is a nationally- and internationally-recognized leader in the treatment of aortic disease and Marfan syndrome. Dr. Coselli has been at the forefront of the treatment of patients with Marfan syndrome for the majority of his career. He and his team have treated several hundred of surgical patients with Marfan syndrome and its related disorders. He has served as a member of The Marfan Foundation’s Professional Advisory Board for 25 years and has co-hosted two of the Foundation’s Annual Conferences in Houston, Texas. Dr. Coselli’s clinical stewardship helped make Baylor College of Medicine, St. Luke’s Episcopal Hospital and the Texas Heart Institute major hubs for Marfan research and treatment.

Dr. Wall Honored at Harris Health System’s 3rd Annual Innovation Summit

On March 2, 2017, Harris Health held its 3rd Annual Innovation Summit at the TMC Innovation Institute. The Innovation Summit honors staff innovation and creativity that has improved patient care and organizational effectiveness. The Department of Surgery’s very own Dr. Matthew J. Wall, Jr., professor in the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery, was honored at the Innovation Summit for his Exceptional Dedication, Ongoing Service and Commitment to the Harris Health System.

Dr. Wall has had multiple long-standing clinical and administrative roles and is currently the deputy chief of Surgery at Ben Taub General Hospital. Dr. Wall is committed to providing superior, patient-focused care and preparing the next generation of surgeons to meet the highest standards of excellence. This vision combines a dedication to advanced research, exceptional education, and the development of newer, better treatments and procedures.
**Faculty Awards**

**Drs. Neal Barshes, Avo Artinyan, Ramyar Gilani, Jeffrey S. Heinle, Carlos M. Mery:** Baylor College of Medicine Star Awards for Excellence in Patient Care

**Dr. Edward Buchanan:** Baylor College of Medicine Norton Rose Fulbright Faculty Excellence Award for Development of Enduring Educational Materials

**Drs. Bryan Burt, Kim I. de la Cruz, Shawn Groth, Nader Massarweh, Laura Monson, George Van Buren II, Bindi J. Naik-Mathura:** Baylor College of Medicine Early Career Faculty Awards for Excellence in Patient Care

**Dr. Joseph Coselli:** 2017 Michael E. DeBakey Award for Excellence in Research

**Drs. William E. Fisher, Matthew J. Wall, Jr., David E. Wesson:** Baylor College of Medicine Master Clinician Awards for Excellence in Patient Care

**Dr. Ravi Ghanta:** 2017 Allen-Sheridan Scholarship, Thoracic Surgery Foundation; Harris Health’s Champion of the 1st Quarter 2017

**Dr. Peter Jindra:** Poster of Distinction, 2017 American Transplant Congress, American Society of Transplant Surgeons (ASTS)

**Dr. Lauren Kane:** Carolyn E. Reed Traveling Fellowship, Thoracic Surgery Foundation (TSF).

**Dr. Scott A. LeMaire:** Lester R. Dragstedt Visiting Professorship, Department of Surgery’s 2017 Research Day at University of Florida Medical College

**Drs. Carlos M. Mery, Bindi J. Naik-Mathura, James W. Suliburk:** Norton Rose Fulbright Faculty Excellence Award for Teaching and Evaluation, Baylor College of Medicine

**Dr. Joseph L. Mills, Sr.:** 8th Annual Miller Family Lectureship in Vascular and Cardiac Disease, Department of Surgery at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine; 53rd Annual RJ White Lectureship, Forth Worth Surgical Society

**Dr. Jeffrey A. Morgan:** Education Committee, American Association of Thoracic Surgery

**Dr. Bindi J. Naik-Mathura:** Baylor College of Medicine Norton Rose Fulbright Faculty Excellence Award for Educational Leadership

**Dr. Ourania Preventza:** Course Director for TEVAR and Aortic Arch Debranching Procedures, Society for Thoracic Surgeons (STS) University, 2017 STS 53rd Annual Meeting

**Dr. Vivek Singh:** Best Junior Faculty Poster, 5th Annual BCM Cardiovascular Research Institute (CVRI) Symposium

**Dr. Barbara W. Trautner:** Baylor College of Medicine Ben and Margaret Love Foundation Bobby Alford Award for Academic Clinical Professionalism

**Dr. Matthew J. Wall, Jr.:** Exceptional Dedication, Ongoing Service and Commitment award, Harris Health System

**Resident and Student Awards**

**Dr. Patricio Lau:** Jens Rosenkrantz Resident Clinical Research Award, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Section on Surgery meeting

Mentor: Dr. Oluyinka O. Olutoye

**Dr. Rachel W. Davis:** Elected for Induction as Resident Honoree into Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society, Baylor College of Medicine chapter

Mentor: Dr. Jed G. Nuchtern

**Dr. Gregory Pattakos:** 2nd Place Poster, American Association for Thoracic Surgery (AATS)

Mentor: Dr. Ourania Preventza

**Dr. Darrell Wu:** Cover article of the April 2017 issue of Arteriosclerosis, Thrombosis, and Vascular Biology (ATVB)

Mentors: Drs. Scott A. LeMaire and Ying Shen

**Dr. Nader Zamani:** Top Poster Award, South Texas American College of Surgeons (ACS) Meeting

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Mentors: Drs. Panos Kougias and Neil R. Barshes