

NEXUS

FALL 2022



Department of
**Anesthesiology &
Perioperative Medicine**



University of
Pittsburgh

UPMC
LIFE CHANGING MEDICINE

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The Pitt/UPMC Department of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine follows UPMC COVID masking guidelines.

Feature Articles

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For almost 30 years, Drs. Pei Tang and Yan Xu have been working to solve fundamental mysteries about anesthesia and pain medicine in a broad range of fields.

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Under the direction of Drs. Kathirvel Subramaniam and Michael Boisen, our team provides comprehensive perioperative clinical echocardiography services and supports a busy education program for trainees.

Chair's Message



**Aman Mahajan,
MD, PhD, MBA**

Welcome to the fourth edition of *Nexus*. This fall 2022 issue covers our news and events that occurred during the summer of 2022.

As another fiscal year recently concluded, we are excited to present the latest facts, figures, and statistics about our department in "By the Numbers." The statistics reflect our continued growth in clinical sites, ORs, and covered locations, the popularity and successes of our educational programs, and our upward trajectory towards our ultimate goal to become the #1 anesthesiology department in the nation in NIH funding. I am so pleased about the tremendous progress we have made over the past year, thanks to the commitment and relentless dedication of our clinicians, researchers, and staff. We have much to be proud of!

In this issue, we spotlight the labs of Drs. Pei Tang and Yan Xu in our research feature article. Drs. Xu and Tang have been seeking answers and innovations in anesthesia and pain medicine for nearly 30 years in our department, conducting complex research focusing on ion channels and various receptors in the human brain and nervous system. Our Perioperative Echocardiography Service, directed by Dr. Kathirvel Subramaniam, is the topic of our clinical feature article. The article focuses particularly on the service's impressive training program and their recently enhanced and expanded digital echocardiography lab at UPMC Presbyterian.

We are delighted to continue our "Q and A" article series in this issue. This time, we get a peek into the lives and careers of Dr. Mihaela Visoiu at UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh, Carolyn Ferguson from the research lab of Dr. Gregg Homanics, and Frank Watson, one of our UPMC Network CRNAs. We extend an enormous "thank you" to these team members for sharing their personal stories. I encourage everyone in the department to nominate a coworker for a potential "Q and A" article. Anyone wishing to do so, please contact our Managing Editor, **Christine Burr**.

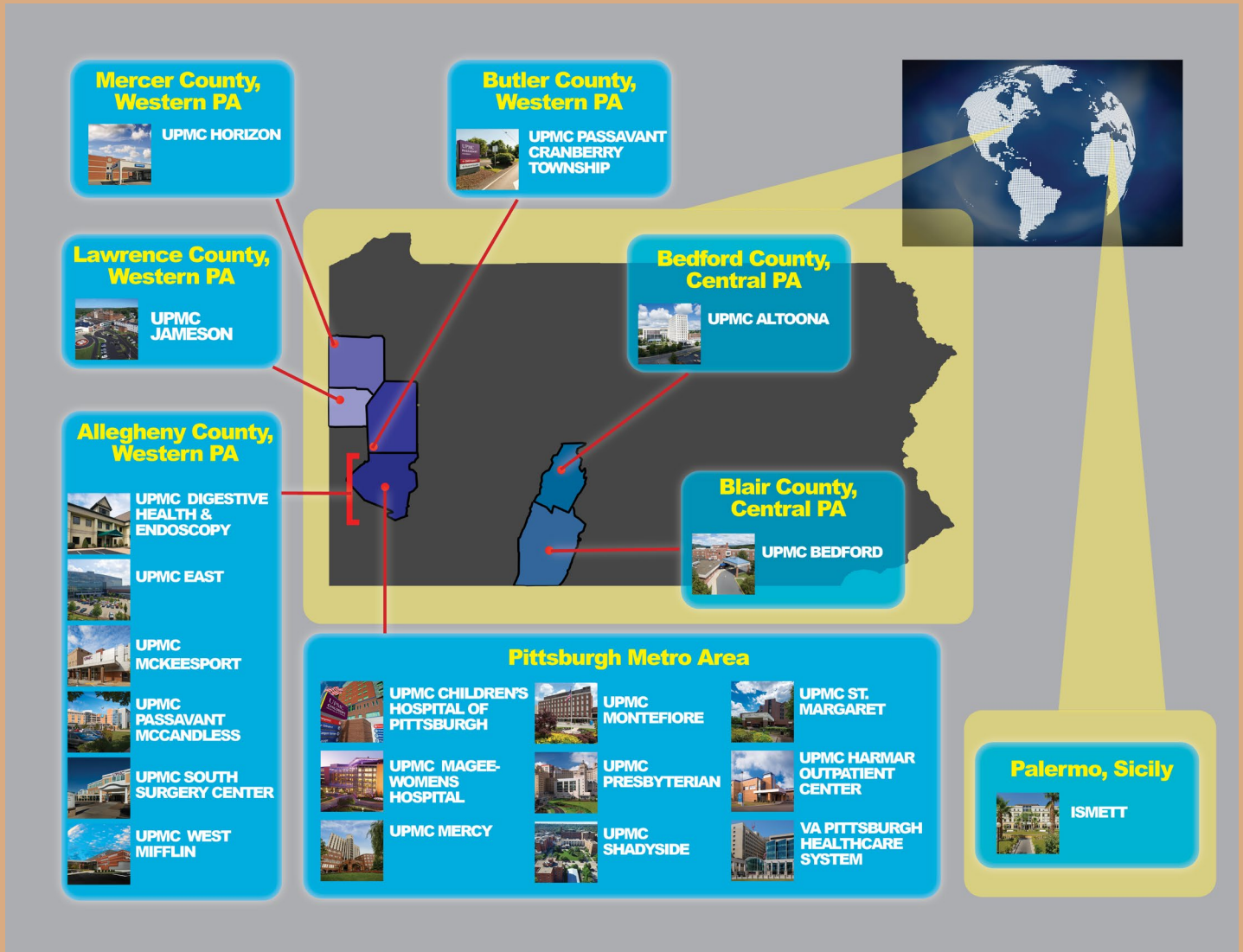
Last, we present our "Summer Fun" photo spread celebrating our team members enjoying summer activities with their families, friends, and loved ones. Thank you so much to all who submitted photos for this section. We could not put this publication together without your contributions and are so happy to make you all part of *Nexus*.

A final reminder that all current and former members of the department are invited to submit photos and article proposals for potential inclusion in *Nexus*. Anyone interested in submitting content, please contact **Christine Burr**.

It is hard to believe that another academic year is now upon us. Wishing all of our readers a safe, fun, and productive fall semester.

AM

Our Department BY THE NUMBERS



20+

HOSPITAL SITES

243

ANESTHETIZING SITES COVERED PER DAY

9

CHRONIC PAIN MEDICINE SITES

5

ACUTE PAIN MEDICINE SITES

AT A GLANCE:
Clinical Care



~300k

APPROX. TOTAL ANNUAL CASES

227*

FACULTY MEMBERS

427*

CRNAs

33

**OFFSITE LOCATIONS
COVERED PER DAY**

177

**OPERATING ROOMS
COVERED PER DAY**

33

**GI LABS COVERED
PER DAY**

* at time of publication

AT A GLANCE:
Education



One of the
Largest

ANESTHESIOLOGY RESIDENCY PROGRAMS IN THE US

10

SUBSPECIALTY
FELLOWSHIP
PROGRAMS

98%

RESIDENT BOARD
CERTIFICATION RATE FROM
THE LAST SEVEN ELIGIBLE
CLASSES

96%

OF OUR RESIDENTS RATED
THE PROGRAM AS "POSITIVE" OR
"VERY POSITIVE" IN 2021

80

RESIDENTS

40

CLINICAL FELLOWS

39

PITT NURSE ANESTHESIA
PROGRAM DOCTOR OF
NURSING (DNP) GRADS,
CLASS OF 2021

AT A GLANCE: Research

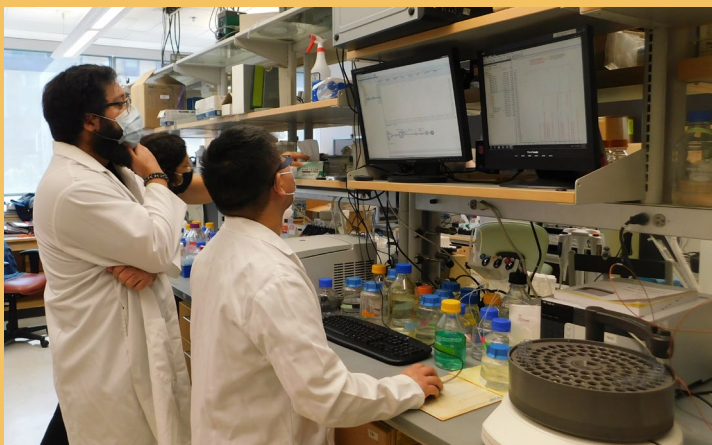


1 of only 2

ANESTHESIOLOGY
DEPARTMENTS WITH MULTIPLE
NIH T32 TRAINING PROGRAMS

80%

MORE GRANT SUBMISSIONS
THAN LAST YEAR



OUR PORTFOLIO OF ACTIVE GRANT SUPPORT INCLUDES

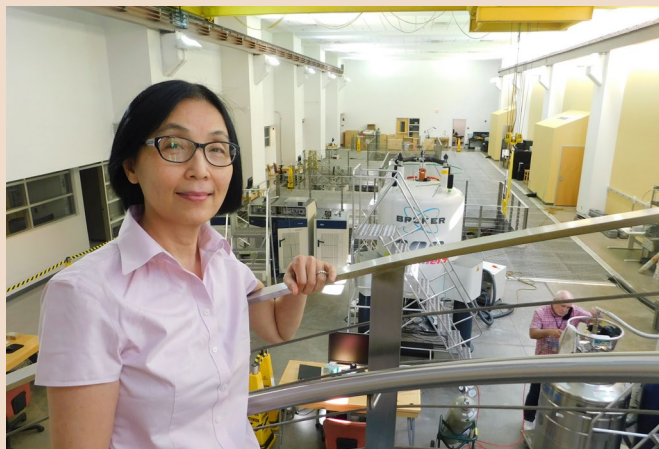
\$46 Million+

OF WHICH

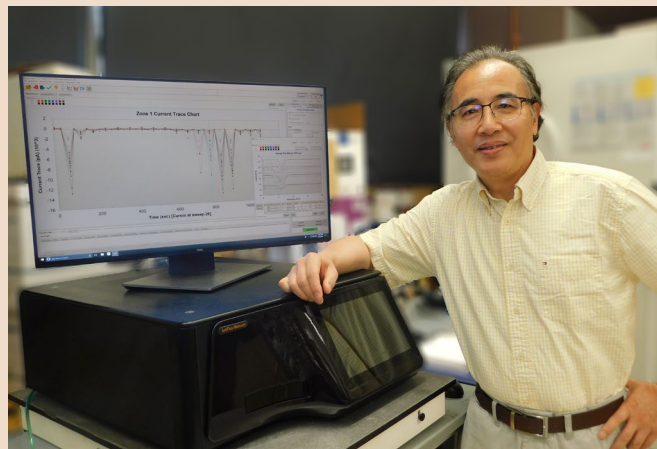
\$44 Million+

IS FROM THE NIH

A Closer Look at the Labs of Drs. Pei Tang and Yan Xu



Dr. Pei Tang



Dr. Yan Xu

Pei Tang, PhD, and Yan Xu, PhD, use tools like high-resolution nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR), X-ray crystallography, electrophysiology, molecular dynamic simulations, in silico and in vitro drug screening, and artificial intelligence to tackle various biomedical and neuroscience questions in their labs on the second floor of Biomedical Science Tower 3.

For almost 30 years, Drs. Pei Tang and Yan Xu have been working to solve fundamental mysteries about anesthesia and pain medicine in a broad range of fields. "Our work is collaborative, but our studies have different emphases," explains Dr. Pei Tang, Professor of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine, Pharmacology and Chemical Biology, and Computational and Systems Biology.

Research in Dr. Tang's lab focuses on determining the structures and dynamics of neurotransmitter-gated ion channels and understanding channel interactions with low-affinity drugs and other proteins. Dr. Tang elaborates that "these ion channels play critical roles in human brain function and the human immune system. They are targets of therapeutics. My lab uses various structural, functional, and computational tools to understand how these channels work - with a goal to discover new drugs acting on these channels to benefit human health." Recently, her team has overcome many technical challenges and successfully determined structures for the highly flexible intracellular domain of the human neuronal 7 nicotinic acetylcholine receptor (7nAChR), the first high-resolution structure in the entire family of the so-called pentameric ligand-gated ion channels. Long flexible regions exist in ~30% of eukaryotic proteins and ~70% of signaling proteins. Conformational flexibility is required for mediating binding diversity to enable cellular signaling, regulation, and other functions. Her team's success in determining the intracellular domain structures and dynamics of 7nAChR shed new light on a path to build structure-dynamics-function relationships for flexible proteins or regions.

Dr. Yan Xu, Vice Chair for Basic Sciences and Peter Winter Professor of Anesthesiology in our department and Professor of Pharmacology and Chemical Biology, Physics and Astronomy, and Structural Biology at the University, says that the overarching goal of their research is to understand how the human brain perceives and processes internal and external sensory signals. "These signals include acute and chronic pain signals. We also want to understand how drugs like pain medications and anesthetics alter and manipulate our perception of these signals in the form of either analgesia or loss of consciousness." Projects that Dr. Xu's lab has developed and led include engineering receptors as a new class of drugs for chronic pain treatment; developing new non-opioid analgesics to treat acute and chronic pain; designing new strategies to treat neuronal injuries during and after global cerebral ischemia; and investigating the molecular and cellular mechanisms underlying the actions of low-affinity neurological drugs like general anesthetics and alcohols.



The collaborative team of the Xu and Tang labs. L to R: Drs. Tommy Tillman, Qiang "Charles" Chen, and Yan Xu; Thomas Deakin; Sandy Hirsch; Drs. Raina Rhoades, Pei Tang, Vasyl Bondarenko, and Shoupeng Wei.

One of Drs. Xu and Tang's key accomplishments is their work on human glycine and acetylcholine receptors (GlyRs and nAChRs, respectively). They determined the structure for the full-length transmembrane domain of the human GlyR 10 years ago when structural information for this receptor family was scarce. They further identified the binding site in the transmembrane domain of GlyRs for the major ingredients of marijuana and performed *in silico*, *in vitro*, and *in vivo* screening of potential analgesic drugs that act at the same site but have no or fewer psychoactive side effects. In collaboration with a large group of scientists, their ongoing research efforts have great potential to address the problem of prescription drug dependence and abuse.

Another major accomplishment was their percolation theory of sensory processing (see our [2015 news story](#) to learn more).

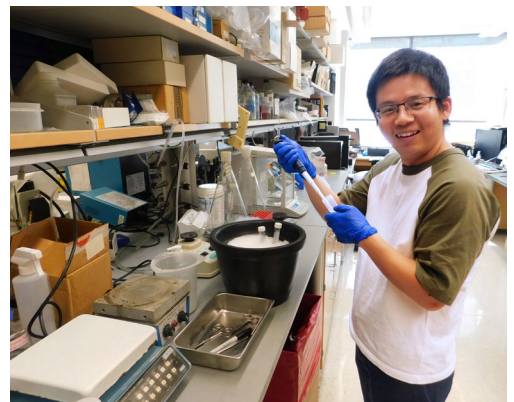
In addition to their groundbreaking bench research and scientific advances, Dr. Xu and Dr. Tang cite training the next generation of leaders as an accomplishment of which they are most proud. Dr. Xu is Director of our postdoctoral National Institutes of Health T32 Program "Research Training in Anesthesiology and Pain Medicine," on which both Dr. Xu and Dr. Tang are mentors. Many of the program's past trainees have stayed with our department, achieved research success, and transitioned into leadership roles.

Drs. Tang and Xu have been pioneers in fostering diversity in science since the beginning of their careers in the 1990s. Both have been committed to training students underrepresented in medicine and research, mentoring students through the QUEST Undergraduate Research Program, the Jean Hamilton Walls Scholars Program, the NIH Diversity Supplement program, and the Pittsburgh Undergraduate Research Diversity Program (PURDiP). These trainees have gone on to successful careers in medicine, pharmacy, and other scientific fields.

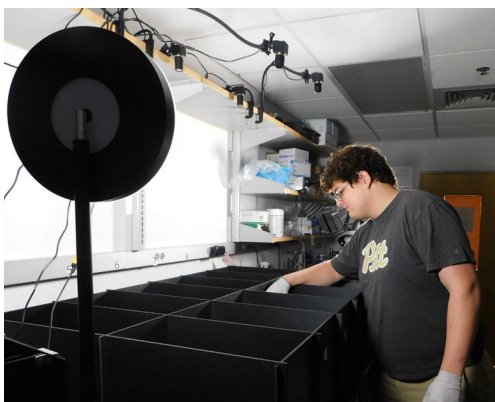
The Tang and Xu labs are currently developing a massive, collaborative project where they will combine their expertise and resources with an experienced team of leaders at Pitt and other institutions to discover and develop novel non-opioid, non-addictive analgesic therapeutics.



T32 Postdoctoral Scholar Raina Rhoades, PhD, preparing slides.



Postdoctoral Associate Shoupeng Wei, PhD, preparing his experimental samples.



Research Specialist Tom Deakin working in the therapeutic testing area.

Clinical Spotlight: Perioperative Echocardiography



Our team, led by Director **Kathirvel Subramaniam, MD, MPH, FASE**, and Associate Director **Michael L. Boisen, MD, FASE**, provides comprehensive perioperative clinical echocardiography services and supports a busy education program for trainees.



Physicians use perioperative echocardiography imaging to see the heart's chambers, valves, and major connecting vessels in the anesthetic management of patients undergoing both cardiac and non-cardiac surgery. Tools include transesophageal echocardiography (TEE), where an imaging probe is passed through the patient's esophagus, and transthoracic echocardiography (TTE), where an imaging probe or transducer is placed on the patient's chest. Point-of-care ultrasonography (POCUS) involves the use of portable ultrasound machines for focused cardiac and non-cardiac (lungs, abdomen, vascular system) exams. POCUS education and clinical practice are promoted by the American Society of Anesthesiologists, the Society for Cardiovascular Anesthesiologists (SCA), and other allied societies. All these tools help physicians establish diagnoses and rescue therapies, investigate and treat hemodynamic instability, and adjust fluids, vasopressors, vasodilators, and medications as needed. These efforts also help the surgical team avoid unnecessary delays and cancellations in the OR and improve patient outcomes.

Our Perioperative Echocardiography Service, led by Drs. Kathirvel Subramaniam and Michael Boisen, is staffed by 25 cardiac anesthesiologists credentialed in perioperative echo serving UPMC Presbyterian, Shadyside, Passavant, and Altoona hospitals. "As cardiac anesthesiologists, we are the leaders of echocardiography at the hospitals," Dr. Subramaniam remarks. While most institutions provide echocardiography coverage for only the intraoperative period, we provide comprehensive echo for the entire perioperative period – including before and after surgery. Our strong comprehensive echo training program for residents, fellows, and faculty is another feature that puts us a cut above similar programs at other health systems.

Every year, the service performs about 2,000-2,500 comprehensive echo studies for cardiac and non-cardiac surgeries. "TEE is not only useful for cardiac surgical patients, but also for patients with trauma, patients with major cardiac disease undergoing non-cardiac surgery, and those undergoing some neurosurgical and vascular surgical procedures," explains Dr. Subramaniam..

Faculty from our program teach workshops and deliver lectures on perioperative echo annually at national conferences such as those of the American Society of Echocardiography (ASE) and SCA. Kimberly Howard-Quijano, MD, MS, FASE, our Associate Vice Chair for Research, Director of Translational Research, and Academic Chief of Cardiac Anesthesiology, is involved at the national level, serving on committees and in leadership roles with the SCA and ASE. Also, we currently have six faculty members (Drs. Ezeldeen Abuelkasem, Ryan Ball, Michael Boisen, Kimberly Howard-Quijano, Joshua Knight, and Kathirvel Subramaniam) who have earned the distinguished FASE (Fellow of the ASE) designation. The FASE peer-review process recognizes dedicated ASE members with an extraordinary commitment to the field of cardiovascular ultrasonography,



ACTA fellow Alessandra Cardi, MD, receiving simulation training in comprehensive TEE in our digital echocardiography laboratory.



Kimberly Howard-Quijano, MD, MS, FASE (center) reviewing echocardiography studies with ACTA fellow Dr. Zach Frabitore (left) and residents Jason Greib, DO, and Elaina Anglin, MD.

designating those with proven professional contributions, a diverse skill set, and knowledge of all aspects of cardiovascular ultrasound.

Our UPMC Perioperative Echocardiography Service is leading the way in training clinicians in our department and all over the world. The service features a digital echocardiography lab, which has evolved over the last five years from just one workstation to four dynamic workstations, a TTE/TEE simulator with a projector and screen, and a full range of post-processing software - QLab, EchoPAC, and TOMTEC. These tools foster education and research, enabling trainees to practice all possible cardiography scenarios as well as the archiving of all echocardiographic studies for a quality improvement program.

Our residency program has a unique, structured two-month or one-month elective rotation in basic TEE to prepare PGY-4 residents for American Board of Anesthesiology examinations. Many residents trained through the program go on to obtain basic TEE certification. Our perioperative echo training program maintains a 100% pass rate in National Board of Echocardiography (NBE) TEE examinations for both residents (basic TEE) and adult cardiothoracic anesthesiology (ACTA) fellows (advanced TEE). Cardiac ultrasound training begins in residents' clinical base year during their inpatient echo rotation in our Center for Perioperative Care. During their PGY-2 year, residents

are introduced to web-based POCUS curriculum and POCUS simulation training, thanks to the tireless efforts of Dr. Boisen, who is also Program Director for our ACTA fellowship and championed incorporating POCUS training into the resident curriculum. PGY-2 residents also receive intensive training in structured focused transthoracic ultrasound during their post-anesthesia care unit rotation; these residents each complete 25 TTE examinations. Residents continue to utilize their focused TTE skills throughout their training for elective and emergency cases.

Our ACTA fellows are required to perform 300 TEE examinations during their fellowship training to qualify for NBE advanced certification in perioperative TEE. We train all our ACTA fellows (four every year) in advanced echo modalities such as 3D echocardiography, tissue Doppler, epiaortic echo, and myocardial deformation imaging. They are also exposed to echocardiography for structural heart disease (device closure of atrial and ventricular septal defects, left atrial appendage occlusion devices, and transcatheter edge-to-edge valve repair and valve replacements).

Our Perioperative Echo Service hosts many interdepartmental conferences and workshops with UPMC's Cardiology, Emergency Medicine, and Critical Care Medicine services to share expertise and training. Focused cardiac and lung ultrasound workshops have been conducted for trainees in our department, as well as biennial "boot camps" for basic TEE board exams that have attracted lecturers and attendees from all over the world. So far, the service has organized two boot camps; the next one is planned for June of 2023.

The service conducts research related to TTE and myocardial deformation imaging; their work has been **published in reputable journals**. Dr. Subramaniam cites the role of comprehensive TTE in the pre-operative evaluation of non-cardiac surgical patients and the role of myocardial strain in perioperative care as some key research findings.

Currently, only a limited number of physicians in our department are trained in advanced transthoracic echo. Dr. Subramaniam strives for all our cardiac anesthesiologists to become credentialed in advanced TTE and advanced TEE. He also aims for all our non-cardiac anesthesiologists to become credentialed in basic TEE and POCUS and strives to produce more national and international leaders in perioperative echo.

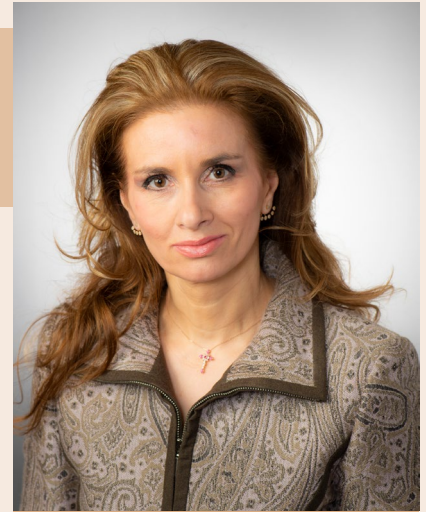


Dr. Subramaniam reviewing cardiac anatomy with ACTA fellow Zach Frabitore, MD

Faculty Profile: Dr. Mihaela Visoiu

Hometown: The village of Trestia in Buzau, Romania

14 years at UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh,
10 years as Director of Acute Pain



Mihaela Visoiu, MD

Associate Professor
Site Director, Division of Acute
Pain and Regional Anesthesia,
UPMC Children's Hospital of
Pittsburgh

Before becoming an anesthesiologist, what was the most unusual or interesting job you ever had?

I attended a nursing high school in Romania before I went to medical school. After graduating from nursing school, I worked as a nurse on the surgical floor. However, well before this, after starting high school, I helped many sick people at home by taking their blood pressures, administering intramuscular and intravenous medications, taking care of wounds, and changing dressings for adults and children with burns who could not go to the hospital.

What inspired you to become an anesthesiologist?

In Romania, there is a combined anesthesiology & critical care medicine (CCM) residency. I chose this residency because I liked caring for sick patients. I like tackling challenges in the operating room, when a patient's life is in the anesthesiology team's hands. Another reason is that anesthesia is a procedural specialty involving the insertion of breathing tubes, placement of venous and arterial lines, and administration of central and peripheral nerve blocks. I enjoy performing hands-on procedures.

What attracted you to pediatric anesthesiology in particular?

During my residency, I realized that I love the challenge of caring for very young and small patients who I can carry in my arms to the operating rooms. Every day can be different, with many kinds of cases, procedures, and patients with a broad range of ages and weights. Pediatric pain management is my passion. I love children's acceptance and nonjudgment. However, the most precious minutes are the ones before putting them to sleep when they listen to my stories and songs and trust me.

Please tell us a bit about your first clinical experience after completing your training.

I clearly remember a couple of challenging cases as a new pediatric anesthesiologist. On my first day, I was assigned to provide anesthesia for eye surgery, and one of the patients experienced a severe laryngospasm in the PACU. In the beginning, I did anesthesia for many ENT cases, and during a typical rigid bronchoscopy, a patient started bleeding profusely from a bronchial vessel. As a new pain attending, I remember the difficulties of convincing the surgeon to let me perform the blocks. Taking care of chronic pain patients was very tough.

Who have been your most significant mentors?

So many people have helped me over the years, and I want to take this opportunity to thank them from the bottom of my heart. Dr. Doreen Soliman is always here for me. Since my fellowship, she has understood the challenges I faced as a foreign anesthesiologist, recognized my ambitions, and helped me to succeed. Soon after finishing my fellowship, Dr. Barbara Brandom invited me to participate in research conducted as part of the North American Malignant Hyperthermia Registry. She never judged me for my lack of research knowledge. She understood my difficulties and taught me how to do every step. After many years, we still share important moments from our lives. Dr. Jacques Chelly noticed my passion for pediatric regional anesthesia and helped me plant and grow this seed. He recognized my struggles in being involved in education and research. He offered me educational opportunities and helped me with my studies. I have always admired Dr. Steven

Orebaugh's passion and immense knowledge of regional anesthesia. I am learning so much from him, especially from his unbelievable modesty. Dr. Tetsuro Sakai helped me find new opportunities to advance my academic career. He guided and helped me through this difficult process. Dr. Senthilkumar Sadhasivam understands my difficulties in doing clinical research. He is committed to supporting my career as a clinical researcher at UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh.

What has been the biggest reward in your career?

In my own career, a big part of my job satisfaction is derived from my role providing acute regional pediatric pain management. I aim to improve the efficacy and safety of regional anesthesia techniques in children, infants, and neonates. In collaboration with the Pitt Bioengineering Department, my biggest reward will be to develop an ultrasound-compatible epidural caudal catheter simulator. This will teach medical providers to place ultrasound-guided single injection caudal blocks and advance caudal epidural catheters at different spinal levels.

What has been the biggest challenge in your career?

When I started as a new attending, I was encouraged to get involved in many research projects. At the time, there was no research support (funding, research coordinator, statistician), and my colleagues had very high expectations of me, even with minimal help. I was a foreigner and did not have much research training and experience. I found this situation extremely challenging.

What advice do you have for aspiring anesthesiologists?

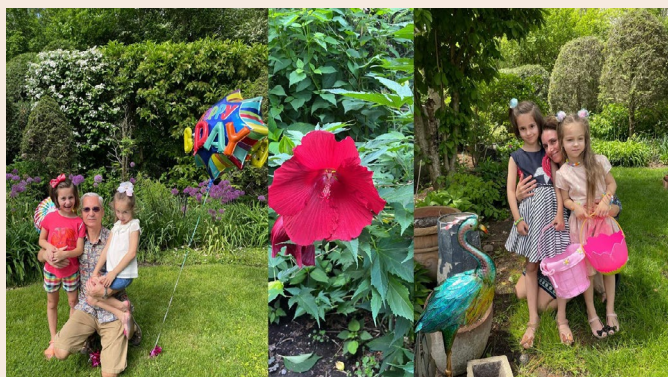
The specialty of anesthesiology is exciting and challenging. It offers many opportunities: performing hands-on procedures, working with patients when they are vulnerable, and developing pain management plans. If you like these challenges and think anesthesiology will make you happier than other specialties, you should consider it.

What has been your proudest non-work accomplishment?

The love of my life is my family: my daughters Silvia (eight years old) and Claudia (six years old), and my husband, Adrian. My husband changed my life completely and has made it so much fuller. I did not speak any English when I met him, and he encouraged and supported me all through my training and career. My girls are my never-ending supply of love and happiness. They boost my energy with their endless smiles and fun.

What might the department be surprised to know about you?

A few weeks ago, Claudia asked me what I would be if I had not become a pediatric anesthesiologist. Before I answered, she said, "a GARDENER." She was correct. I love flowers. I started planting flowers in my garden before we moved into the house. My garden is in bloom from early spring until late fall. My house is full of orchids, tropical flowers, amaryllis, and bonsai trees during the winter. It is hard for me to resist a new flower, and I love to share flowers from my garden.



Dr. Visoiu with the loves of her life: her family and her flowers.



CRNA Profile: Frank Watson

Hometown: Bentleyville, Pennsylvania

23 years at UPMC

CRNA for 17 years, all 17 with our department



Frank Watson, MSN, CRNA
UPMC Network

Before becoming a CRNA, what was the most unusual or interesting job you ever had?

My most unusual job before becoming a CRNA was working as a farm hand. I did a lot of odd jobs like clearing rocks from crop fields, pasteurizing/homogenizing milk on the dairy side of the farm's operations, and occasionally working in the barn to stack bales when it came time to harvest hay. It was definitely a lesson in hard labor.

What inspired you to become a CRNA?

I worked in the neuro intensive care unit at UPMC Presbyterian and would often interact with CRNAs. I admired their didactic and clinical expertise. Their critical thinking, autonomy, and clinical skill set attracted me to the field.

Please tell us a bit about your first clinical experience after completing your training.

Many of my first clinical experiences after training were memorable and intense. I had graduated on a Friday and immediately started working the following Monday. On my first day, we had a patient with a ruptured aortic arch aneurysm who required deep hypothermic arrest. There is nothing like diving right in and using what you were trained to do!

Who have been your most significant mentors?

Many people have influenced me through my career. I have had the pleasure of working with a number of great CRNAs and anesthesiologists. The people I worked with early in my career like Paul Butler, Margaret Lucas, Dr. John Caldwell, and most of the clinicians in the UPMC Presbyterian anesthesia department were excellent mentors that helped me become a CRNA.

What has been the biggest reward in your career?

One of my biggest challenges was stepping away as a full-time provider at UPMC Presbyterian, a place where I spent my career as a nurse and CRNA, to work as a UPMC "network" CRNA. The challenge of working consistently between five to eight different hospitals and being dropped into any OR to provide anesthesia for patients ranging from a 700 gram preemie to a complex adult case was an extremely challenging transition, but a choice I'm happy that I made.

What advice do you have for aspiring CRNAs?

I would advise anyone who aspires to become a CRNA to shadow one of us. It's a great career. Every day I get to use my skills. I use what I have learned. If you have a passion for the sciences (physiology, pharmacology, physics) and enjoy the challenges of critically thinking through a problem set in a team environment, then this job is for you.

What has been your proudest non-work accomplishment?

My proudest non-work accomplishment is being a dad of two kids and a husband to an amazing wife. It may not be a traditional "accomplishment," but it is what I love the most and am most proud of.

What might the department be surprised to know about you?

People may be surprised that I have a musical side. I play the guitar and have some experience with the piano. I made my first public musical appearance playing at a small venue just this past August.

Staff Profile: Carolyn Ferguson

Hometown: Pittsburgh, PA

Working in basic research for 34 years,
all 34 with the Homanics lab in our department

Before working in our department, what was the most unusual or interesting job you ever had?

I've been working at the University of Pittsburgh since graduating college, so my current job is the most interesting job I've had—science is always fascinating! My most unusual (and fun) job was working as a teenager for a summer at Roy Roger's restaurant in the late 70s in Georgetown where my sister was living. I was the "hostess" and wore the whole cowboy outfit: leather boots, short skirt, bandana. The restaurant was right beside a movie theater that had very popular midnight showings of the Rocky Horror Picture Show—enough said!



Carolyn Ferguson
Manager, Laboratory of Dr. Gregg Homanics

What inspired you to work in basic research?

I didn't decide on a science major in college until my junior year, and realized I loved every class I had, even organic chemistry. I knew I wanted to stay in science as a career.

Tell us briefly about your job/role in the dept.

I work as a lab manager in the lab of Dr. Gregg Homanics. I provide scientific and administrative support to all who work in the lab (PIs, students, post-docs, collaborators).

Please tell us a story about something funny that happened at work while you've been in our department.

There used to be an Anesthesiology/CCM lab in what was the Rangos Building on the corner of Fifth and McKee where they worked with pigs. I stopped by one day to pick something up and found the researchers jovially chasing a squealing pig who had escaped. It was a large, open-space lab and the pig gave them a run for their money! It was quite a sight that still makes me laugh.

What has been your proudest professional accomplishment?

Creating numerous genetically-engineered lines of mice that have been studied here at Pitt and by collaborators all over the country.

What has been your proudest personal (non-work) accomplishment?

Raising three very cool kids who are fun to be with! And bicycling from Washington DC to Pittsburgh in four days on a loaded bike at the age of 56.



Carolyn enjoying a day of biking

Who have been your most significant mentors throughout your career and/or life?

Dr. Gregg Homanics for his scientific mentoring, Dr. Melanie Grubisha (Department of Psychiatry) for her health and exercise mentoring, and my mom while she was alive for life mentoring.

Are there any professional or personal skills you're currently working on?

I am always working on better organizational skills in the lab, especially now that the lab is growing. Personally, I am working on bike touring skills.

What might the department be surprised to know about you?

I am a grandma of two sweet, energetic girls and one sweet, energetic 100 lb. doggie.

Drs. Yan Xu and Pei Tang (also researchers in the department) have a daughter who is my eldest daughter's age. We had lab space next to each other when the girls were younger; both girls would come into the lab after school or on days off. We would send them down to the library or museum while we were working. Hard to believe we are all grandparents now!

Did we miss your name or photo?
If so, please email Christine Burr
(heiner@upmc.edu) and let us
know so we can include
you in the next issue
of Nexus!

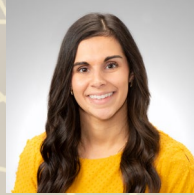
New Team Members



Stephanie Allman, PA-C
Chronic Pain,
UPMC Passavant



Lloyd Barrera Allen, MD
Clinical Assistant
Professor,
UPMC Passavant



Maggie Borrelli, CRNP
Chronic Pain,
UPMC Horizon



Rosalind Butterfield, PhD
Psychologist,
Chronic Pain



Quinn Callihan, MHA
Project Coordinator,
Chronic Pain



Amanda Cheng, DNP
Clinical Research
Nurse Practitioner,
Center for Innovation
in Pain Care



Thomas Deakin, BS
Research
Specialist,
Xu Lab



Alyssa Fazi, MD
Clinical Assistant
Professor,
UPMC Children's
Hospital of Pittsburgh



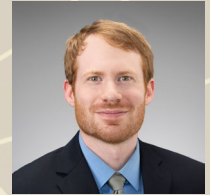
Ed Hughes
Senior Financial
Administrator,
(Post-Award), Research
Administration



Benjamin Kenny, DO
Clinical Assistant
Professor,
UPMC Shadyside
UPMC East



Leslie J. Matthews, MD, PharmD
Assistant Professor,
UPMC Magee-
Womens Hospital
UPMC Children's
Hospital of
Pittsburgh



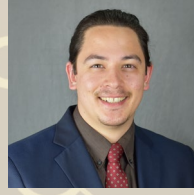
Sean McDermott, MD
Assistant Professor,
Chronic Pain,
UPMC St. Margaret
UPMC Shadyside



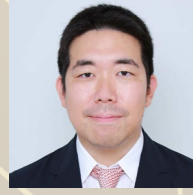
Christopher A. McNulty, MD
Clinical Assistant
Professor,
UPMC St. Margaret



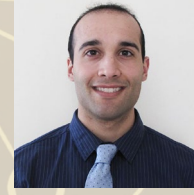
Lydia Moss
Administrative
Supervisor,
UPMC Presbyterian



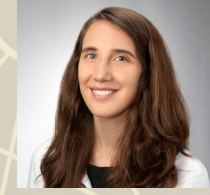
Anh Vinh Nguyen, MD
Clinical Assistant
Professor,
UPMC East



Yuki Otani, MD, PhD
Postdoctoral
Scholar,
Mahajan Lab



Anthony Pannunzio, MD
Clinical Assistant
Professor,
UPMC Mercy



Yolien Peeters
Clinical Data
Analyst Int.,
Scaife Department
Administration



Andrew Phan, MD
Clinical Assistant
Professor,
UPMC Mercy



Raina Rhoades, PhD
T32 Postdoctoral
Scholar,
Xu Lab



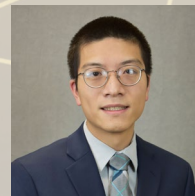
Ryan Schroth
Senior Financial
Administrator,
(Post-Award),
Research
Administration



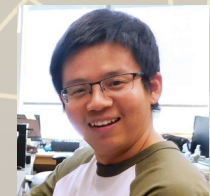
Erin Simonds, PA-C
Chronic Pain,
UPMC Children's
Hospital of
Pittsburgh



Dahlia Townsend, MD
Clinical Assistant
Professor,
UPMC Shadyside



David Wang, MD
Assistant
Professor, UPMC
Shadyside



Shoupeng Wei, PhD
Postdoctoral
Associate,
Xu lab

New Team Members, Not Pictured

Michael DiTommaso, DNAP, CRNA
UPMC Children's Hospital of
Pittsburgh

Donna Koleck, MHS, CRNA
UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital

Jesse Kummer
Director, Research Administration

Michele Lydic, MSN, CRNA
UPMC Jameson

Stephen McClain
Clinical Data Analyst Int., Scaife Department
Administration

Brian O'Connell, MS
Data Scientist, Wasan Lab

Sayumi Otani, MD
Postdoctoral Scholar, Mahajan Lab

David Puccio
Clinical Research Coordinator,
Clinical Research Program

Sripriya Raman, MD, MBA
Project Manager, Wasan Lab

Samuel Seroky
Financial Assistant, Research
Administration

Carley Siedlecki
Clinical Research Coordinator,
Clinical Research Program

Fei Wang
Research Coordinator, Clinical
Research Program



Our Chronic Pain Division welcoming new advanced practice providers (APPs) to their team and thanking the group overall for making a difference in the lives of others. Back row, L to R: Stephanie Allman, Caroline Sedmak, Kristin Koontz, Dane Sink, Nicole Lukaszewicz, Kevin Luong, Front row, L to R: Amy Croushore, Amanda Cheng, Kara Martin, Maggie Borrelli, Missing: Eric Cheponis, Erin Simonds, Erin Haberman

New Leadership Appointments



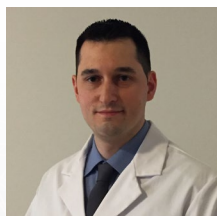
Dale Fleck, MSN, CRNA
Clinical
Director, UPMC
Presbyterian



Rama Joshi, MBBS, MPM
Site Director,
Cardiac
Anesthesiology,
UPMC Shadyside



Jeremy T. Kearns, MD
Interim
Director, Acute
Interventional
Perioperative Pain
Service, UPMC
Shadyside



Luca La Colla, MD
Interim
Director, Acute
Interventional
Perioperative Pain
Service, UPMC
Presbyterian /
Montefiore



Joseph Manilla, MSN, CRNA
Clinical Director,
UPMC Passavant



Amy Monroe, MPH, MBA
Director, Clinical
Research
Operations

RETIREMENTS

Congratulations to all our July 2021 - June 2022 retirees!
Wishing you all a happy and well-deserved retirement!



Sandra Lee Barr, CRNA
UPMC Passavant
39 years with UPMC



Barb Bertges
UPMC St. Margaret



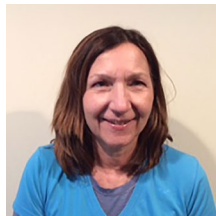
Robert Boretsky, MD
UPMC Shadyside
31 years with UPMC



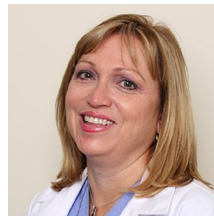
Helen Defranco, CRNA
UPMC Presbyterian
37 years with UPMC



Mary DiBasilio, CRNA
UPMC Shadyside
21 years with UPMC



Susan Favorite, MHS, CRNA
UPMC Magee
5 years with UPMC



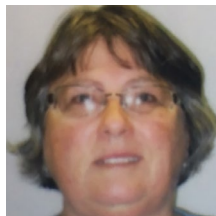
**Lori J. Ferriero-Jakiela,
MS Ed, CRNA**
UPMC East
21 years with UPMC



Elizabeth A. Hoenstine, CRNA
UPMC Altoona
19 years with UPMC



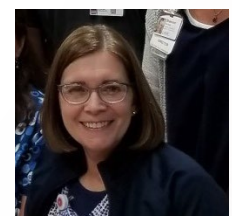
Michael D. Ingram, MD
UPMC Shadyside
36 years with UPMC



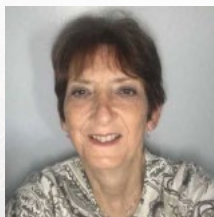
Mary Jo Irvine, CRNA
UPMC Horizon
14 years with UPMC



**Lawrence B. Marr, MD,
MBA, FRCP (C)**
UPMC Shadyside
20 years with UPMC



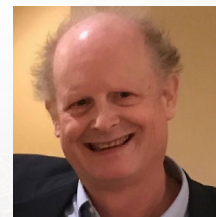
Laura Peduzzi, RN
Chronic Pain -
Monroeville Clinic
37 years with UPMC



Linda Reitz, CRNA
UPMC Horizon
16 years with UPMC



William Simmons, MD
UPMC Shadyside
26 years with Pitt/UPMC



Steven L. Whitehurst, MD
UPMC Presbyterian
32 years with UPMC

not pictured: **Toni Rold-Gerstbrein**, UPMC Presbyterian, 47 years with UPMC

Updates From Our EDI Committee



Kimberly Cantees, MD, MBA
Chairperson,
EDI Committee

Developments from our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee continue to evolve. EDI Framework is our strategy to grow and sustain a more diverse, inclusive, and equitable working and learning environment that improves our department, faculty, and staff, and others whom we serve. The Framework's five pillars are:

- Recruitment
- Professional advancement and retention
- EDI communication and education
- Community outreach and engagement
- Health disparity/inequity education and research

ARE WE AN EQUITABLE, DIVERSE, AND INCLUSIVE DEPARTMENT?

Dr. Kimberly Cantees posed the question, "are we an equitable, diverse, and inclusive department?" in a previous committee meeting. Thoughtful and valuable feedback was collected from our committee members. We would also like to hear thoughts from everyone in the department. Department members – please check your inbox for a survey in the near future. Your input is critical in helping us identify opportunities for further enhancement and action.

UPMC LGBTQIA+ AFFIRMING PROVIDER DESIGNATION

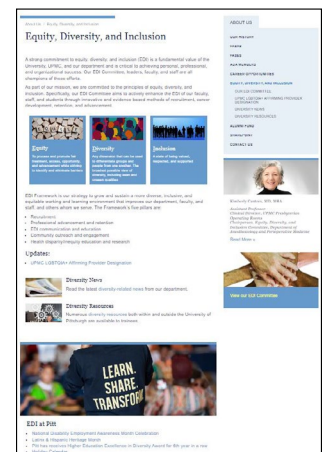
UPMC developed an "LGBTQIA+ Affirming Provider" Designation for patients and family members to more easily identify providers who have been given tools to improve their interpersonal relationships with LGBTQIA+ community members. Please see the update on [our website](#) for more information.

PITT RECEIVES HEED DIVERSITY AWARD

The University received the **2022 Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award (HEED)** from *INSIGHT Into Diversity* magazine, the oldest and largest diversity-focused publication in higher education, for the sixth consecutive year.

NEW EDI WEB PAGE

We recently added an **EDI page** to our department website to share news, resources, and events related to EDI both in our department and at the University. Stay tuned as we continue to build and expand the content on this page.



UPMC Physician Wellbeing Committee



Monica A. Bolland, MD



Phillip Adams, DO, FASA

Our Anesthesiology Physician Wellbeing Committee, led by **Drs. Monica Bolland and Phillip Adams**, is focused on three pillars for our physician team: increasing a feeling of control over their lives, improving their sense of connectedness and comradery, and developing their sense of being part of something meaningful with opportunities for excellence.

Committee successes and ongoing efforts include improving schedule flexibility; continuing growth, learning, and career advancement; recognition of successes; and advocating for social events and expanded event options. These efforts have resulted in new initiatives such as building supplemental shift program (SSP) work into weekend schedules and call-bundling

weeknights; building in scheduled comp days and steady non-clinical days; reducing OR time waste and increasing efficiency; and the **Faculty Fellow Advanced Scholarship Training (FFAST) Career Development Program**.

The committee will implement changes and face new challenges in the upcoming year. Their agenda is currently being built with a focus on the pillars, adding areas of interest and developing additional collaborations. Physicians interested in joining the committee are encouraged to contact **Dr. Bolland** or **Dr. Adams**.

Accolades

CHAIR'S EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Congratulations to the faculty and CRNAs who were selected as recipients of our department's Chair's Excellence Award. These individuals are recognized by our Chair, Dr. Aman Mahajan, and department leaders for going above and beyond in their service to our patients and department. This annual award was established to recognize and honor outstanding contributions by our faculty and CRNAs who exemplify our guiding principles, core values, and embody the attributes outlined by our clinical, research, and educational mission.

These clinicians are recognized as ambassadors of our department's expectations of values and behaviors. They drive excellence in everything they do, achieve ambitions (for themselves and others), enable quality improvements, provide exceptional patient care and support for colleagues, exemplify outstanding service through their work, and exhibit a positive and supportive attitude.

Our Chair's Excellence Award aligns with UPP and our department's select shared values and honors the following faculty and CRNAs for their exceptional contributions in the following areas:

Compassionate Care Award



Brandon L. Beach,
MHS, CRNA
UPMC Altoona



Bryce Bernard, MD
UPMC Mercy



Susan M. Kelly,
MSN, CRNA
UPMC Children's
Hospital of Pittsburgh



Danielle M. Meholic,
DNAP, CRNA
UPMC Magee-
Womens Hospital



Steven L. Orebaugh, MD
UPMC Presbyterian



Daniel Springer, MD
UPMC Children's
Hospital of Pittsburgh

Professionalism Award



Franklyn P. Cladis, MD
UPMC Children's
Hospital of Pittsburgh



Joseph S. DeRenzo, MD
UPMC Magee-
Womens Hospital



Kevin I. Dom,
MSN, CRNA
UPMC Network



**Jennifer Fleegle-
Vitsas,** MSN, CRNA
UPMC Presbyterian

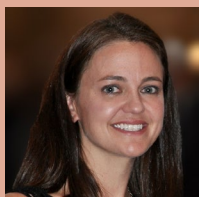


Daniel Sabo, MD
UPMC Shadyside

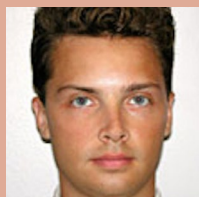


Emily M. Whitco,
MSN, CRNA
UPMC Passavant

Exceptional Service Award

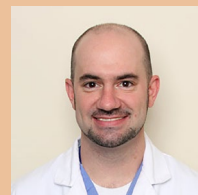


Jamie Artman, MSN,
MBA, CRNA
Scaife Hall, Dept.
Administration



Ivan V. Colaizzi, MD
UPMC Magee-
Womens Hospital

Outstanding Leadership Award



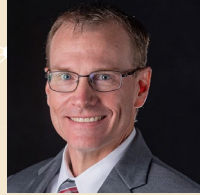
Robert K. Lorah,
MSN, CRNA
UPMC Shadyside



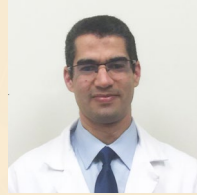
Cynthia M. Wells, MD
UPMC Horizon/
Jameson

Accolades

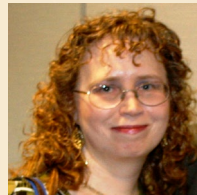
FACULTY



Congratulations to **Erin A. Sullivan, MD, D.ABA, FASA** and **James W. Ibinson, MD, PhD**, who recently achieved faculty rank promotions. Dr. Sullivan was promoted to Professor and Dr. Ibinson was promoted to Associate Professor



Ezeldeen Abuelkasem, MBBCh, MSc, received the distinguished FASE designation (Fellow of the American Society of Echocardiography).

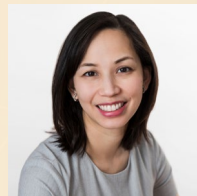


Theresa A. Gelzinis, MD, will serve on the Program Committee for the 43rd Annual Meeting & Scientific Sessions of the International Society for Heart and Lung Transplantation, April 19-22, 2023 in Denver, CO.



Scott A. Brancolini, MD, MPH; William R. McIvor, MD, FASA; and Tetsuro Sakai, MD, PhD, MHA, FASA, were appointed to the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine Academy of Master Educators Mentoring in Medical Education Committee.

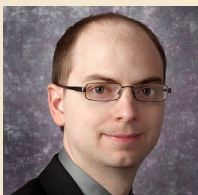
Dr. Sakai was also selected as a member of the Steering Committee of the Live Donor Liver Transplantation Special Interest Groups of the International Liver Transplant Society for a three-year term.



Grace Lim, MD, MS, and her OB & Women's Anesthesiology Research Group were recognized with the Society for Obstetric Anesthesia and Perinatology Frederick P. Zuspan Award.



Charles Lin, MD, joined the Anesthesia Patient Safety Foundation as a member of the Committee on Technology.



Denise Hall-Burton, MD, and Keith M. Vogt, MD, PhD, received the prestigious FASA designation (Fellow of the American Society of Anesthesiologists).



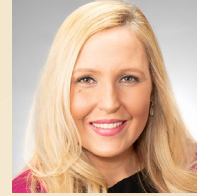
John P. Williams, MD, was appointed Chair of the Council on Medical Education for the American Medical Association.

Accolades

CRNAS



Michael W. Neft, DNP, MHA, CRNA, FNAP, FAANA, FAAN, earned his second doctoral degree - a PhD in Nursing from Duquesne University.



From Top, L to R: Rachel Cellurale, Danielle Meholic, Linda Crippen, Kirsten Radaker, Terri Sluganski, Michael Gumpf, Christina Singleton. Not pictured: Tyler Schultz.



Stephanie A. Willis, MSN, CRNA, and **Robert K. Lorah, MSN, CRNA,** from UPMC Shadyside are working on a multidisciplinary Surgical Safety Workgroup to pilot an expanded, more comprehensive surgical timeout/debriefing to decrease errors and improve communication amongst preoperative staff, the surgical team, the OR staff, and the anesthesiology service.

Our CRNAs are working on some notable Doctor of Nursing (DNP) projects with Pitt student nurse anesthetists (SRNAs):

Lt. Col. Laura Lee Wiggins, DNP, CRNA, (UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital) is working with SRNA **Jackie Willett** on her DNP project that received funding from a Magee medical staff grant. The project focuses on a protocol for ordering, obtaining, and labeling blood samples from the surgical field. The study will determine whether blood typing and screening from the

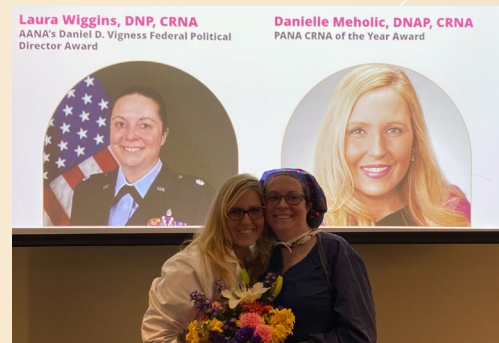


Jackie Willett and Laura Wiggins

surgical field is a feasible alternative for patients from whom it is difficult to obtain a standard venous blood sample. Results of the type and screen of blood obtained from the surgical field will be compared with the type and screen of blood obtained from standard venous puncture to ensure accuracy.

CRNAs from Magee (**Laura Wiggins, Rachel Cellurale, MSN, CRNA; Danielle Meholic, DNAP, CRNA**); UPMC St. Margaret (**Linda Crippen, MSN, CRNA**); and UPMC Mercy (**Kirsten Radaker, MSN, CRNA; Terri Sluganski, CRNA**) worked with SRNAs **Michael Gumpf, Tyler Schultz,** and **Christina Singleton** on a multi-facility, simulation-based research study at WISER to improve providers' knowledge, confidence, and competence in placing ultrasound-guided peripheral intravenous catheters and to establish a sustainable training model. CRNAs trained in these techniques instructed health care providers in a course that encompassed online learning modules and hands-on competency sessions. Michael, Tyler, and Christina successfully defended their DNP projects on this work on August 25 and will present this project at the Pennsylvania Association of Nurse Anesthetists (PANA) Fall Symposium on October 14, 2022.

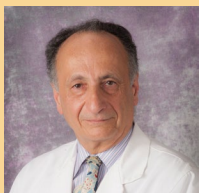
Leadership at UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital organized a luncheon to celebrate our CRNA recipients of state and national awards, **Danielle Meholic** and **Laura Wiggins**. Laura received the Daniel D. Vigness Federal Political Director Award at the American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology Mid-



Year Assembly in Washington, D.C. from April 2-6, 2022, and Danielle received the PANA CRNA of the Year Award on Saturday, April 30, 2022 in Hershey, PA.

Accolades

IN THE PRESS



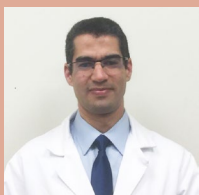
Research by **Jacques E. Chelly, MD, PhD, MBA**, is the topic of a **news release** from the American Association for the Advancement of Science. The study, presented at the European Society of Anaesthesiology and Intensive Care meeting in Milan, Italy, June 4-6, showed that aromatherapy reduced post-surgical opioid use by half in hip replacement patients who were anxious before surgery.



Cheryl Bernstein, MD, and **Ajay D. Wasan, MD, MSc**, were both featured in UPMC Community Matters segments that aired on WPXI-TV Pittsburgh:

- **Dr. Cheryl Bernstein talks about fibromyalgia**
- **Dr. Ajay D. Wasan talks about managing pain**

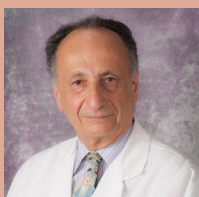
NEW GRANTS



Ezeldeen Abuelkasem, MBBCh, MSc, American Society of Echocardiography (ASE) Foundation Council on Perioperative Echocardiography travel grant to present his work on intraoperative changes in myocardial strain during liver transplantation at the 2022 ASE Annual Scientific Sessions.



Senthil Sadhasivam, MD, MPH, MBA, FASA, U01 grant from the National Center for Advancing Translational Science, "Perioperative Precision Medicine: Translating Science to Clinical Practice to Improve Safety and Efficacy of Opioids in Neonates, Children and Nursing Mothers." Dr. Sadhasivam is also the University of Pittsburgh PI on "Reducing Opioid Use and Adverse Effects through Proactive Precision Pain Management Following Spine Surgery," recently funded by the NIDA to OpalGenix, Inc.



Jacques E. Chelly, MD, PhD, MBA, R01 award, National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), "Reduction of Opioid Requirement Associated with Auriculo-Nerve Stimulation Following Open Surgery."



Sydney Lamerand (lab of Bradley K. Taylor, PhD), F31 award from the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS), "Microglia and S1PR1 Signaling in Multiple Sclerosis-Associated Neuropathic Pain."



Bradley K. Taylor, PhD (PI); Abigail Hellman, PhD; Tyler Nelson; Aman Mahajan, MD, PhD, MBA; and Kimberly Howard-Quijano, MD, MS, FASE, Virginia Kaufman Pain Research Challenge Award, "A Non-Invasive Nasal Spray to Treat Neuropathic Pain." **Check out a video featuring the project on YouTube.**

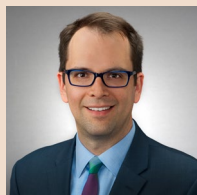


Yan Xu, PhD, NIH/NINDS R01 grant, "Peripheral and Central Pathways of 3 Glycine Receptors as Non-Opioid Molecular Targets to Treat Pain."

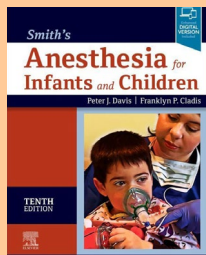
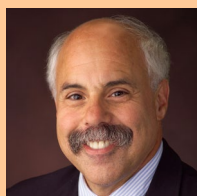
Publications

HIGHLIGHTS

Authors from our department produced **47 publications** from May 1, 2021 - August 31, 2022. Below are some highlights. A list of department publications can be viewed [on PubMed](#).



Benedict Alter, MD, PhD, and **Rebecca P. Seal, PhD**, (Pitt Neurobiology) try to unravel the mysteries of how painkillers work in their article "**How do painkillers actually kill pain? From ibuprofen to fentanyl, it's about meeting the pain where it's at.**" published in *The Conversation*.



The 10th edition of *Smith's Anesthesia for Infants and Children*, edited by **Peter J. Davis, MD**, and **Franklyn P. Cladis, MD**, was published in December 2021. The book, originally written by distinguished pediatric anesthesia pioneer Dr. Robert Smith, is referred to as "the bible" of pediatric anesthesia. The book provides clear, concise guidance on effective perioperative care for all types of pediatric surgery.

The book's renowned expert authors in pediatric anesthesia include our department faculty members Phillip Adams, DO, FASA;

Brian Blasiolo, MD, PhD; Thomas M. Chalifoux, MD; Denise M. Hall-Burton, MD, FAAP, FASA; Andrew Herlich, DMD, MD, FAAP; James W. Ibinson, MD, PhD; Robert Scott Lang, MD; Greg L. McHugh, MD; Etsuro K. Motoyama, MD, FAAP; Alexander D. Praslick, MD; Lieu Tran, MD; and Keith M. Vogt, MD, PhD.

Reviews of the textbook were recently published in the journals *Anesthesiology* and *British Journal of Anesthesia*.



Annals of Internal Medicine published an update on the REGAIN trial ("Regional Versus General Anesthesia for Promoting Independence After Hip Fracture") by a group of the study's investigators, including co-author **Charles B. Luke, MD, MBA, FASAM**. The journal also published an editorial featuring the study. The investigators' initial findings were published in *The New England Journal of Medicine* in October 2021. Other REGAIN study collaborators from our department include Jacques E. Chelly, MD, PhD, MBA (site PI); Shiv K. Goel, MD; Wende A. Goncz, DO, MMM; Touichi Kawabe, MD; Sharad K. Khetarpal, MBBS, MD, FFARCSI; Amy Monroe, MPH, MBA; and Vladislav I. Shick, MD.

- **Pain, Analgesic Use, and Patient Satisfaction With Spinal Versus General Anesthesia for Hip Fracture Surgery: A Randomized Clinical Trial**
- **EDITORIAL: Severe Pain After Hip Fracture Repair in Older Adults: Challenging a Dominant Narrative**

Upcoming Events

GRAND ROUNDS/JOURNAL CLUB, OB GRAND ROUNDS, AND RESEARCH ROUNDS

September 2022 started a new academic year and a new year of presentations for our Grand Rounds/Journal Club, Obstetric Anesthesiology (OB) Grand Rounds, and Research Rounds lecture series. Check out the full schedule in the [Events section](#) of our website.

Grand Rounds/Journal Club are held Thursdays at 5pm. Journal Clubs are held both virtually via Microsoft Teams as well as in person in the LHAS Auditorium in UPMC Montefiore, 7th Floor. Visiting professor/keynote speaker Grand Rounds are held virtually only.

OB & Women's Health Grand Rounds are held monthly on Tuesdays from 6:45-7:45 AM using a hybrid platform - virtually via Microsoft Teams and in person at UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital, Education Room 3415.

Research Rounds are held select Wednesdays in a hybrid format - virtually via Teams and in person (for most lectures - locations announced prior to lectures).

EVENTS CALENDAR



Department of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine

The Department of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine is one of the largest anesthesiology departments in the nation with a long legacy of excellence in research and academics. The department manages approximately 300,000 cases annually at over 20 clinical locations and hosts two residency programs, 10 clinical subspecialty fellowship training programs, and two NIH T32 research training programs.

View our events below by category:

- Grand Rounds / Journal Club
- OB & Women's Health Grand Rounds lectures
- Research Rounds series
- Symposiums and Conferences



PARRC 2023

We will be hosting the **17th Annual Pennsylvania Anesthesiology Resident Research Conference** here in Pittsburgh:

May 13th, 2023, 7:30 am- 5:00 pm
IN PERSON at UPMC Shadyside Herberman
Conference Center, Pittsburgh, PA
Conference Course Director:
Phillip Adams, DO, FASA

Please save the date and check [our website](#) for more details as they become available.



13TH INTERNATIONAL NPY-PYY-PP RESEARCH CONFERENCE 2023

Save the date! We will be hosting the **13th International Neuropeptide Y, Peptide YY, Pancreatic Polypeptide (NPY-PYY-PP) Research Conference** at Posvar Hall, University of Pittsburgh, July 15-18, 2023. Bradley K. Taylor, PhD, will chair the meeting. We expect roughly 100 attendees from around the world. Please check [our website](#) for more details as they become available.

Education News



The virtual 16th Annual Pennsylvania Anesthesiology Resident Research Conference (PARRC) was hosted by the Department of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine at Penn State Health Milton S. Hershey Medical Center on Saturday, May 7. Per tradition, our residents presented a robust volume of their scholarly work. We couldn't have been prouder, given our residents gave 12 of the 38 presentations (six original research, six case reports), second only to the hosting institution (Penn State University - 13, UPMC - 12, Temple - 6, Jefferson - 5, Penn - 2), reflecting all the hard work by our residents and their faculty mentors. Once again, our residents nearly swept all the awards at the meeting. In addition, many of our faculty members participated in the conference as judges - **Tyler Smith, MD**; **Andrea Ibarra, MD, MS**; and **Harikesh Subramanian, MBBS**, as abstract judges and **Phillip Adams, DO, FASA**; **Elizabeth Ungerman, MD**; and **Evan E. Lebovitz, MD, MBA**, as presentation judges. Congratulations to all our residents, judges, and award winners on their tremendous participation!

Our PARRC 2022 Awards

Case Reports - 1st Place Award - **Garret Hillsdon-Smith, MD**: Cor Triatriatum Dexter in an Adult Female with Noncompaction Cardiomyopathy Undergoing Heart Transplantation

Case Reports - 3rd Place Award - **John Yin, MD**: Left Atrial Appendage Occlusion Device Attempt Complicated By Embedment Of Coronary Bypass Graft

Original Research - 2nd Place Award - **Stephen Frabitore, MD**: The Pittsburgh Innovation and Technology Track (PITTrack): An Integrated Innovation Curriculum Addressing Barriers to Physician-Led Innovation

Original Research - 1st Place Award - **Brian Reon, MD, PhD**: Intraoperative Triple Low States are Associated with Post-Operative Delirium

Please see [our website](#) for information about all our participants.

ACTA AND OB FELLOWSHIP MATCH RESULTS

Match results for our Adult Cardiothoracic Anesthesiology (ACTA) and Obstetric Anesthesiology (OB) fellowship programs for academic year 2023-2024 are in! Please visit our website for more information:

- [ACTA Match Results](#)
- [OB Match Results](#)

REFLECTIONS ON A GLOBAL HEALTH FELLOWSHIP IN GHANA

Regional anesthesiology fellow **Niyant Jain, MD**, who completed an American Society of Regional Anesthesia and Pain Medicine Global Health Fellowship Rotation at Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital in Kumasi, Ghana, wrote an article about his experiences in the [June 2022 Global Health SIG Newsletter](#).



Education News

2022 EDUCATIONAL SEED GRANT AWARDED



Congratulations to **Mackenzie Noonan Haase, MD**, and mentor **Steven L. Orebaugh, MD**, whose Educational Seed Grant Proposal entitled "Developing, Implementing, and Testing a VR Simulation to Teach Peripheral Nerve Blockade" was accepted for full funding (\$8,000) for the one-year support period starting July 1, 2022 and ending June 30, 2023.

NEW 3D PRINTER ENHANCES PAIN MEDICINE TRAINING TECHNOLOGY

Sergio Hickey, MD (2021-2022 Pain Medicine Fellow), presented at the Society for Education in Anesthesia meeting in Pittsburgh, PA on innovation curricula in anesthesiology residency programs. Dr. Hickey developed a novel intubation device during his residency and received seed grant funding for a 3D printer



for this work. The 3D printer is now housed within the pain medicine offices for additional innovation use for trainees and faculty.

PITT PAIN INCUBATOR CLUB

The Pitt Pain Incubator Club is an after-work gathering of Pitt trainees, faculty, and students with a like-minded interest in pain medicine and one of the first programs in the nation of its kind. Similar to a journal club, the group is entirely devoted to new medical device development in the pain space. Please [visit our Center for Innovation in Pain Care website](#) for more information. Anyone at Pitt with an interest in pain medicine innovation who wishes to join the club, please reach out to **Trent D. Emerick, MD, MBA, FASA**.

NEW OB CCM FELLOWSHIP PATHWAY ANNOUNCED

Our OB Anesthesiology and Anesthesiology CCM Fellowship Programs have joined forces to offer a two-year enhanced training program for unique candidates who are committed to a lifetime of excellence in the care of critically ill OB patients. One fellowship position in each program will be dedicated to this pathway/track at the discretion of the program directors based on applicant interest. Please visit the [OB CCM Fellowship Pathway page](#) on our website for more information.

RESIDENT BOOK CLUB FUNDS DONATED TO LIGHT OF LIFE



Our residents organized a book club focused on the recently published fiction book *The Stairs on Billy Buck Hill* authored by our faculty member, **Steven L. Orebaugh, MD**. Participating residents, faculty, and staff from our department purchased copies of the book in advance, and Dr. Orebaugh donated proceeds from the book sale to Light of Life, an organization that provides community outreach programs and assists individuals with homelessness, poverty, or addiction. The donated funds will help provide food, shelter, and care to people in need in the community.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR RESIDENT AND FELLOW CLASS OF 2022!

Graduation 2022



On Friday, June 10, 2022, we celebrated the graduation of our Class of 2022 residents and fellows at the University Club. Congratulations to our outstanding graduates, as well as the recipients of the 2021-2022 Outstanding Clinical Resident Awards and Faculty Teaching Awards. Please [visit our website](#) to see the names and photos of the winners.

GRADUATING RESIDENTS

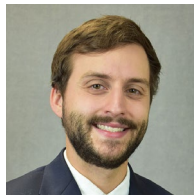
post-graduation plans listed under each name



Samuel Atherton, MD
Anesthesiology
Critical Care
Fellowship, UPMC



Semerjit Bains, MD
Associate Chief Resident
Pediatric Anesthesiology
Fellowship, Boston
Children's



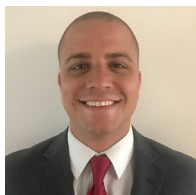
Harris Broad, MD
private practice, Seattle



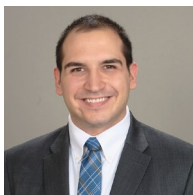
Maria Cohen, MD
private practice,
Pittsburgh



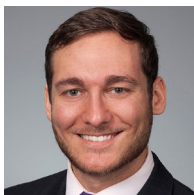
Amanda Deis, MD MS
Associate Chief Resident
Pediatric Anesthesiology
Fellowship, Colorado
Children's Hospital



Zachary Denham, MD
Captain, United States
Air Force



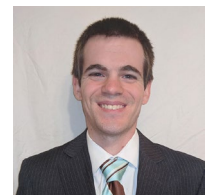
Michael Desciak, MD
Chief Resident
Pain Medicine
Fellowship, UPMC



Zach Frabitore, MD
Adult Cardiothoracic
Anesthesiology
Fellowship, UPMC



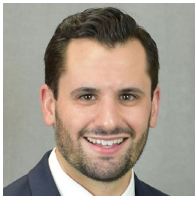
Tyson Gillmen, DO
academic anesthesiology
position, Allegheny
General Hospital,
followed by private
practice anesthesia,
Indiana



Kevin Hansen, MD
private practice,
Wyoming

GRADUATING RESIDENTS

post-graduation plans listed under each name



Ryan Holden, MD
Pain Medicine
Fellowship, UPMC



Francesca Jung, MD
Regional Anesthesiology
Fellowship, UPMC



Vin Nguyen, MD
Faculty, Pitt/UPMC
Anesthesiology



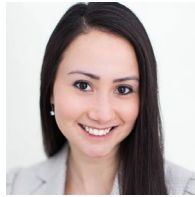
Anthony Pannunzio, MD
Faculty, Pitt/UPMC
Anesthesiology



Elizabeth Pickle, MD
Pediatric
Anesthesiology
Fellowship, UPMC



Lilinete Polsunas, MD
*Pediatrics/Anesthesiology
Combined Resident*
Pediatric Anesthesiology
Fellowship, Stanford
University



Felicia Tulgestke, MD
private practice,
Michigan



Holly Turula, MD
Pediatric Anesthesiology
Fellowship, UPMC



Matt Yin, MD
Regional
Anesthesiology
Fellowship, UPMC



Aamir Zariwala, MD
private practice,
Maryland

GRADUATING FELLOWS

post-graduation plans listed under each name

Adult Cardiothoracic Anesthesiology



Ezeldeen Abuelkasem, MBBCh, MSc
Faculty, Pitt/UPMC
Anesthesiology & Perioperative
Medicine



Samuel J. Goldstein, MD
Anesthesiologist,
Novant Health



Juan N. Rango, MD
Anesthesiologist,
Sparrow Hospital



Chad Spencer, MD
Cardiac Anesthesiologist,
Providence Sacred Heart
Medical Center

Anesthesiology Critical Care Medicine



Alessandra Cardi, MD
Adult Cardiothoracic
Anesthesiology
Fellowship, UPMC



Melissa Giraldo Duque, MD
Adult Cardiothoracic
Anesthesiology
Fellowship, UPMC



Christopher Ogbuah, MD
academic faculty position,
Nova Scotia Health, Cape
Breton Nova Scotia



David Wang, MD
Faculty, Pitt/UPMC
Anesthesiology &
Perioperative Medicine

GRADUATING FELLOWS

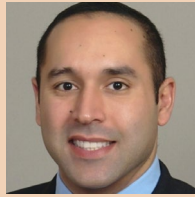
post-graduation plans listed under each name

OB Anesthesiology

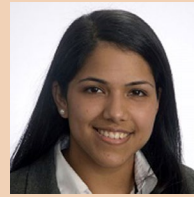


Adam P. Dunmore, MD
Obstetric Anesthesiologist,
Great Lakes Anesthesiology

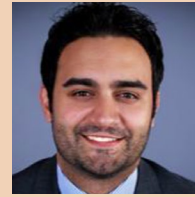
Pain Medicine



Roozbeh A. Ahmadi, MD, MS
Assistant Professor,
University of Texas
Southwestern



Richa Dudek, MD
Pain Physician, St
Luke's University
Health Network



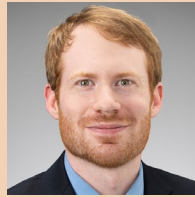
Michael E. Farrell, MD
Interventional
Pain Management
Physician, Erie County
Medical Center



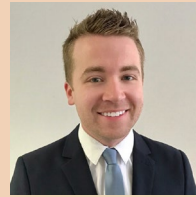
Sergio Hickey, MD
Interventional Pain
Medicine, Bingham
Memorial Hospital



Michael Hur, MD
Pain Physician
Chicagoland Pain
Management



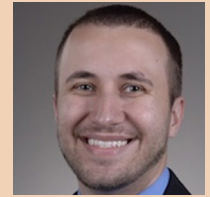
Sean McDermott, MD
Faculty, Pitt/UPMC
Anesthesiology &
Perioperative Medicine



Andrew J. McNicol, MD
Physician, Pain
Management Group



Patrick Polsunas, MD
Physician, Allied Pain
and Spine Institute, San
Jose, CA

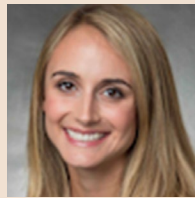


Joseph P. Staszal, MD
Physician, Olean General
Hospital, Bradford
Regional Medical Center

Pediatric Anesthesiology



Bushra Abdul Aleem, MD
Assistant Professor,
Metrohealth Hospitals



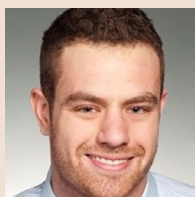
Cristen Cain, MD
Staff Anesthesiologist,
Northside Atlanta



Mark J. Facchin, MD
Anesthesiologist,
Hartford Hospital/
Connecticut Children's
Medical Center



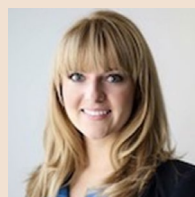
Alyssa Fazi, MD
Faculty, Pitt/UPMC
Anesthesiology &
Perioperative Medicine



Robert Gitman, DO
Pediatric Anesthesiologist,
Long Island Jewish
Medical Center - Cohens
Children's Hospital



Jay K. Kamdar, MD
Pediatric
Anesthesiologist,
AdventHealth Orlando



Adrienne E. Lazer, MD
Academic Pediatric
Anesthesiology



Audesho Shlimun, MD
Anesthesiologist,
Valley Childrens
Hospital

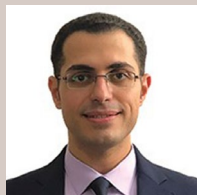


Cameron J. Sutton, MD
General Pediatric
Anesthesiologist, Atrium
Health, Wake Forest
Baptist

GRADUATING FELLOWS

post-graduation plans listed under each name

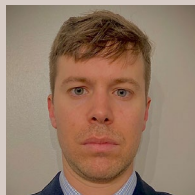
Regional Anesthesiology



Geroges Azer, MD
Pain Medicine
Fellowship, UPMC



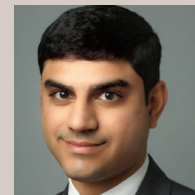
Lloyd Barrera Allen, MD
Faculty, Pitt/UPMC
Anesthesiology &
Perioperative Medicine



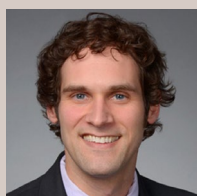
Peter Compton-Craig, MD
Private Practice,
Indiana



Jauhleene Chamu, MD
Case Western Reserve
University



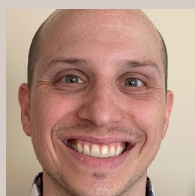
Niyant Jain, MD
Private Practice, Indiana



Paul Johnson, MD
Northwestern
University



George J. Karam, MD
Locum Tenens,
Chicago IL



Benjamin Kenny, DO
Faculty, Pitt/UPMC
Anesthesiology &
Periop. Medicine



Adnan Khan, MD
Locum Tenens,
Lynchburg, VA



**Zahraa
Majeed, MB ChB**
University of Rochester



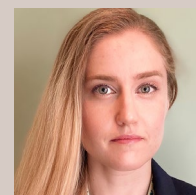
Christopher A. McNulty, MD
Faculty, Pitt/UPMC
Anesthesiology &
Perioperative Medicine



Emmanuel Perez, MD
Hackensack University
Medical Center



Andrew Phan, MD
Faculty, Pitt/UPMC
Anesthesiology &
Perioperative Medicine



Kathryn Ticehurst, MD
Cooper University,
Camden, NJ

Safar Symposium 2022



Top: Tyler Nelson and Heather Allen; Bottom, L to R: Drs. Patrick Kochanek, Geoffrey Ling, Yan Xu, and Aman Mahajan at the 2022 event



SAFAR SYMPOSIUM AND MULTI-DEPARTMENTAL TRAINEES' RESEARCH DAY, UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH, MAY 26-27, 2022

This yearly event honors the late Dr. Peter Safar (former chair of our department) and his wife Eva for their contributions to the scientific community and highlights current research in areas spanning Dr. Safar's interests. The Multi-Departmental Trainees' Research Day is a collaboration between our department, the Departments of Critical Care Medicine, Emergency Medicine, Neurological Surgery, and Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, and WISER. Our trainees contributed 30 abstracts and we had two award winners, both mentees of Bradley Taylor, PhD - first place to **Tyler Nelson** for "Spinal Neuropeptide Y1 Receptor-Expressing Interneurons Represent a Therapeutic Target for the Treatment of Neuropathic Pain" and second place poster award to **Heather Allen, PhD**, for "Parabrachial Neuropeptide Y Y1 Receptors Modulate Neuropathic Pain in Mice."

Geoffrey Ling, MD, PhD, CEO of On Demand Pharmaceuticals, presented the 41st Peter and Eva Safar Annual Lecture in Medical Sciences and Humanities, "Say Yes to a Different Attitude to Help Advance Patient Care."

Read the full story [on our website](#).

Summer Fun

Thank you to all faculty and staff who provided photos!



Submitted by Angela Schultz (Education Office):
The Schultz Family at the UCI Mountain Bike
World Cup at Snowshoe, WV



Submitted by Barb Chismar (Education Office):
Left: Kylemore Abbey, Ireland with daughter
Alexandra; Right: Cliffs of Moher, Ireland with
husband Jake and kids Kyle and Alexandra



Submitted by Mithila Bedekar
(Anesthesia Technician, UPMC
Presbyterian): Her visit to Grand Teton
National Park and its spectacular
landscape



Submitted by Jen Branik (Scaife
Department Administration): Jen and her
family vacationing in Fairbanks, AK



Submitted by Lydia Moss
(UPMC Presbyterian): Lydia and her boyfriend
Mike at the Grand Canyon



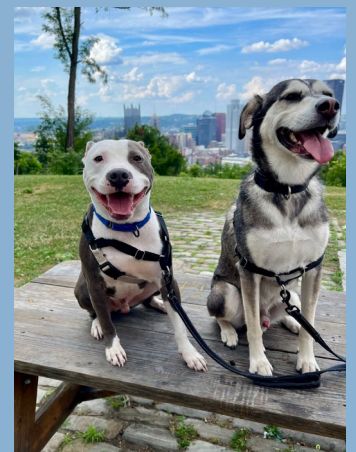
Submitted by Dee Trick (Chronic Pain Division): Top: Dee and her husband Jim in Naples, FL; Bottom: Dee's birthday celebration



Submitted by Britni Kress (Scaife Department Administration): Britni and her husband Dayne at Yellowstone



Submitted by Jennifer Flegle-Vitsas (CRNA, UPMC Presbyterian): Jennifer and her family at the beach



Submitted by Meredith Axe (Scaife Department Administration): Her (now-former) foster dog Blue and her own dog Jack, enjoying a hike in Mt. Washington.



Submitted by Dr. Wende Goncz (UPMC Passavant): Dr. Goncz and her family - three generations - at her son Tyler's college graduation



Submitted by Laura Hollis (Manager, Anesthesia Technicians): Michael & Mila Hollis



Submitted by Amy Monroe (Clinical Research): Amy and her son at the Bubble Run at Hartwood Acres



Submitted by Laura Kridler (CRNA, UPMC St. Margaret). Top: Laura and her husband before "date night at the beach"; Bottom: Family time in Bethany Beach, DE



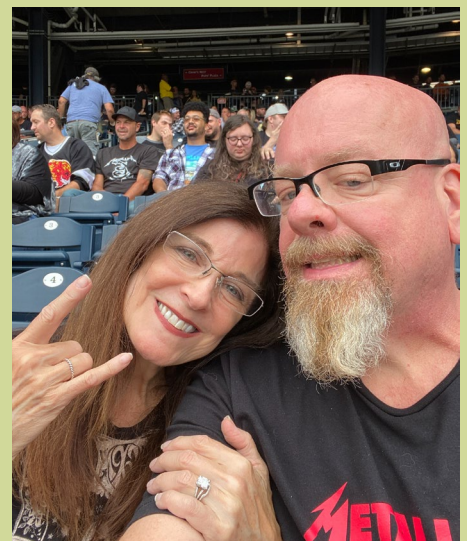
Submitted by Dr. Kristin Ondecko Ligda (UPMC Mercy): Top: CA1 residents with Kona ice truck at party; Right: The Ondecko Ligda Crew in Ruby Falls, TN



Submitted by Leann McDonald (CRNA, UPMC Passavant): UPMC Passavant - McCandless Campus Anesthesia Events. bowling and ax throwing.



Submitted by Dr. Huong-Tram Duran (UPMC Mercy): L to R: Drs. Murat Kaynar, Alfaras-Melainis, Huong-Tram Duran, and Sam Atherton at our 2022 Resident/Fellow Graduation



Submitted by James Kelley (CRNA, UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital): James and his wife at the Metallica concert at PNC Park



Submitted by Shannon Morrissey (Scaife Department Administration): Left: Disney Trip with her nephew, Julian Right: Boating on Smith Mountain Lake in Penhook, VA.



Submitted by Dr. Josh Knight (UPMC Presbyterian): Dr. Knight, his wife, and their three daughters at Chatauga Lake



Submitted by Dr. Zach Frabitore (Adult Cardiothoracic Anesthesiology Fellow): Dr. Frabitore and his wife and kids at Pittsburgh Pirates games.



Submitted by Dr. Zach Frabitore (Adult Cardiothoracic Anesthesiology Fellow): A group of department CRNAs and physicians formed a team to play men's rugby in the Steel City 7s Tournament here in Pittsburgh in June. The team, named "Feel Good Inc.", won the Shield in the Men's Open Division.



Career Opportunities

CLINICAL FACULTY

We are seeking highly motivated physicians and physician researchers with demonstrated track records for excellence and the ability to work with a highly productive team. We offer positions in numerous anesthesiology subspecialties throughout over 20 clinical sites. Our anesthesiologists enjoy exceptional career growth opportunities, stability, and flexible scheduling as part of a financially strong and thriving world-class health system. Our highly competitive compensation and benefits package includes occurrence-based malpractice, an employer-funded retirement plan, health insurance, CME allowance, and more. We are currently recruiting for the following faculty positions.

- Clinical Leadership Positions
- Physician Investigators
- Assistant Professor
- Associate Professor
- Chief Anesthesiologist, UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital
- Cardiac Anesthesiologist, UPMC Altoona
- Acute Pain Physician, UPMC Mercy
- Physicians - various UPMC sites

Please visit "[career opportunities](#)" on our website for full information:

Interested candidates should send their CV via e-mail to the attention of David G. Metro, MD, FASA, and Dr. Aman Mahajan, MD, PhD, MBA, at gallascj@upmc.edu.

CRNAs

We are seeking full-time, part-time, and casual CRNAs at various UPMC facilities/hospitals. Our CRNAs enjoy:

- Market-competitive salaries with newly increased salary ranges and new sign-on bonuses
- A robust CRNA career ladder to support career advancement with compensation increases to recognize expertise and contributions along the way
- Generous paid time off, including PTO advance for experienced CRNAs to support work-life balance
- Site movement incentives to recognize and reward flexibility
- Annual pay increases based on performance to acknowledge professional contributions as a CRNA
- Comprehensive benefits package and retirement options



Scan the QR code to apply today. To connect directly with a member of our recruitment team, please contact Rise' Porter-Wolf at wolfr@upmc.edu or 412-864-2034. For questions regarding CRNA positions, please e-mail Toni Orsino, MBA, CRNA at orsinoa@upmc.edu.

NIH T₃₂ POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS

We are actively recruiting physicians who are committed to both excellence in clinical care and research for an NIH-funded research training program. Most trainees are recruited from anesthesiology residency programs, but individuals from other clinical specialties may be considered if their research interest is focused on problems in anesthesiology and pain medicine. Trainees are expected to spend at least two years in the program and devote a minimum of 80% effort toward their research.

More information on the program and eligibility requirements can be found on our website's [Postdoctoral Research Training page](#). Applications will be accepted until positions are filled.

UPMC positions: EOE. Minority/Female/Vet/Disabled

The University of Pittsburgh is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer and values equality of opportunity, human dignity and diversity, EOE, including disability/vets.

Giving

Please help us continue our tradition of excellence by supporting our department with your tax-deductible gift. Whether you choose to contribute toward our research initiatives, educational programs, or other area of need, your generosity is sincerely appreciated at any level. Philanthropic giving to our department plays an important role in helping us improve the lives of patients throughout Western Pennsylvania and all over the world by giving us more opportunities to train the best and brightest clinicians and discover new and better treatment plans.

How to Give

For information on how to make a contribution to the University of Pittsburgh Department of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine, please contact Laura Latini at Pitt's Division of Philanthropic and Alumni Engagement at 412-398-0786 or LauraLatini@pitt.edu. Types of gifts accepted include:

- gifts of cash, check, or credit card
- gifts of stock
- gifts of other assets
- memorial gifts
- unrestricted gifts
- bequests and planned gifts



To make your gift by check: Checks should be made payable to University of Pittsburgh Physicians. If you wish to give to a specific department initiative or would like your gift to honor or memorialize an individual, please designate this information on the memo line. Please mail checks to Barb Novak Chismar, Department of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine, 3471 Fifth Avenue, Suite 402 Kaufmann Building, Pittsburgh, PA 15213.

To make your gift by credit card: Your gift can be **made online**. If you would like to make a credit card gift to another area, please contact Laura Latini at 412-398-0786 or LauraLatini@pitt.edu.

Honorary or Memorial Gifts

A gift made in honor or memory of an individual is a thoughtful way to recognize the accomplishments of or remember a loved one, friend, or colleague.

Matching Gifts

Your gift may be increased if you work for a company with a matching gift program. Spouse and retiree gifts may also be matched. Contact your company's human resources department to get more information on the options they offer.

Tax Concerns

Your contribution may be tax-deductible. Contributions to the University of Pittsburgh and UPMC are tax-deductible as provided by law. Official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free at 1-800-732-0999. Please consult with your tax advisor before making any contribution or taking any tax deduction.

We gratefully
acknowledge the
generous donations
from **contributors to
the Alumni Fund** on our
website

In Memoriam

Susan Tuck Rooksby, MD

Dr. Susan Rooksby, a pediatric anesthesiologist who worked in our department from 2012 through 2018 at both UPMC Mercy and UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh, passed away on July 17, 2022 after a valiant, decade-long battle with breast cancer. She died peacefully at home surrounded by her loving husband and family, only 12 days shy of what would have been her 41st birthday.

Susan Tuck Rooksby, MD, earned her BA in women's studies at The College of William and Mary and completed her MD and anesthesiology residency at Medical College of Virginia at Virginia Commonwealth University. After completing a pediatric anesthesiology fellowship at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, she joined the faculty of our department. After leaving UPMC in 2018, she moved with her family to Spokane, Washington and worked at Providence Sacred Heart Medical Center until 2021. Dr. Rooksby was a member of the American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA) and the Society of Pediatric Anesthesiologists (SPA) and presented at several ASA and SPA annual meetings.

We convey our deepest sympathy and condolences to Dr. Rooksby's family, friends, and colleagues.

She is survived by her husband Jacob, her daughter Mary, her parents, two sisters, and an extended family who remember her fondly. A funeral was held in Spokane, Washington on Saturday, September 3rd.

Donations may be made to the Susan Tuck Rooksby Memorial Foundation, via Venmo (@SusanRooksbyMemorialFoundation) or by check to 3428 S Lincoln Dr., Spokane, WA 99203.

- **Obituary: Susan Tuck Rooksby**





University of
Pittsburgh®

Department of Anesthesiology
and Perioperative Medicine

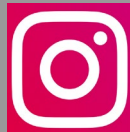
A-1305 Scaife Hall
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