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January 2016

Message From The Chair

Happy New Year! It's a fresh start. The slate is clean. Let's choose to write on it bold and ambitious goals to challenge ourselves as we renew our pursuit of excellence over the next 12 months and beyond. There is much to think about and even more to plan. That's true not only with the ongoing transition in the merger and new academic affiliation with Banner – University Medicine, but in our efforts to transform the clinical environment to one more proactively prepared for the future of health care. As **Gordon Carr, MD**, vice chair for clinical affairs in the Department of Medicine, points out, our focuses are:

- Enhancing clinic access
- Increasing transparency about performance
- Optimizing care coordination and staffing models
- Identifying strategic priorities
- Engaging our primary care base, and
- Improving our administrative structure.



We need your input to achieve what we set our sights on accomplishing. We are putting together groups of faculty members to receive input regarding the new outpatient building plans and overall operations for the clinical mission. And for those faculty members who have participated in my **'Coffee with Kraft' breakfasts**, I appreciate all your feedback!

I look forward to a good turnout at Wednesday's DOM Quarterly General Faculty Meeting, 5 p.m., Jan. 6, COM-T, Room 5403, and South Campus Conference Room 3030. I plan to provide highlights of the past year, talk about faculty member accolades and, of course, review the Banner partnership — the major event of 2015. I will also expand on research, teaching and clinical activities.

Monica Kraft, MD

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

SPOTLIGHTS

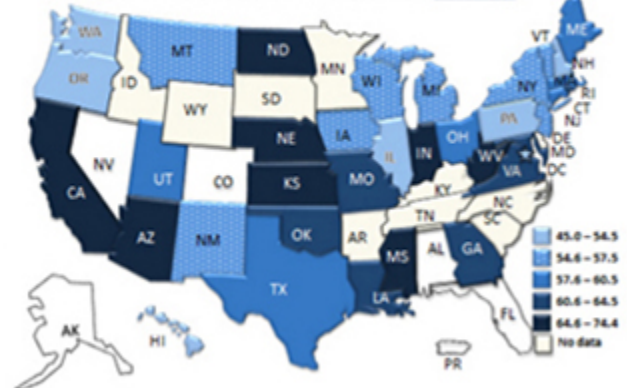
Asthma Severity Among **ADULTS** with Current Asthma

Nearly **65%** of adults with current asthma * have persistent asthma; **35%** have intermittent asthma; [Read More...](#)



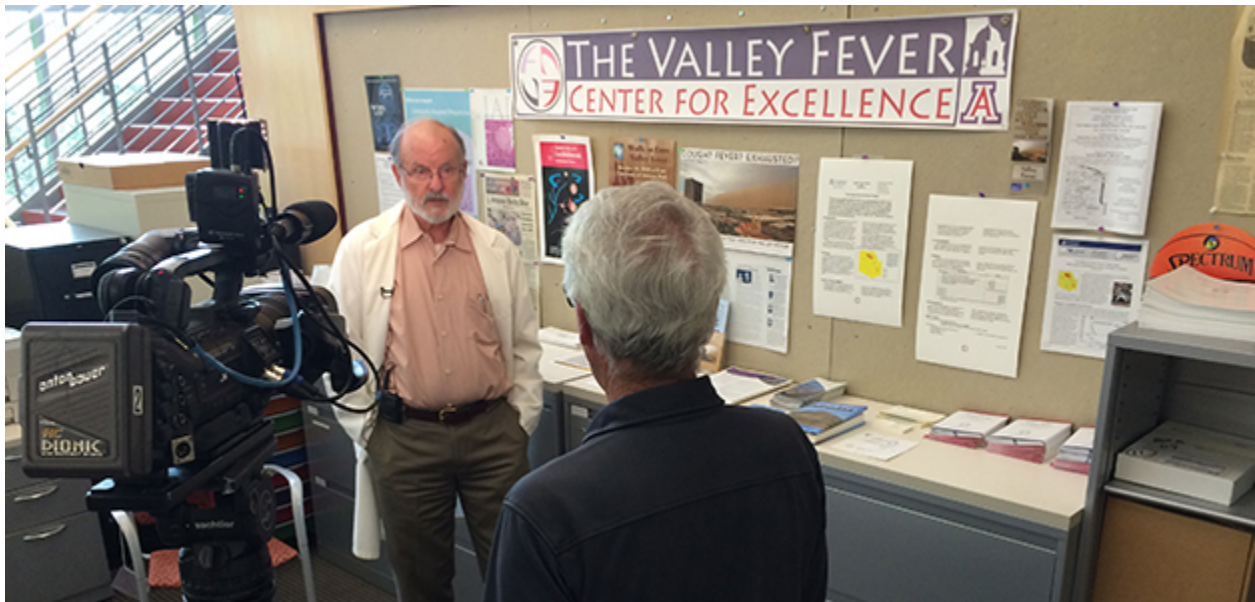
Asthma Severity Among **CHILDREN** with Current Asthma

Nearly **60%** of children with current asthma * have persistent asthma; **40%** have intermittent asthma. [Read more...](#)



Clinical partnership leads to advances in understanding asthma

With asthma trends in the news, a UA researcher and clinician team – **Julie Ledford, PhD**, and **Monica Kraft, MD** – has discovered genetic mutations in a protein, pulmonary surfactant protein A (SP-A), associated with asthma that can affect a person's susceptibility to a variety of lung diseases, and that could lead to new treatments. Their findings were just published in the *Journal of Immunology*...



UA president singles out cardiologist, Valley Fever Center for praise

In a blog post and letter, **UA President Ann Weaver Hart** echoed recent Arizona Board of Regents testimony focused on UA Health Sciences innovative investigators and research accomplishments. She singled out Cardiology's **Marvin Slepian, MD**, and the **UA Valley Fever Center for Excellence**, which just announced an award of \$2 million in NIH funding for clinical trials to start in Tucson in January...



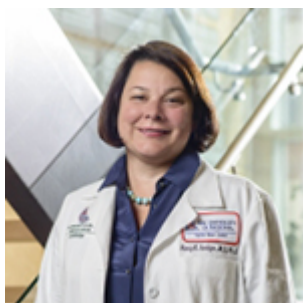
Cure for fat tissue disorders sought in UA alumna's \$1.5M gift

UA computer science graduate **Felicite Daftuar**'s gift serves as seed funding for a new Treatment, Research and Education of Adipose Tissue (TREAT) Program to allow internationally noted endocrinologist **Karen Herbst, MD, PhD**, to improve imaging and phenotyping of fat tissues and develop educational tools to help physicians better recognize, diagnose and treat patients. She'll work closely with the UA Department of Medical Imaging, Lymphology Labs and AZiCATS Biospecimen Initiative...

UPCOMING EVENTS

JAN 6	DOM Quarterly General Faculty Meeting	JAN 8	Cardiology Guest Speaker Series: Stanford's Dr. Joseph Wu	JAN 15	Advances in Aging: Knee or Hip Replacement in Older Adults
JAN 21	AMES: Hot Topics in Medical Education - The 'Flipped' Classroom	JAN 23	Living Healthy With Arthritis Annual Conference	JAN 30	Cellular Therapy & Regenerative Medicine Symposium

RESEARCH



Sweitzer wins \$165K to study heart failure biomarkers

The American Heart Association awarded **Nancy Sweitzer, MD, PhD**, UA Sarver Heart Center director and Division of Cardiology chief, a [Cardiovascular Genome-Phenome Study \(CVGPS\) Discovery Grant](#) for \$165,000 through its new Institute for Precision Cardiovascular Medicine. Her research project looks at predictive biomarkers in heart failure patients...

[more](#)

RESEARCH



Cardiology investigative awards top \$110K for 2014-15

Among Sarver Heart Investigator Award recipients are South campus cardiology and cath lab director **Kwan Lee, MD**; cardiovascular fellow **Jagdesh Kandala, MD**; **Aiden Abidov, MD, PhD**, associate division chief and the C. Leonard Pfeiffer Endowed Chair in Cardiology; and **Kapil Lotun, MD**, director of vascular medicine, structural heart disease, interventional cardiology and the Tucson campus cath lab. The awards, totaling \$114,360, range from \$500 to \$25,000...

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Help strengthen clinical research with this UAHS survey

An important UA Health Sciences initiative this year is to strengthen and expand clinical research programs, said **Chuck Cairns, MD**, interim dean of the UA College of Medicine – Tucson. A census of who's doing what is the first step in structuring a cohesive plan for training, support and infrastructure to expand clinical research at the UA and Banner – UMC. Are you involved in research through any of the UAHS colleges or centers? Please click here for this quick survey...

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EDUCATION



Internal medicine residents get early present, a lounge

The new resident lounge for the UA Department of Medicine opened Dec. 17 to great fanfare, with a ribbon-cutting event and cupcakes. The lounge now makes the program fully ACGME-compliant. **Dr. Monica Kraft** and **Laura Meinke, MD**, Tucson campus residency program director, clipped the big red bow to the cheers of the residents...

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QUALITY



DOM Blog: Had a patient with *C. diff.* lately?

C. diff. infections cause a half million infections and thousands of deaths a year in the United States alone. Learn more about them and a new foundation initiative that offers patient support groups for those coping with this health-care-associated infection, which is the topic for this DOM Blog post from our vice chair for Quality & Safety, **Phil Factor, DO**...

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IN OTHER NEWS

Cardiology



The latest *UA Sarver Heart Center Newsletter* highlights the center's 30th anniversary in 2016, the first cardiology participant in the UA biorepository, new faculty, new TAVR technologies, AHA Scientific Session participation, and speakers and topics for the upcoming Green Valley winter lecture series...

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Marvin J. Slepian, MD, was one of two UA faculty inducted as fellows of the National Academy of Inventors for their work's impact on quality of life, economic development and societal welfare. In 2015, Dr. Slepian helped launch the Arizona Center for Accelerated Biomedical Innovation, became president of the International Society for Mechanical Circulatory Support and was recognized by NIH's biomedical engineering unit...

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Endocrinology



Janet Funk, MD, UA associate professor of medicine and nutritional sciences, won approval to enroll 45 patients for clinical trials in her efforts to crack the code behind turmeric's medicinal potential. Her research team will focus primarily on the South Asian spice's effects on rheumatoid arthritis, but they also have looked at benefits for cancer patients. The NIH-funded study's title – *Curcuma longa* L in Rheumatoid Arthritis (CLaRA) – plays on turmeric's botanical name...

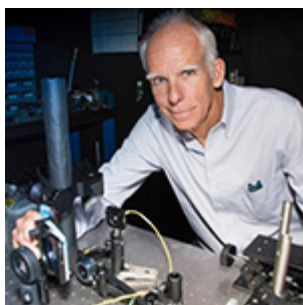
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Hematology and Oncology



Courtney's Courage donated \$40,000 to the UA Steele Children's Research Center for its pediatric cancer research program. It raised the funds through its "17th Annual Tee Up For Tots Golf Tournament" at the Omni Tucson National Resort in August. Funds support research examining novel immunotherapy strategies to treat pediatric cancer...

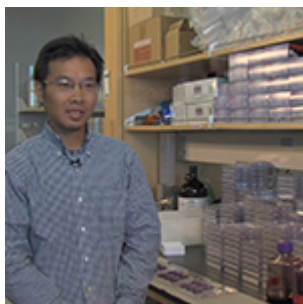
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Art Gmitro, PhD, UA professor of medical imaging and optical sciences, co-director of the UA Cancer Center Imaging Program and head of the UA Department of Biomedical Engineering, is a busy guy. As well as his administrative duties, he's been the PI or co-PI on 10-plus major research projects. Read about the holder of the Margaret E. and Fenton L. Maynard Chair in Breast Cancer Imaging in this profile...

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Infectious Diseases



As much as 20 percent of the U.S. population gets the flu each year, with seasonal flu-related complications accounting for roughly 36,000 deaths and more than 200,000 hospitalizations. These numbers make the NIH-funded work of UA College of Pharmacy assistant professor and BIO5 investigator **Jun Wang, PhD**, important to everyone as he works to develop new, effective treatments for the influenza A virus...

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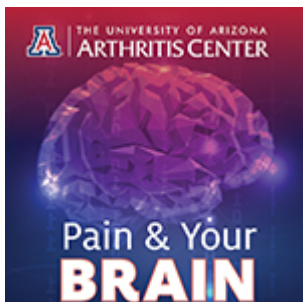
PACCS



The UA Winter Series Lung Conferences features two speakers this month. **Victor Thannickal, MD**, director of the University of Alabama Division of Pulmonary, Allergy & Critical Care Medicine, is our guest speaker Jan. 7. On Jan. 28, we will hear from **John McDyer, MD**, director of the University of Pittsburgh's Lung Transplant Translational Research Program. The series runs through mid-March...

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Rheumatology



Head of UA Neurology **David Labiner, MD**, will provide the keynote to the Living Healthy With Arthritis Conference 2016 on Jan. 23, **Ernest Vina, MD**, talks lupus in *Tucson Lifestyle* article, Stanford Professor **Katie Lorig** delivers the first Eric Gall Endowed Lecture, and a paper by Dr. Vina and UA Arthritis Center Director **Kent Kwoh, MD**, is published on biracial knee-replacement preferences...

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