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November 2015

Message From The Chair

It's been nearly a year since my arrival as the new chair for the UA Department of Medicine and I'm happy to introduce you to the inaugural issue of our new e-newsletter, The Pulse. As you can see, it offers a detailed look at a host of activities across our 13 divisions and several affiliated centers and institutes. We are a diverse group of subspecialists in internal medicine with multiple roles as physicians, professors and researchers — providing training and education for our fellows, residents and medical students and compassionate care for the many patients we all serve. We are buoyed by dedicated administrators and support staff in our mission to advance health and wellness through education, research and excellent patient care. This e-newsletter will highlight the progress we make and help provide visual detail to the vision we have for a more vibrant future. Feel free to relay any ideas you may have on items to include in upcoming issues to communications coordinator [David Mogollón](#), 626-1137.



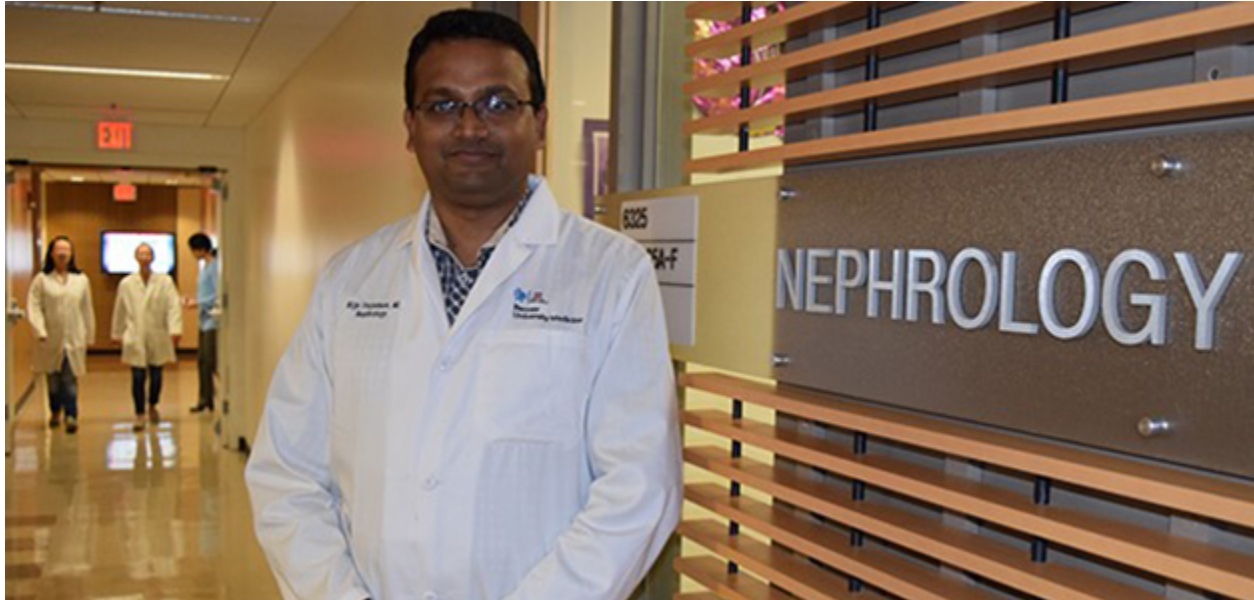
Monica Kraft, MD

Robert & Irene Flinn Professor of Medicine
Chair, Department of Medicine
University of Arizona College of Medicine – Tucson

UPCOMING EVENTS

NOV 4	Arizona Health Sciences Library Open House	NOV 4	Living Healthy With Arthritis: Back Talk - Treating and Preventing Back Pain	NOV 7	Sixth Annual Melanoma Walk
NOV 9	Valley Fever Awareness Week Activities	NOV 19	2015 UACOM-T Faculty Teaching Awards Ceremony	NOV 20	Advances in Aging Lectures: 'Parkinson's Update'

SPOTLIGHTS



He's BUMG Physician No. 1

Cheers to nephrologist **Bijin Thajudeen, MD**, a UA assistant professor of medicine and the first physician in Tucson or Phoenix to sign and return his BUMG Physician Employment Agreement. That makes him the first official member of the Banner – University Medical Group practice plan. He also has been named a Key Clinical Educator in the UA Department of Medicine. His clinical efforts will decrease to accommodate a protected “academic half-day” funded by DOM to mentor residents, teach and serve a key role in the residency program. This past summer, Dr. Thajudeen also took on the medical director role for the DCI dialysis center in Douglas, Ariz., and started a Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) clinic there...



DOM shines at 1st Influential Health & Medical Leader Awards

Several UA Department of Medicine-affiliated faculty members and programs were

recognized at the first Influential Health and Medical Leaders Awards ceremony hosted Sept. 23 by the Tucson Local Media publishing agency. Award winners include:

- Pulmonologist **Fernando Martinez, MD** (*pictured with Arizona Respiratory Center staff at a recent UA Spirit Day event; he's between the "A" and "Bear Down"*), immediate past director of the BIO5 Institute and inaugural director of the recently announced [Asthma and Airway Disease Research Center](#)
- UA Sarver Heart Center cardiologist **Charles Katzenberg, MD**.

Finalists for other awards include: **David Alberts, MD**, UA Cancer Center director emeritus; **Bijan Najafi, PhD**, UA director of the Interdisciplinary Consortium on Advanced Motion Performance (iCAMP) and affiliated with the UA Center on Aging, UA Arthritis Center and UA Cancer Center; and the **UA Center for Integrative Medicine**...

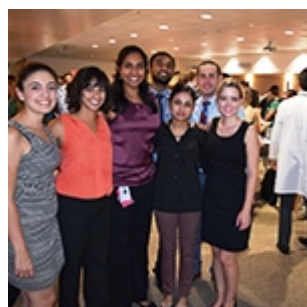


Way to Go, Team!

Congratulations to the three DOM divisions whose specialties won national recognition in the latest **U.S. News & World Report "Best Hospitals" rankings** — **Geriatrics** (38th), **Nephrology** (41st) and **Pulmonology** (49th). Three of the seven specialties rated as "high-performing" at Banner – UMC Tucson also were from our department — Cancer Care, Diabetes & Endocrinology, and Gastroenterology & GI Surgery...

– DOM physicians among nearly 100 to make 'Top Doctors' list

EDUCATION



DOM recruitment season excitement builds

With recruitment season in full swing, applicant interviews with candidates for the Department of Medicine's 11 fellowship programs will wrap up soon and those for our residency programs begin. A big thanks to all faculty and staff who've assisted in putting our best foot forward...

Pictured are UA Internal Medicine Student Association members at a Club Fair event in Kiewit Auditorium in August.

[more](#)

RESEARCH



DoD puts \$75M in wearable electronic health monitors

The FlexTech Alliance, which includes the **UA Center for Integrative Medicine**, was awarded \$75 million by the U.S. Department of Defense to create “flexible hybrid...

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Targeting better quality of life for hemodialysis patients

San Francisco company **Symic Biomedical** won a \$1.5 million NIH Phase II SBIR grant to further develop a therapeutic agent to reduce arteriovenous fistula (AVF) failures in collaboration with UA Nephrology Division Chief **Prabir Roy-Chaudhury, MD, PhD...**

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Some diabetes patients likelier to become amputees

A UA study by the **Southern Arizona Limb Salvage Alliance (SALSA)** found a huge disparity in leg amputations for Type 2 diabetes patients who are low-income or from rural areas, with rural patients 51 percent more likely and low-income patients 21 percent more likely to become amputees...

[more](#)



Device aims to help breathe life into diabetes patients

A **UA Institute for Cellular Transplantation** effort to develop implantable oxygen generators to improve function of implanted insulin-producing islet cells in Type 1 diabetes patients was awarded more than \$3 million in grants and contracts from JDRF and NIH...

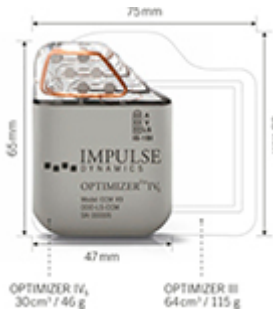
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Cardiac arrest patients sought for Sarver Heart study

The **PEARL Study**, led by Sarver Heart Center Co-director **Karl B. Kern, MD**, seeks to discover whether early heart catheterization improves survival from cardiac arrest even when an ECG doesn't show an obvious heart attack. [Candidates wanted...](#)

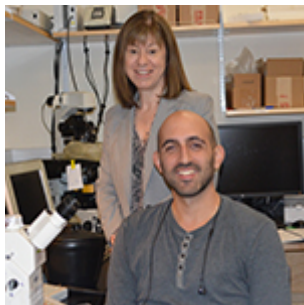
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Recruiting heart failure patients for clinical device study

The Sarver Heart Center's **Peter Ott, MD**, leads a study to evaluate a cardiac contractility modulation (CCM) device, Impulse Dynamics' OPTIMIZER®, for subjects age 18 or older with moderate-to-severe heart failure. [Candidates wanted...](#)

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\$1.77M study looks to keep hearts beating during DCM

The lab of **Carol C. Gregorio, PhD**, in the UA Molecular and Cardiovascular Research Program won a \$1.77 million NIH award for a study on "Deciphering the Role of Lmod2 in Thin Filament Length Regulation and Dilated Cardiomyopathy."

Other Research News...

– Request for Applications, AzaHEC Research and Project Small Grant Program

Look for details soon on a UA Department of Medicine seed grant and bridge funding program.

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IN OTHER NEWS

Cardiology



Sarver Heart Co-director **Karl Kern, MD**, was chosen as vice chair of the American Heart Association National Emergency Cardiovascular Care Committee. He also is on the program for ECCU 2015, Dec. 8-11, in San Diego, where official instructor updates for new cardiac resuscitation guidelines are on the agenda...

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Cardiology



The NIH's National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering recently highlighted UA research from the lab of **Marvin J. Slepian, MD** (*left on left*). A cardiologist who collaborates with bioengineers, Dr. Slepian's research is focused on reducing dangerous blood clots in patients with ventricular assist devices...

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Cardiologist **Jennifer L. Cook, MD**, joined the Sarver Heart Center as associate professor of medicine in the Division of Cardiology, and director of Advanced Heart Failure, Mechanical Circulatory Support and Cardiac Transplantation at Banner – UMC Tucson. She was medical director of the ventricular assist device program at Charleston's Medical University of South Carolina...

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Endocrinology



Director of the Diabetes Program in the UA Division of Endocrinology, **Merri Pendergrass, MD, PhD**, was among presenters Oct. 25 at the grand opening of the Harvard Medical School Center for Global Health Delivery in Dubai. She's particularly excited to meet Paul Farmer, MD, founder of Partners in Health and chair of Harvard's Department of Global Health and Medicine, with whom she'll share the stage...

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A big welcome to **Juan Galvez, MD**, who joins Endocrinology faculty as an assistant professor after completing his fellowship at the UA this summer. Born in Caracas, Venezuela, he moved to Miami at age 10. His medical degree is from Philadelphia's Thomas Jefferson University, where he completed a residency in internal medicine. Dr. Galvez said he's happy to continue serving special needs of the local community, including Spanish speakers...

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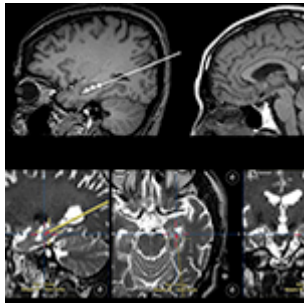
Gastroenterology



Kudos to the multidisciplinary medical team who helped win Banner – UMC Tucson accreditation as an NPF Center for treatment referrals by the National Pancreas Foundation — one of 30 named nationally and the only one in Arizona. The effort was led by **John T. Cunningham, MD** (*center on left*), a professor in the Division of Gastroenterology...

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Geriatrics



The “**Dementia: A Global Challenge**” lecture series will feature four researchers on the cutting edge of research related to cognitive impairment, Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s disease, and aging – beginning with South Korea’s **Duk L. Na, MD**, on Nov. 20...

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Second-year med student **Pooja Rajguru** was awarded the **2015-16 Theodore H. Koff Graduate Scholarship for Studies in Aging**. She also won the Medical Student Training in Aging Research (MSTAR) scholarship, administered by the American Federation for Aging Research and National Institute on Aging...

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The **UA Center on Aging** is among 44 organizations in 29 states that received a three-year, \$2.5 million grant as part of a new Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program announced by HHS Secretary Sylvia M. Burwell during the White House Conference on Aging this summer...

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Hematology and Oncology



Daniel Persky, MD, a leading physician-scientist in lymphoma translational research, is now associate director of clinical investigations and director, Clinical Trials Office at the UA Cancer Center. Dr. Persky will work closely with Center leadership to enhance clinical and translational research efforts...

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Infectious Diseases



The UA Division of Infectious Diseases and its Petersen Clinics partner, Banner – UMC Tucson, were recognized as third best of 142 academic hospitals nationally for research, training, education and excellence in patient care in the treatment of HIV. The **top 3 University HealthSystem Consortium ranking for HIV care** was for 2014. The division also houses the Arizona AIDS Education & Training Center, a statewide program for HIV treatment. Congrats!...

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Integrative Medicine



The Division of Integrative Medicine welcomes new assistant professor and assistant director of the Fellowship in Integrative Medicine, **Ann Marie Chiasson, MD, MPH**. She will speak on “Self Healing with Energy Medicine” at the **11th Annual CHAI Circle Retreat**, hosted by a support group for cancer survivors, Nov. 1 at Canyon Ranch Health Resort...

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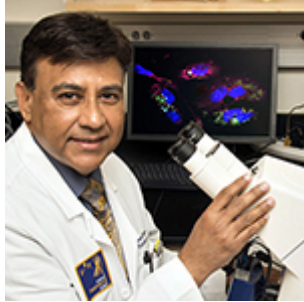
Nephrology



New to UA Nephrology are transplant nephrologist Asjad Sardar, MD, and Division Chair **Prabir Roy-Chaudhury, MD, PhD**. Dr. Roy-Chaudhury (*center on left*) just finished several speaking engagements and industry events in Australia, Japan, Washington, D.C., and Chicago. Next up, the American Society of Nephrology (ASN) annual meeting in San Diego, Nov. 3-8, where he will be joined by other UA nephrologists **Drs. Sardar, Amy Sussman** and **Pradeep Kadambi**, who as an ASN Communications Committee member will do Kidney Week podcasts...

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PACCS



Kenneth S. Ramos, MD, PhD, PharmB, was elected one of 70 new members and 10 international members to the **National Academy of Medicine**. Dr. Ramos is UA Health Sciences' associate vice president for precision health sciences, a professor of medicine in the Division of Pulmonary, Allergy, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine, and director of the MD-PhD Program. You could hear him this summer in a [Science Fiction TV Dinner podcast](#) that explored an episode of "House, M.D." on a boy with cells of two different genomes...

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Joe G.N. "Skip" Garcia, MD, UA senior vice president for health services and an internationally known pulmonary physician-scientist, was elected to the board of the **Association of Academic Health Centers**. He also received the **Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce's La Estrella Award**...

[more](#)



New to the division as assistant professors of medicine are **Cameron Hypes, MD**, and **Safal Shetty, MBBS**. Both recently completed UA fellowships in PACCS at Banner – UMC Tucson, Dr. Hypes in internal and critical care medicine and Dr. Shetty in sleep medicine. Dr. Shetty now works at the Center for Sleep Disorders at Banner – UMC Tucson...

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Also new, **Michael Grandner, PhD, MTR, CBSM, FAASM**, internationally recognized for his studies on the relationship of sleep and sleep-related behaviors on health, joins us from the University of Pennsylvania as a UA assistant professor of psychiatry and director of the Department of Psychiatry's new Sleep and Health Research Program. [His latest work](#) is on sleep and intimate partner violence, published in the *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*...

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Rheumatology



C. Kent Kwoh, MD, Rheumatology division chief and director of the UA Arthritis Center, was named by the University of Arizona Asian American Faculty, Staff and Alumni Association as the recipient of its 2015 Outstanding Faculty Award, to be presented Nov. 7 at the group's 26th annual gala at the Tucson Chinese Cultural Center...

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Recent articles by **Ernest R. Vina, MD**, and **Kent Kwoh, MD**, have been featured in *Lupus Science & Medicine*, *MedPage Today* and *Arthritis & Rheumatology*. Dr. Kwoh also has presented at two events in China and another in California...

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Translational Medicine



While it officially joined the Department of Medicine as its newest division last year, **Translational and Regenerative Medicine** now has a web presence to back it up. Led by **Jason X.-J. Yuan, MD, PhD**, its website became active in late August...

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