MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

As our leadership team begins the second year with the Margaret M. and Albert B. Alkek Department of Medicine (DoM) at Baylor College of Medicine, we thank the faculty, staff, trainees and students in the department for making the first year so successful.

DoM faculty have brought in increased research funding, and the department has improved by three positions in the Blue Ridge national rankings. We have recruited several funded investigators, partnered with the Institute for Clinical and Transitional Research at Baylor to ensure a stronger research infrastructure, bolstered the research support infrastructure in central administration and recruited three new section chiefs (Gastroenterology and Hepatology, Rheumatology, and Infectious Diseases), who are supported to bring in new recruits in the three main missions.

DoM has finished the year with positive financial margins, thus significantly contributing to the overall Baylor mission. We have crafted a DoM-specific incentive plan for excellence in research and education that will be effective in FY19. We also have fully implemented the new college-wide clinical compensation plan in the Faculty Group Practice.

Our communication strategies have resulted in the weekly Friday Good News e-mail, which has become a robust and popular feature, a new biannual newsletter (this is the second issue!), well-attended DoM town hall meetings, as well as a growing presence on social media.

Our five Vice Chair Groups covering Education, Clinical Affairs, Research, Faculty and Staff Development, and Quality Improvement and Innovation already have made significant improvements to our processes and our healthcare. Guided by the DoM overall strategic plan, all DoM sections have shown progress on their proposed strategic goals.

Our pipeline of graduates from residency and fellowship is strong, and has resulted in 22 new faculty, 191 new residents and 172 new fellows during the first half of 2018. Our administrative and education offices and clinical FGP operations have completed the move to the Baylor College of Medicine Medical Center on the McNair Campus. The space will support the major increase we saw in the number of faculty, trainees and staff and will enhance our patient care and clinical research projects. Our faculty have considerably increased their presence at Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center, and our affiliations with the DeBakey Veterans Administration Medical Center, Harris Health and Texas Children’s Hospital continue to be strong.

We are confident that 2018-2019 will see us maintaining those gains as well as achieving many more.

Hashem B. El-Serag, M.D., M.P.H.
DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE QUALITY ACADEMY

The Quality Improvement and Innovations (QII) Vice Chair Group, led by Dr. Aanand Naik, was established in March 2017 to foster a new culture of improvement and innovation within the Department of Medicine. In the summer of 2018, the group will hold its second DoM Quality Academy. This Academy is a mentored program for Department of Medicine faculty who are interested in carrying out a QI project in their clinical pavilion.

Participants in the Academy complete a “Jumpstart” training consisting of five sessions over three months to learn basic skills and tools, such as how to identify a QI challenge and build an improvement team, how to extract and use clinical data effectively and how to select the proper approach to solve quality improvement challenges. In addition, members attend monthly pod meetings, consisting of a Vice Chair Group mentor and one or two Academy members, to provide more personalized, case-specific mentoring. The Quality Academy members are required to submit scholarly abstracts of their final improvement project results at annual specialty society meetings, the annual Baylor Quality Improvement and Patient Safety Conference, or the national VA Quality Scholars Program Summer Institute.

The 2018 BCM QUALITY ACADEMY participants are:

- Neeraj Agrawal, General Internal Medicine-Hospital Medicine, Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center
- Muhammad Alsafadi, Infectious Diseases, Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center
- Samaya Anumudu, Nephrology, Harris Health/Ben Taub Hospital
- Natasha Dave, Nephrology, MEDVAMC
- Stephen Fadem, Nephrology, MEDVAMC
- Elizabeth Guy, Pulmonary, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine, Harris Health/Ben Taub Hospital
- Bryan Jiang, Endocrinology, Diabetes, and Metabolism, Harris Health/Ben Taub Hospital
- Aparna Jotwani, Internal Medicine/Hematology-Oncology, Harris Health/Ben Taub Hospital
- Lee Lu, General Internal Medicine, Harris Health/Smith Clinic
- Dhari Narendran, Pulmonary, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine Care Medicine, Harris Health/Ben Taub Hospital
- Yvonne Sada, Hematology-Oncology, MEDVAMC
- Robert Sealkock, Gastroenterology and Hepatology, Harris Health/Ben Taub Hospital
- Rajesh Shah, Gastroenterology and Hepatology, MEDVAMC

Examples of high-impact projects from the 2017 QUALITY ACADEMY GRADUATES are:

- Kathryn Agarwal, Baylor/Harris Health: Framework for improving Nurse Assessments of Fall Risk and Delirium
- Gyanprakash Ketwaroo, Baylor/MEDVAMC: Standardizing the Removal of Large Colon Polyps: An Evidence-Based Approach
- Derek Meeks, Baylor FGP: Improving Diabetes Care at the Faculty Group Practice: Overview of the Diabetes Task Force

COLLABORATION

TRANSITION MEDICINE: COLLABORATION WITH TEXAS CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL

Non-pediatric healthcare professionals have limited experience managing young adults with life-threatening chronic childhood conditions such as Down syndrome or cerebral palsy. As Transition Medicine Section Chief Dr. Cynthia Peacock says, these patients are now increasing in number and thriving owing to improvements in healthcare and are thus “aging out” of the care of a pediatrician and must learn how to navigate the more complicated adult healthcare network. Transition Medicine works with Texas Children’s Hospital to improve access to care for this group of patients.

Transition Medicine works closely with other Department of Medicine sections, as these patients often require treatment for multiple different chronic conditions. For example, approximately half of patients with Down syndrome also have congenital heart disease. Transition Medicine works closely with adult medicine specialists and their staff to help them understand the unique aspects of treating these young adults.

Patients with Down syndrome often present with sitting up to sleep as a manifestation of sleep apnea. Reinforced through a study of the Clinic’s large population of patients, Dr. Peacock now recommends that new patients with Down syndrome visit Dr. Prasad Manian’s group in the Section of Pulmonary, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine.

The section is having a profound impact on the quality of healthcare. For example, treatment plans for a patient with autism must be carefully scripted. Transition Medicine’s Allison Carter, RN—who was selected by the Houston Chronicle as one of 2018’s Top 15 Nurses for the city of Houston—says that a new patient on the autism spectrum may need to “visit” the doctor’s office several times before feeling comfortable enough to be treated, or may react poorly to a caregiver wearing a white coat or to an office with too much background noise.
That cherished memory of medical care—house calls—is to most just a dream. But for our most vulnerable populations—the elderly, the handicapped, the transportation-impaired—it can be a lifesaver. The Section of Geriatrics’ House Calls initiative began in the 1980s with one physician a day, one day a week. Today, Dr. Anita Major leads the group of 10 clinicians and a large staff of case managers and social workers to call on the 400 patients on its active census. Without house calls, says Dr. Major, “this population ends up being invisible until there’s an emergency. And these patients end up being transported to the closest provider, whether it’s for the patients’ best interests or not.”

The group’s staff makes calls, sets appointments, researches solutions, and ensures the team reaches the patients’ homes with the materials they need. An important aspect of the program is the transition-of-care visits that occur within a few days after patients are discharged from hospital. The team may contact a patient’s pharmacy to get a prescription filled, prescribe temporary rehabilitation treatment, or ensure a home care worker shows up. “Transition-of-care visits are where the group really makes a difference,” says Dr. George Taffet, chief of the Section of Geriatrics: “Helping patients and their families bridge the gap from hospital care and, often, preventing them from slipping into worse health and returning to it.”

What Dr. Major considers just as important: raising the next generation of physicians who will embrace transition care. Says Dr. Major: “Students and residents witnessing the comprehensive care that can be delivered in a patient’s home provides a compassionate, patient-centered model that can and should be implemented in all clinical settings. This is where we can make a real difference in the lives of our aging patients.”

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROGRAM

Dr. Andrea Bradford joined the Section of Gastroenterology and Hepatology in spring 2018. She is a clinical psychologist, operating as a clinical supervisor, and also provides a clinical rotation psychology intern. The move is part of the Department of Medicine’s aim toward integration between medical and behavioral disciplines to promote improved medical care for its patients. Studies show that patients presenting with gastroenterological ailments often can find increased levels of improvement through a combination of physical and behavioral health assessments and treatment. Dr. Bradford was recently highlighted in the Wall Street Journal in an article titled “A Surprise Medical Solution: Hypnosis,” which describes how major hospitals are using hypnotherapy to help sufferers of digestive conditions.

CONDITIONS treated by the Interventional Pulmonology team include:

- Lung cancer
- Hemoptysis (coughing up blood)
- Abnormal chest X-rays/CTs
- Pulmonary nodule management
- Pleural effusion (fluid around the lungs)
- Endobronchial tumors and other airway obstructions

Procedures include bronchoscopy as well as advanced procedures:

**ADVANCED DIAGNOSTIC BRONCHOSCOPY**
- Endobronchial ultrasound (EBUS)-guided transbronchial needle aspiration
- Electromagnetic navigation bronchoscopy
- Transbronchial cryobronchoscopy
- Radial endobronchial ultrasound

**PLEURAL PROCEDURES**
- Pleural ultrasound
- Thoracentesis
- Tunneled indwelling pleural catheters
- Pleuroscopy/medical thoracoscopy
- Pleural drainage

**THERAPEUTIC BRONCHOSCOPY**
- Rigid bronchoscopy
- LASER and argon plasma coagulation
- Electrocautery/electrosurgery
- Foreign body removal
- Balloon dilation of the airways
- Endobronchial cryotherapy
- Microdebrider bronchoscopy
- Airway stenting
- Intrabronchial and endobronchial valves for persistent air leaks
- Bronchial thermoplasty
- Whole lung lavage

Interventional pulmonology is a subspecialty within pulmonary medicine focused on consultative and procedural services for patients with malignant and nonmalignant disorders of the lung, airways, and pleura. Interventional pulmonologists are trained in performing invasive diagnostic and therapeutic procedures requiring expertise beyond that required for general pulmonary practice. The Baylor College of Medicine Interventional Pulmonology Program offers consultation services for both malignant and benign disorders of the lung and the airways in addition to advanced diagnostic and therapeutic bronchoscopic and pleural procedures.

The group practices at several Baylor clinical affiliates: Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center, Michael E. DeBakey Veterans Affairs Medical Center, and Ben Taub Hospital. Part of the Department of Medicine’s Section of Pulmonary, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine, the team strives to improve both diagnostic and therapeutic techniques through sound clinical research.

Its formally trained interventional pulmonologists are recognized leaders in the field, and both state-of-the-art clinical services and experimental trials are part of the group’s daily practice. The goal of the Interventional Pulmonology team—which comprises Drs. Ali Jiwani, Donald Lazarus and Venkata Bandi—is to collaborate with referring clinicians to ensure that patients get the best care possible in the most efficient manner. The physicians work closely with other groups throughout Baylor College of Medicine, such as Thoracic Surgery and the Institute for Voice. This collaboration allows Dr. Jiwani and his team to more quickly—and accurately—determine the correct course of treatment when time is critical and create the most streamlined, effective diagnosis and treatment platform available today.

As the Interventional Pulmonology Program continues to increase in scope and recognition, Dr. Jiwani says that the group is addressing ways to meet the growing demand, including the creation of a new interventional pulmonary center and the expansion of the Lung Nodule Program.
**SELECT FACULTY AWARDS**

**Dr. Kathryn Agarwal**  
Baylor Women of Excellence

**Dr. Mahboob Alam**  
Norton Rose Fullbright Faculty Excellence Award for Teaching & Evaluation

**Dr. Rosa Banegas**  
Baylor Women of Excellence

**Dr. Biyikem Bozkurt**  
Baylor Women of Excellence

**Dr. Andrew Caruso**  
Norton Rose Fullbright Faculty Excellence Award for Teaching & Evaluation

**Tiffany Castenell**  
Baylor Women of Excellence

**Dr. Rhonda Cole**  
Baylor Women of Excellence

**Dr. Natasha Dave**  
Baylor Women of Excellence

**Dr. Mary Estes**  
American Gastroenterological Association William Beaumont Prize in Gastroenterology

**Dr. Mary Estes**  
American Gastroenterological Association Distinguished Mentor Award

**Dr. Joselyn Fisher**  
Baylor Women of Excellence

**Dr. Cara Foldes**  
Baylor Women of Excellence

**Karima Ghazzaly**  
Department of Medicine Quarterly Administrator Award

**Dr. Sylvia Hysong**  
Norton Rose Fullbright Faculty Excellence Award for Educational Leadership

**Dr. Glenn Levine**  
Baylor College of Medicine Master Clinician Award for Excellence in Patient Care

**Dr. Glenn Levine**  
Norton Rose Fullbright Faculty Excellence Award for Development of Enduring Educational Materials

**Dr. Na Li**  
University of Houston Teaching Excellence Award for Group Teaching

**Dr. Jonathan Lim**  
David C. Leach Award, Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education

**Jennifer McCullough**  
Baylor Women of Excellence

**Dr. Nikki Oakman**  
Baylor Women of Excellence

**Dr. George Parkerson**  
Norton Rose Fullbright Faculty Excellence Award for Teaching & Evaluation

**Dr. Laura Petersen**  
Baylor Women of Excellence

**Dr. Nalini Ram**  
Think Innovation Summit Award, Harris Health System

**Dr. Nalini Ram**  
Norton Rose Fullbright Faculty Excellence Award for Teaching & Evaluation

**Dr. Anum Saeed**  
First place, American College of Cardiology 2018 meeting, best poster

**Dr. Anum Saeed**  
Young Investigator of the Year Award for Clinical Investigations

**Dr. Sai Saridey**  
Norton Rose Fullbright Faculty Excellence Award for Teaching & Evaluation

**Dr. Tina Shah**  
Norton Rose Fullbright Faculty Excellence Award for Teaching & Education

**Dr. Tina Shah**  
Norton Rose Fullbright Faculty Excellence Award for Development of Enduring Educational Materials

**Dr. Diana Stewart**  
Norton Rose Fullbright Faculty Excellence Award for Teaching & Education

**Dr. Addison Taylor**  
Baylor College of Medicine Master Clinician Award for Excellence in Patient Care

**Dr. Barbara Trautner**  
Norton Rose Fullbright Faculty Excellence Award for Development of Enduring Educational Materials

**Dr. Christie Turin More**  
Baylor Women of Excellence

**Dr. Salim Virani**  
Norton Rose Fullbright Faculty Excellence Award for Development of Enduring Educational Materials

**NATIONAL LEADERSHIP AWARDS & APPOINTMENTS**

**Dr. Adelaida Adjouvi**  
Fellow, American College of Physicians

**Dr. Anoop Agrawal**  
Fellow, American College of Physicians Fellow

**Dr. Sharmila Anandasabapathy**  
Texas Executive Women’s Women on the Move

**Dr. Melissa Bondy**  
National Institutes of Health Board of Scientific Advisors

**Dr. Sarah Candler**  
Chair, Council of Resident/Fellow Members, American College of Physicians’ Board of Regents

**Dr. Andrew Caruso**  
Fellow in Hospital Medicine, Society of Hospital Medicine

**Dr. Matthew Ellis**  
Inducted member, Association of American Physicians

**Dr. Joan Friedland**  
Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society

**Dr. Alan Garber**  
Master of the American College of Endocrinology Award, American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists

**Dr. Nicola Hanania**  
American Thoracic Society Fellows

**Dr. Ruben Hernaez**  
Steering Committee Practice Guidelines Committee, American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases

**Dr. Holland Kaplan**  
Co-chair, American College of Cardiology medical resident group

**Dr. Amir Kazerouninia**  
Well-Being Champion, American College of Physicians

**Dr. Sabina Lee**  
American Gastroenterological Association Government Affairs Committee

**Dr. Yami Natarajan**  
Distinguished Award for Extraordinary Scientific Achievement and Leadership in Breast Cancer Research, American Association for Cancer Research

**Dr. Ryle Przybyłowicz**  
Core Medicine Resident-as-Teacher Award, Academy of Resident Educators

**Dr. Corry Ritter**  
Fellow in Hospital Medicine, Society of Hospital Medicine

**Dr. Stacey Rose**  
Well-Being Champion, American College of Physicians

**Dr. Susan Samson**  
Council of the Association of Program Directors of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism

**Dr. Jose Serpa**  
Fellow, American College of Physicians

**Dr. Rajesh Shah**  
Cohort III of American College of Cardiology Leadership Academy program

**Dr. Tina Shah**  
Editorial Team Lead, Heart Failure and Cardiomyopathies Clinical Topic Collection, American College of Cardiology

**Dr. Tina Shah**  
Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America’s Public Policy and Government Affairs Committee

**Dr. Barbara Trautner**  
Fellow, American Gastroenterological Association

**Dr. John Vierling**  
Chair, Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease Leadership Council

**Dr. Salim Virani**  
Core Medicine Resident-as-Teacher Award, Academy of Resident Educators

**Dr. Jade Zhou**  
Core Medicine Resident-as-Teacher Award, Academy of Resident Educators
Fourth-year medical students could not contain their excitement at the annual Match Day, March 16, 2018—when they learned where they will continue their medical training through the National Resident Matching Program. Of the 187 Baylor College of Medicine medical students participating, 43 matched with residency programs at Baylor and, of the 28 matched in internal medicine, nine elected to continue in Baylor’s Department of Medicine, a testament to the popularity of the program and in accordance to DoM’s stated strategic goal of building a pipeline in Baylor from students through faculty.
RESEARCH: A FAMILY AFFAIR AT DoM!

The Department of Medicine fosters a collaborative working environment to further our goal of conducting innovative research. Two such collaborations have resulted in fruitful discoveries that are enhancing the department—and healthcare.

Dr. David Corry and Dr. Farrah Kheradmand

Physician-scientists Farrah Kheradmand and David Curry, who are married, of the Pulmonary and Critical Care and Immunology, Allergy and Rheumatology sections, respectively, have been collaborating for the past 20 years to determine the immune system’s role in the pathogenesis of allergic asthma and cigarette smoke-induced chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Work led by Dr. Corry has shown that colonization of the airways by fungi mediates airway epithelial cell activation and coagulation factor secretion that can promote asthma; Dr. Kheradmand’s lab has shown how acquired immunity in smokers can lead to progression of COPD. Together, their research is focusing on how to mitigate immune-mediated pathways that promote allergic lung inflammation in asthma or auto-inflammation in COPD. According to Dr. Kheradmand, “We’ve come a long way in expanding this knowledge; it’s exciting to think we could translate this into actionable steps to treat our patients.”

Aside from its renowned Biology of Inflammation Center, the Section of Immunology, Allergy and Rheumatology also supports ongoing research into seven endowed research programs:

- Cullen Chair in Immunology
- The Mendenhall Asthma Research Program
- Trammell Chair in Allergy
- Finger Lupus Center
- Brochstein Arthritis Research Program
- Papadopoulos Autoimmunity Research Program
- Kostas Dermatomyositis Research Program

DoM TRAINEES RESEARCH DAY SYMPOSIUM

The annual Research Day Symposium was held in Spring 2018 at the main Baylor campus to highlight academic achievements of Department of Medicine trainees. The symposium underscores both the department’s research and mentoring as well as the dedication of the department’s mentors who help these trainees’ careers.

NUMBER OF PRESENTERS: 154
NUMBER OF ATTENDEES: 224
NUMBER OF AWARDS: 16

TOP AWARDS:
Basic Research, First Place: Cameron Landers
Clinical Research, First Place: Priyanka Iyer
Clinical Medicine, First Place: Trisha Cubb
QI/Patient Safety, First Place: Rachel Jacobson/
Khaled Sanber

NEW NIH RESEARCH GRANTS 2018
Dr. Chris Amos U19 National Cancer Institute
Dr. Melissa Bondy R21 National Institute of Environmental Health Services
Dr. Melissa Bondy R01 National Cancer Institute
Drs. David Corry/ Farrah Kheradmand R01 National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
Dr. Hashem El-Serag R01 supplement National Cancer Institute
Dr. Hashem El-Serag P30 National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases
Dr. Richard Finnell R01 Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health & Human Development
Dr. Richard Finnell R01 Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health & Human Development
Dr. Winnie Hamilton R21 National Institute of Environmental Health Services
Dr. William Mitch R01 National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases
Dr. Yanlin Wang R01 National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases

NEW VA GRANTS 2018
Dr. Laura Petersen
Dr. Fasiha Kanwal & Aanand Naik
Dr. Nader Massarweh
Dr. Kyler Godwin
Dr. Hardeep Singh
Dr. Ashley Meyer

NEW RESEARCH GRANTS 2018
Dr. Rachel Schiff Puma Biotechnology
Dr. Svatii Haricharan Department of Defense
Dr. Meghashyam Kavuri Department of Defense
Dr. Farrah Kheradmand CPRIT

Dr. Dennis Villareal and Dr. Reina Villareal

Physician-scientists Dennis and Reina Villareal, who are also spouses, of the Section of Endocrinology, Diabetes, and Metabolism, conduct their research through the Diabetes Research Center, part of an integrated nationwide program. The Villareals have been awarded multiple R01 NIH grants worth more than $6 million, including a 5-year grant to seek solutions using aromatase inhibitors and weight loss for severely obese men with hypogonadism. This was one of seven active R01 grants in 2017 for the section.

The Villareals have been seeking ways to improve the health of older, obese adults with diabetes through diet, aerobic exercise, and resistance exercise. Research has found that frailty is common in obese older adults, despite having adequate body weight. Obesity acts synergistically with sarcopenia to maximize disability, and diet-induced weight loss has been found to exacerbate sarcopenia and osteopenia. In studies, patients who performed aerobics or resistance exercise, or both, achieved much greater weight loss than the control group, which did not participate in exercise activities. Lean mass and bone mineral density decreased less in the combination and resistance groups than in the aerobic group. “Patients seeking greater health benefits should combine aerobic and resistance training rather than relying on one of the two,” Dr. Reina Villareal says. “However,” Dr. Dennis Villareal cautions, “the most effective path is a combination of exercise with sustained dieting and healthy eating.”

The encouraging results from this trial provided a basis for a Joint Position Statement regarding the approach for obesity in older adults, as well as two landmark studies covered in the New England Journal of Medicine.