The final quarter of 2018 was full of activities, both academic and festive. Our research faculty were well-represented at the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine (STFM) Conference on Practice and Quality Improvement held in Tampa, Florida in early December. See page 18 for a listing of authors and presentation titles.

Everyone enjoyed our annual Alumni Event held in November. Because we have email addresses only through our 2006 alumni, we likely missed others who may have enjoyed the camaraderie and reminiscing. While we are working on completing our database, if you are in contact with any of our earlier graduates, please send us their email addresses.

On November 16 the first annual Chair’s Lecture was given by David M. Stern, MD, a national authority on opioids. He has served as Dean of the University of Tennessee Health Sciences Center, as the chancellor for statewide initiatives on addiction, and as a member of the Governor’s commission on pain and addiction.

No end of the year would be complete without food and fellowship. Our clinics hosted celebratory events to thank faculty and staff for making a difference in the lives of patients and colleagues. We appreciate your devotion to our common goal.

I wish everyone a happy, healthy and productive new year. Keep up your outstanding work.
Kunwal Ahmad is the department’s newest Sponsored Programs Manager. Prior to this position, she worked for the last eight years in Baylor’s Office of Research as the Research Conflict of Interest Administrator. Prior to joining OOR, Kunwal was a Grants Manager in Pediatrics where she managed all pre- and some post-award activities for 75 faculty and 250+ support staff. She’s been with Baylor for 14 years. Kunwal has a diverse background in accounting, research administration, and grants and policy compliance, and she enjoys working closely with faculty to resolve administrative issues so that they can focus on their science.

Gabriella Chmaitelli is a Project Coordinator I, working with Dr. Hamisu Salihu on multiple epidemiological projects with interest on addressing maternal and infant health disparities within the city of Houston. Gabriella received her Bachelor Degree in Biology from Texas A&M University in 2017. Prior to joining Baylor, Gabriella worked at Texas Children’s Hospital researching the selective inhibition of pathogen outgrowth and at Texas A&M University’s Comparative Medicine Program.

Julian Garza is a Data Processing Assistant working with Dr. Hamisu Salihu to log staff directories for universities and major hospitals around the country for ongoing research. Julian is set to receive his Bachelor’s degree in English in May 2019. Prior to joining Baylor, Julian worked with a successful law firm in Houston and intends to enroll in law school after graduation.

Rosaria Burney is a Medical Assistant I for the Healthcare for the Homeless Clinic – Houston. Rosaria comes to us with several years of administrative and customer service experience and her previous employers include Houston Methodist and Advanced Diagnostics HealthCare. Rosaria prides herself in the ability to leverage a compassionate and empathetic style to build rapport with patients and put them at ease. Her primary work location is HHH.

Kelsey Carruth is a Medical Assistant II for the Healthcare for the Homeless Clinic – Houston. Kelsey received her Medical Assistant Certification from Vista College and Nurse Assistant Certification from Kilgore College. Kelsey comes to Baylor with over 10 years of medical experience working in various capacities. Most recently, Kelsey worked as a Medical Assistant at Nova Medical Center.

Emerald Ferrer is a Registered Nurse, II for the Healthcare for the Homeless Clinic-Houston. Emerald received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Lamar University in 1996 and comes to us with over 20 years of nursing experience. Some of Emerald’s previous employers include UT Physicians, UT MD Anderson Cancer Center and St. Luke’s Episcopal Hospital. Her background includes inpatient nursing, telemetry, triage and oncology care. Emerald is deeply committed to providing quality and compassionate patient care to a diverse patient population.

Paul Dalangpan is a Senior Practice Manager for the Family Group Practice. Paul received his Master’s Degree in Healthcare Administration from California State University, Long Beach, and comes to us with 23 years of experience in healthcare operations. Prior to joining Baylor, Paul worked as a Deputy Director of Operations at the U.S. Naval Hospital in Guam, Director of the Emergency Mobile Surgical Services for the 1st Medical Battalion in Oceanside, California, and Manager at the Naval Medical Center Blood Donor Center in San Diego, California. Paul has experience in outpatient clinic operations, business development, forecasting, production and budget tracking, access to care, emergency medical planning, and talent acquisitions. Paul’s primary work location is at the Kirby clinic.

Priya Davar, MD is Assistant Professor in the Family Medicine Center at Baylor Clinic. She received her medical degree from Ross University School of Medicine in Miramar, Florida (2015) and completed her residency at the UT McGovern School of Medicine in June 2018. She is a native Austinite who enjoys playing soccer, performing improv comedy, and bike riding with her wife along the Buffalo Bayou. She has a special interest in women’s health, preventive medicine, and GLBTQ+ health.
In November, Fabrizia Faustinella, MD, PhD, FACP, was awarded The American College of Physicians Laureate Award at a ceremony in Austin, Texas. The Laureate Award honors those Fellows and Masters of the College who have demonstrated by their example and conduct an abiding commitment to excellence in medical care, education, or research and in service to their community, their Chapter, and the ACP. The awardees are senior physicians and Fellows or Masters of long-standing, with acknowledged excellence and peer approval in the field of internal medicine and have served their Chapter with distinction. Dr. Faustinella is only the seventh woman to receive this honor since the award went into effect 33 years ago.

A constant element of Dr. Faustinella work and career has been extensive and direct patient care, which has inspired her to write about her experiences in several patient-centered essays. In particular, her work with our underprivileged patient population has added depth and breadth to her human experience and has enriched her life to a great degree. “A Day in The Walk-in Clinic” is based on patient encounters at the Ben Taub Clinic. The essay has received national attention, in the context of the ongoing debate about health care access by disadvantaged, low-income population.

After reading this essay, a retired physician sent Dr. Faustinella a note saying, in part, that “rarely, if ever, have I been so touched by the cumulative misfortune that has befallen your patients.” Along with the note, the doctor sent a “charitable donation to help alleviate their suffering.”

Another of her essays is “Daisies for Hope” which was selected to be read at Stories from the Heart of Medicine, the combined BCM Narrative Medicine Program and McGovern Center for Humanism and Ethics.

Recent presentations include the STFM Conference on Practice Improvement in Tampa, Florida, in December. Her talk, “Obstacles to Health Care Access Among Racial and Ethnic Minorities and Development of the Same Day Clinic System,” was authored by Dr. Faustinella and Dr. Zoorob.

Dr. Faustinella, Associate Professor, is a clinician in the HHS Same Day Clinic System. She is currently working on a documentary about homelessness to be released soon.
HAPPENINGS

Staff at the FCM Kirby location enjoyed some fine food and each other’s company at the Thanksgiving luncheon on Tuesday, November 6. Top photo foreground: Maria Mejia de Grubb, MD, MPH; Sandra Gonzalez, PhD, LCSW; Liza Lane, MSW; and Roger Zoorob, MD, MPH.

Smiling for the camera (below) are Fareed Khan, MBBS, Dani Moreno, and Gabby Mireles.
Vallbona Health Center held their Thanksgiving celebration on November 15. Pictured in the top photograph are: Bharat Joshi, MD; Phong Luu, MD; Joy Blumenreich, MD; Saira Khan, MD; Ambreen Mujahid MD; Noreen Pirzada, MD and Melvin Prado (Site Director).

Bottom photo: Bharat Joshi, MD; Eric Lee, MD; Joy Blumenreich, MD; Noreen Pirzada, MD; Sanjana Bhattarai, MD and Preethi Nambi, MD.
Dr. Zoorob welcomed alumni and guests to the annual Family Medicine Residency Alumni Event, held on November 15th Damian’s Ducina Italiana on Smith Street.

Dr. Warwick described the growing gap in the ratio of Family Physicians to the number of people needing care in the Texas population, while the number of residency spots for FM training has not grown in the past decade. Alumni were encouraged to reach out to their state government representatives as the new Texas legislative session begins on January 9, 2019. Dr. Khan gave a soft sell for donating to the FCM Education Endowment Fund. He also noted that the department has multiple faculty positions open and would love to have our graduates return to the BCM family.

The BCM Family Medicine Residency Program is a family of Family Medicine.
We’re a family that alumni do not outgrow upon graduation.

The department has a record and contact information for the classes only since 2006, so we are asking alumni to help us locate the names and contact information for any classmates they remember or keep in contact with. You may email that information to Sharon Mitchell or Joan Newell.
The Faculty Group Practice honored Isabel Valdez, PA-C with two farewells: a breakfast celebration and a send-off with cake on her last day in the department. She remains at BCM at General Internal Medicine on Cambridge.

Isabel, thank you for your diligence and excellent patient care. We wish you the very best!
Many thanks to Joy Blumenreich, MD who has been the Director of the Same Day Clinics for over a year. She has graciously agreed to remain in that capacity until permanent director can be secured. We appreciate your extra effort and wonderful attitude, Dr. Blumenreich!

While gathered at the home of Anjali Aggarwal, MD (below left), MS1-MS4 students were treated to good food and good times. Dr. Aggarwal hosts get-togethers like this twice a year.
Surrounded by her PhD committee (Dr. Elizabeth Pomeroy, Dr. Mary Velasquez [chair], Dr. Kirk von Sternberg, Dr. Zoorob, and Dr. Mercedes Hernandez), Sandra Gonzalez, PhD, LCSW (holding the flowers) celebrates earning her doctorate in Social Work from the University of Texas - Austin. Her dissertation is “Acculturation and Association to Alcohol Use and Contraception Decisions in Hispanic Women.” Soon thereafter, she was made Assistant Professor in the department.

Congratulations, Dr. Gonzalez!

Family Medicine shows its appreciation to the medical assistants who give our patients special care at each visit. Medical Assistants Week was October 15-19.

(Left to right) Vida Kahrizi, MBA-HC; Ruby Farias, MAII; Denise Williams, RN; Jasmin Romo, MAII; Miranda Scott, MAII; Paula Rosales, MAII; Rocío Hernandez, MAII; Stephanie Cortez, MAI; Roger Zoorob, MD, MPH; Mohamad Sidani, MD, MA

The Faculty Senate held its annual Bring a Friend Reception event this quarter. Those in attendance from our department are Malvika Juneja, MD; Nihita Shah, MD; Rashmi Rode, MD; and Kenneth Barning, MD.

(left to right) Vida Kahrizi, MBA-HC; Ruby Farias, MAII; Denise Williams, RN; Jasmin Romo, MAII; Miranda Scott, MAII; Paula Rosales, MAII; Rocío Hernandez, MAII; Stephanie Cortez, MAI; Roger Zoorob, MD, MPH; Mohamad Sidani, MD, MA

(left to right) Malvika Juneja, MD; Nihita Shah, MD; Rashmi Rode, MD; and Kenneth Barning, MD.
Halting the opioid epidemic...it takes a village

David M. Stern, MD shared his experience fighting the misuse of opioids in western Tennessee at the inaugural Chair’s Lecture on Friday, November 16. Dr. Stern, the previous Dean of the University of Tennessee Medical School in Memphis, is a national authority on opioids. He also served as the chancellor for statewide initiatives on addiction and served on the Governor’s commission on pain and addiction.
On December 12, the department held a farewell breakfast to bid a fond adieu to Vida Kahrizi, MBA-HC, as she takes on new challenges in the Cardiology Department at BCM. Current and former colleagues stopped by to thank Vida for her hard work for the FGP and to wish her the very best.
The annual Residents’ Retreat was held at the Houston Museum of Natural Science. Residents and attendings were divided into two groups: One group was stationed in the control room while the other was directed to a spacecraft. Communication was of utmost importance as we accomplished our assigned tasks and successfully landed the spacecraft first on the moon, and then on Mars. The dark room in which residents are pictured (right) was part of the transition area where the two groups moved to and from the spacecraft and control room between rounds. Residents learned to rely on each other to accomplish goals both big and small. During the debriefing session following the activity, the HMNS staff running the simulations noted that our group was one of the most highly effective groups they had worked with in a long time.

After the HMNS adventure, residents spent the rest of the day relaxing and bonding at a home along Galveston Bay.
(Left) Dr. Rebecca Berens (attending), Mohamed Khoaja, MD; Waqas Shuaib, MD; Daniel Jeffcoat, MD; Amanda Patterson-Gilbert, MD; Stephanie Vachirasudlekha, MD, MPH, MSW; Cathy Xie, MD; Reginald Nguyen, MD; Arindam Sarkar, MD; Eloy Galvan, MD; Nidhisha Anireddy, MD; Rida Khan, MD

(Lef) Reggie Nguyen, M.D.; Veenadhari Chavakula, M.D.; Stephanie Vachirasudlekha, M.D., MPH, MSW; Roslyn Oduro, M.D.; Residence Director Eric Warwick, M.D.; Amanda Patterson, M.D.; Stephanie Nguyen, M.D.; and Ngozi Okorafor, M.D.
Rashmi Rode, MD has been elected as a At-Large member in Board of Directors with the Harris County Academy of Family Physicians (HCAFP) for the two year term. She has also been selected to be a member of the Texas Academy of Family Physicians (TAFP) Commission of Health Care Services and Managed Care. Dr. Rode begins both pursuits in 2019.

Frene LaCour-Chestnut, MD participates in The Women’s Fund which offers health education and workshops for young girls and their female caregivers. Watch the video here.

Jeffrey Steinbauer, MD spoke with reporters from Time Magazine for an article “Here’s how to tell if you have a cold or the flu.”

Before moving to General Internal Medicine in December, Isabel Valdez, PA-C was busy with public service. In an interview with SUNNY 99.1 “The tipping point of antibiotics” (October 26), Ms. Valdez spoke about the best ways to avoid antibiotic overuse.

Next she was interviewed by Houston Public Media for “Recognizing the tipping point for your health” (October 30).

Ms Valdez later spoke with KHOU-11 “Five things to stay healthy.”
A donation from a grateful donor who had an exceptional patient experience at a Baylor College of Medicine medical practice, launched the “That’s the Way” program. Each month, these donated funds, are used to recognize two employees for their exemplary service.

Maria La Cruz Rondon, MD was presented Baylor’s player of the month award in October.

Every time we take a course of antibiotics we don’t necessarily need, we’re disrupting our own microbiome - as well as potentially contributing to drug resistance. The Houston Chronicle interviewed Larissa Grigoryan, MD, PhD and Barbara Trautner, MD about their recent survey.

Trick-or-treating, dressing up in costume and having fun are all most children want to do on Halloween, but for some divorced families it can be a challenge. Sandra Gonzalez, PhD, LCSW gives some ideas how to make the night a treat and not a fright.

FMIG has been making plans for 2019. Some highlights of this upcoming year include monthly lunch-and-learn lectures by various faculty in Baylor’s FM department illustrating the range of possibilities in Family Medicine, as well as our first annual Procedures Workshop later this fall to highlight the variety of procedures that are available in the field.
OTACA is an acronym for Observadores del Tiempo Atmosférico Cer- res-Antares, a NASA project set in Jardín, Colombia, in which the youth of this rural area contribute information about rain levels to study weather patterns. Leading the group is Mercedes Arrubla, a math teacher and the coordinator of this project.

Mónica Alzate, PhD, LCSW (above, far left) used to volunteer at a small non-profit that provides financial support to OTACA and was always curious about the school, but had never had the chance to visit. She recently had that opportunity. Dr. Alzate reports that the school is resource poor and lacks the means to pay for workshops or speakers from external people, but all the teachers are college educated. Most of the families are farmers who do not own the land, they are day laborers. Most of the youth work in the farms even during school time and on vacations.

Preethi Nambi, MBBS, and friend of the department, Asim Shah, MD were named Harris Health Champions during the quarter. Dr. Nambi sees patients at Vallbona Health Center.

Go to the Smile Education Foundation website for more information. Click here to donate to this or other worthy causes. At the end of the form under “Additional Comments” please note that the donation is for OTACA project in Jardín, Antioquia.


Varadarajan S, Juneja M, Sung A, Barning K, Zoorob R. Work in Progress: Central repository for research and improvement activities.

Faustinella F, Zoorob R. Obstacles to health care access among racial and ethnic minorities and development of the same day clinic system.

Fields-Gilmore JAR, Mahadasyam S, Varadarajan S, Warwick E, Galvan E, Patterson A, Herrera A, Milbander U, Salemi JL. “I’m listening:” A quality improvement project focused on patient-centered communication enhancement of Northwest Clinic.

Agana DF, Striley C, Carek PJ. Understanding the middle-tier population of ambulatory care sensitive 30-day readmissions: Using the nationwide readmissions database.
American Society of Hematology Annual Meeting
December 2018
Rivero G, Noguera P, Moreno S, Dongarwar D, Salemi JL, Salihu HM. Excess in atherosclerotic and inflammatory diseases are differentially expressed in myelodysplasia and are highly dependent on age, R-IPSS and ethnicity.

Narrative Medicine Program Workshop at Baylor College of Medicine
November 2018

Rode R, Sulapas I, Nietfeld L, Shah NP. Closing the gap between noncompliance and ignorance by meaningful use of AVS.


Food & Nutrition Conference & Expo (FNCE)
October 2018
American Academy of Pediatrics National Conference & Exhibition
November 2018
Rodrigo OD, Wood SK, Hennekens CH, Levine RS. Another racial divide: Greater disparities in black/white infant mortality from necrotizing enterocolitis of the newborn.

Annual Baylor College of Medicine Academy of Distinguished Educators Showcase of Educational Scholarship
November 2018

IDWeek 2018: Advancing Science, Improving Care
November 2018


Stories from the Heart of Medicine, Combined Initiative: BCM Narrative Medicine Program and McGovern Center for Humanism and Ethics. McGovern Medical School
November 2018
Faustinella F. Daisies for Hope.

TAFP Annual Session & Primary Care Summit
October 2018
Faustinella F. Writing as a means for coping with stress.

Food & Nutrition Conference & Expo (FNCE)
October 2018
Make plans to attend Primary Care Update, sponsored by the Department of Family and Community Medicine at Baylor College of Medicine on March 23, 2019. This one-day conference providing evidence-based advice in a non-commercial setting.

This year we are adding posters to the mix. Submissions were accepted from residents, students, fellows, and faculty. Ribbons will be awarded to the best in each group.

Seven hours of CME (one hour of ethics included)

Arunima Misra, MD  
CHF: Diagnosis, staging and evidence-based updates  
• Discuss heart failure, its classification and differential diagnosis  
• Determine diagnostic value of tests to assess and treat heart failure  
• Examine strategies for prevention of heart failure

Aimee Garcia, MD  
Wound care  
• Explain the basics of wound bed preparation  
• Discuss management plans for commonly encountered wounds in ambulatory setting  
• Review indications for different types of dressings to treat wounds

Sahil Mittal, MD, MS  
Functional bowel disorders  
• Discuss etiology, diagnosis and differentials of functional bowel disorders  
• Explain updated management plans for primary care patients  
• Analyze case based scenarios to develop familiarity with treatment strategies

Maher Karam-Hage, M.D.  
Smoking cessation: Newer options and updates  
• Discuss and review the biological basis of tobacco use disorder and dependence  
• Describe newer treatment modalities for tobacco cessation.  
• Reframe tobacco cessation education for patients

Judy Levison, MD  
Abnormal Cervical Cytology: What do I do next?  
• Learn to diagnose anorectal disease in the office  
• Treatment of various diagnoses  
• Know when to refer to a specialist

Ida Orengo, MD  
Common Skin Lesions in Primary Care  
• Recognize skin lesions commonly seen in a primary care setting  
• Describe and document these lesions  
• Formulate strategies and discuss options for treatment of skin lesions

Savitri Fedson, MD  
End of life decision: Medical facts & patient preferences  
• Explain life-sustaining treatment & underlying ethics in advance directive documents.  
• Define the types of advance directives documents under Texas Advance Directives Act.  
• Identify standards and hierarchy in end-of-life decisions by surrogate decision makers.

This live activity, Primary Care Update, with a beginning date of March 23, 2019, has been reviewed and is acceptable for up to 7.00 Prescribed credit(s) by the American Academy of Family Physicians. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.
The Family and Community Medicine Quarterly Newsletter is a publication of the Department of Family and Community Medicine at Baylor College of Medicine.

To be added to the Newsletter email listserve, please email Joan Newell.