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November 2016

Message From The Chair

Halloween and the national elections are over, today is Veterans Day and we're headed into the holiday season with a lot of good activity and news from the UA Department of Medicine.

Not only did three of our Pulmonary & Critical Care fellows—**Drs. Huthayfa Ateeli, Naser Mahmoud** and **Muna Omar**—win the National CHEST Competition at the American College of Chest Physicians annual meeting, but South Campus resident **Dr. Jessica August** was named Resident of the Year by the Arizona Chapter of the American College of Physicians. See news items for both below.



Two divisions reintroduced their grand rounds lectures—Endocrinology (in September) and Nephrology (starting in January), Cardiology renamed its grand rounds in honor of the Sarver Heart Center and launched a new lecture series for the center's 30th anniversary as well as the Andra Heart Speaker Series with Banner – UMC, and Geriatrics moved its grand rounds (known as “Advances in Aging” lectures) back to main campus in August.

In addition, the DOM Research Seminar Series has been well-received—feed them and they will come—and continues to highlight innovative work done by our senior and junior faculty investigators. In the fourth lecture, Dec. 8, look for **Drs. Larry Mandarino** and **Cristine Berry** to present on: “The Origins of Insulin Resistance and Type 2 Diabetes” and “Characterizing Lung Function Trajectories in the Tucson Children's Respiratory Study.” Remember on Jan. 12, these move from COM 8403 to 5403.

And we plan on hosting a “**PI Poster Session**” on Tuesday, Jan. 17, 5:30-7:30 p.m. in Kiewit Auditorium—**SAVE THE DATE!**—to highlight collaborative research opportunities with senior faculty for fellows, residents and medical students. Yes, there will be food.

For those keeping track, I'd also like to point out our department is on a nearly record pace for research awards, particularly if including those for cardiology and hematology/oncology. In the most recent UA Health Sciences report for [August-September](#), our faculty are responsible for 30 awards valued at nearly \$17.2 million.

The top award totals went to **Drs. Olga Rafikova** and **Ruslan Rafikov** for \$3.84 million, **Dr. Daruka Mahadevan** for \$2.37 million, **Dr. Lolu Ojo** for \$2.23 million, **Dr. Larry Mandarin** for \$2.1 million, **Drs. Erik Knudsen** and **Agnes Witkiewicz** for \$1.89 million, and **Drs. Steffan Nawrocki** and **Jennifer Carew** for \$1.7 million. Also notable are three awards each for **Dr. Prabir Roy-Chaudhury** for nearly \$1.5 million and **Dr. Dominick Sudano** for \$1 million. Both also landed sizable awards in June-July, Dr. Sudano for \$1.9 million and Dr. Roy-Chaudhury for \$1.16 million. If you haven't seen one already, look for news items on them soon.

With these and other significant research awards throughout the past year, I anticipate conservatively that our place in the [Blue Ridge NIH funding rankings](#) will jump from the low-40s to the low-30s for 2016. Congratulations all!

Lastly, with the year coming to a close and folks typically in search of charitable giving to lower their tax burdens, I recommend a donation to the department's **Bressler-Alpert Society Travel Assistance Fund**. Since its creation in 2012, this fund has enabled [more than 30 of our fellows and residents](#) to travel to present their research at conferences, seminars and workshops from Honolulu to Munich, Germany. We've created [a new web section](#) on our website where you can not only renew or join as members, but where you can also contribute to this worthy cause that enhances our academic, research and clinical missions. See **"Ways to Give"** in the upper right of our homepage to learn more.



Have a Happy Thanksgiving and I look forward to seeing you all at our upcoming seasonal gatherings next month.

Monica Kraft, MD

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

NOV 14	Advances in Aging: Alzheimer's Primary Care Engagement Campaign	NOV 14	State of the UA Health Sciences with Joe G.N. 'Skip' Garcia, MD	NOV 15	UA Cancer Center Open House: Lung Cancer Awareness, Treatment
NOV 16	21st Annual Farness Lecture: 'Valley Fever in Transplantation'	NOV 16	Petersen Clinics Meet-Your-Pharmacist Event: Antiretroviral Side Effects	NOV 16	Sarver 30th Anniversary Lectures: 'Beating Your Odds Against Stroke' with Bruce Coull, MD
NOV 17	Founders Day Lecture with Arthur F. Gmitro, PhD	NOV 19	Living Healthy with Arthritis: Fitness on the Go!	DEC 3	2016 Jingle Bell Run for Arthritis

SPOTLIGHTS



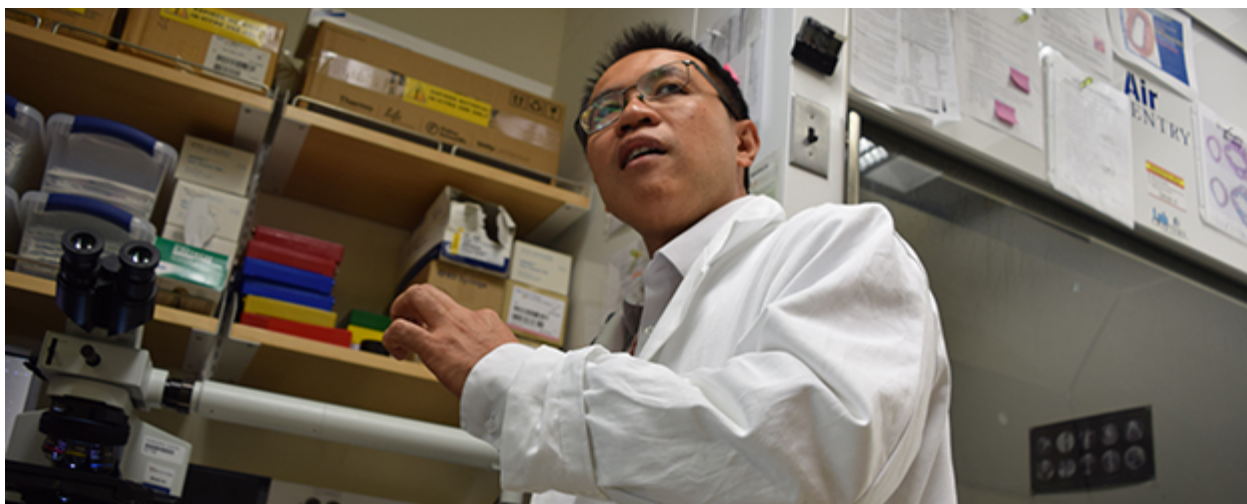
Pulmonary Docs Thrilled with CMS Certification for Lung Transplant Program

Drs. Monica Kraft, department chair, and **Ken Knox**, pulmonary chief, congratulated the collaborative, multidisciplinary effort of physicians from Tucson and Phoenix required for this milestone. Our seventeenth lung patient was recently transplanted with two more on the waiting list. A patient from Yuma (*pictured here courtesy of the Arizona Daily Star*) received a double lung transplant in March and is now a freshman at the UA. It underscores the value of teamwork in academic medicine, they said...



UA Pulmonary Fellows Win Big at National CHEST Challenge Competition

Drs. Huthayfa Ateeli, **Naser Mahmoud** and **Muna Omar**—fellows in the UA Pulmonary & Critical Care Fellowship Program—took the top trophy in a medical knowledge contest at CHEST 2016, the American College of Chest Physicians' annual conference. "All three showed poise and smarts," program director **Dr. Jim Knepler** said. They doubled their closest competitor's score at the Oct. 25 Los Angeles event...



Thai Physician Ends Nephrology Visiting Scholar Tour in Mourning for King

Dr. Sukit “Kob” Rukasuk, a visiting scholar to the UA Division of Nephrology from Thailand, takes home happy and sad memories. He’s learned a lot about advanced kidney care, vascular access and research methodologies—traveled from the Grand Canyon to Colorado ski slopes to Times Square and Harvard Yard—but the king of Thailand’s Oct. 13 death makes going home bittersweet...

RESEARCH



UANews Spotlights Research on Cancer, Disparities, Infectious Diseases, Strokes, Cognition & More

Articles spotlight recent health research, including several advances by interdisciplinary teams at the UA Cancer Center. Among topics: How supercomputers crunching big data could improve cancer diagnostics, **Dr. Jennifer Barton** and a \$1.3 million NIH grant to develop a novel tool to identify early signs of ovarian cancer, and a UA study led by **Dr. Peter Lance** questions the safety of selenium as a nutritional supplement...

[more](#)

EDUCATION



DOM Faculty Repeat as Winners in the 37th Annual College of Medicine – Tucson Teaching Awards

Drs. John Bloom and **Amy Sussman** were the big winners again from the Department of Medicine at the University of Arizona College of Medicine – Tucson Faculty Teaching Awards Ceremony held Nov. 3 in DuVal Auditorium. Both were repeat winners from last year, joined by **Drs. Diana Darnell** and **Brandon Larsen**, for the Cardiovascular, Pulmonary & Renal Systems Block of medical student education...

[more](#)

EDUCATION



ACP Picks South Campus Doc as Resident of Year
Dr. Jessica August, a third-year in the South Campus Internal Medicine Residency Program, was among two recognized with this year's top Arizona resident award at Governor's Dinner preceding the Arizona Chapter Scientific Meeting of the American College of Physicians, Nov. 4-6, hosted by Arizona State University. UA residents swept last year's competition...

[more](#)

FACULTY



DOM Physicians Lauded as 'Health & Medical Leaders'
Drs. Karl Kern, Andrew Kraft and Peter Ott were recognized at a gala Sept. 28 at Casino del Sol honoring Southern Arizona Influential Health and Medical Leaders that also named Banner – University Medicine the Outstanding Large Healthcare Organization of the year. Honored too were Dermatology's **Dr. Gerald Goldberg** and the Stephen M. Gootter Foundation...

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Special Veterans Day Grand Rounds Theme Recognizes Physician Who Served

Dr. Dean Winslow, a U.S. Air Force flight surgeon and current Stanford professor, gave a moving presentation for Nov. 9's Medicine Grand Rounds lecture titled, "From Bagram Airfield to Baghdad and Back Again—A U.S. Military Doctor's Experience in Two Wars." Several faculty raised their hands in a call to the audience for fellow veterans. Frequently teary-eyed and occasionally humorous and irreverent, he drew them to their feet for a standing ovation. Watch the archived video...

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IN OTHER NEWS

Cardiology



Banner – UMC Tucson and the Andra Heart Foundation hosted Sudden Arrhythmia Death Syndromes Foundation president and Mayo heart specialist **Dr. Michael Ackerman** for a free, public talk about sudden cardiac death in the young at Tucson's Fox Theater on Thursday evening, Nov. 3. He also provided a **Cardiology Grand Rounds** address at the UA Sarver Heart Center earlier that afternoon...

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Endocrinology



Dr. David G. Marrero, an expert in the field of clinical trials in type 2 diabetes and translational research, has been appointed director of the newly established UA Health Sciences Center for Border Health. His research has focused on medication adherence, community health programs, early diabetes intervention and translational medicine...

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An associate editor of the *American Journal of Physical Anthropology*, **Dr. David Raichlen**, a research scientist from the UA School of Anthropology, providing an entertaining, historical view on, “An Evolutionary Medicine Perspective on Physical Activity and Inactivity,” at the Endocrinology Grand Rounds, Tuesday, Nov. 8...

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More than two dozen strong, the UA/Banner team took second place in fundraising at the 2016 Step Out Walk to Stop Diabetes at Rillito Park Race Track on Oct. 30. Among walkers were Arizona Nutrition Network's **Kinsey Torbet**, **Jeanne Fenn, NP**, UA Adult Diabetes Program Medical Director **Dr. Merri Pendergrass**, and DPEC Program Coordinator **Rosi Vogel**. You can still help them reach their \$1,000 goal...

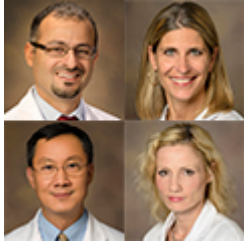
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With November being American Diabetes Awareness Month, the Diabetes Prevention and Education Center is offering free rubber wristbands to folks who attend its workshops this month. Those who go to six or more by the end of the year can win a \$100 gift card, too. DPEC is affiliated with the Banner – University Medical Group diabetes clinic at the Abrams Public Health Center adjacent to Banner – UMC South...

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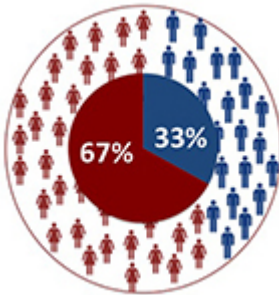
Gastroenterology



“Pancreatic & Liver Cancer Awareness” was the theme of the UA Cancer Center Open House, Thursday, Oct. 27, billed as a Community Education Event by organizers within the UA Cancer Center Gastrointestinal Oncology Team. Several groups—including the American Liver Foundation, Pancreatic Cancer Action Network, American Cancer Society, etc.—also provided information about additional resources available to patients and their families in the community...

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Geriatrics



A team led by **Dr. Roberta Diaz Brinton**, UAHS Center for Innovation in Brain Science inaugural director, won a five-year, \$10.3 million grant from the NIH’s National Institute on Aging to help unlock the mystery of Alzheimer’s in women. The number of women affected by this neurodegenerative brain disease is staggering. Of 5 million Americans of all ages with Alzheimer’s disease in 2016, 3 million are women. By age 65, women have a 1 in 6 chance of developing it, compared to 1 in 11 for men...

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Hematology and Oncology



Dr. Dean W. Felsher, of Stanford Medicine, will be the University of Arizona Cancer Center’s keynote speaker at the Third Annual UACC Spring Scientific Retreat. Proposed abstracts are now being accepted for consideration for presentation at the retreat, which will be held April 21, 2017. The deadline for submissions is Tuesday, Dec. 20...

[more](#)



Susan G. Komen, the Milburn Foundation, and Inflammatory Breast Cancer Research Foundation have entered into a groundbreaking partnership to provide a unique funding opportunity addressing key needs in this understudied form of breast cancer. Up to \$60,000 is available for research projects for one year. Applications are due Nov. 28...

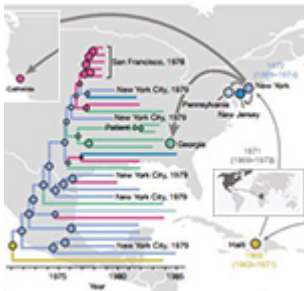
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Infectious Diseases



Although rarely fatal, Valley Fever—a fungal disease that affects largely the lungs—can prove debilitating to people and their pets. Now, a breakthrough—published in August in the journal *Infection & Immunity*—by a UA team in development of a vaccine, highlights work being done that has drawn in specialists in infectious diseases, pulmonary, agriculture and plant sciences (including **Dr. Marc Orbach**) to find a cure...

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A new technique that allowed researchers from the University of Arizona and Cambridge University to analyze genetic material from serum samples of HIV patients taken before AIDS was known provides a glimpse into the beginnings of the epidemic. Media outlets worldwide have picked up on the revelation that its spread began way before “Patient Zero”...

[more](#)



UA infectious diseases researchers led by **Dr. Stephen Klotz** and **Shannon Smith** have begun a project to address concerns in the city of Bisbee, 90 miles southeast of Tucson, about kissing bugs, whose bite can trigger an allergic reaction and also transmit Chagas disease—which can cause swelling and fever and, left untreated, can lead to congestive heart failure. Here is what they've found so far...

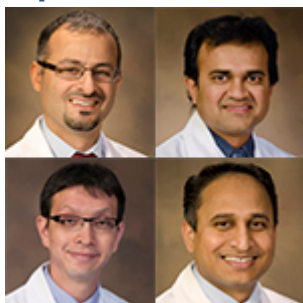
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The U.S. House majority leader and a Phoenix Congressman convene a press conference at Banner – UMC Phoenix to underscore Valley Fever's health impact in the Southwest. In other news: Valley Fever Center for Excellence gets a \$300,000 grant, **Dr. John Galgiani** appears Oct. 27 on Animal Planet, Farness Lecture speaker from Mayo Clinic, and two papers emphasize UA research on vaccine, mortality studies...

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Inpatient Medicine



UA Department of Medicine physician-faculty **Drs. Emad Elquza, Pradeep Kadambi, Kwan Lee and Tejo Vemulapalli**, chief, Division of Inpatient Medicine, were among 60 new graduates of Banner Health's 2016 Advanced Leadership Program for Physicians. Two dozen providers from Banner – University Medical Group participated in effort to cultivate next generation of Banner leaders...

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PACCS



The new Neuro ICU at Banner – UMC Tucson reopened in Unit 5W on Oct. 1 with **Dr. Sankalp Gokhale**, recently recruited from UT Southwestern in Dallas, heading the unit as medical director. He completed his internal medicine residency at Brown, a neurology residency at Beth Israel Deaconess, and a neurocritical care fellowship at Duke. Please welcome him to our team...

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Rheumatology



UA Arthritis Center faculty **Drs. Kent Kwoh, Eric Gall and Dan Latt** led the program at Canyon Ranch Health Resort Tucson's "Spotlight on Arthritis" week lectures. In addition, an article by Dr. Kwoh, **Dr. Ernest Vina, Erin Ashbeck and Di Ran** on reasons behind disparities in knee replacement surgery ran in the journal of the American College of Rheumatology; and Dr. Kwoh was an invited speaker at an orthopedic conference in Xi'an, China...

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More Headlines...

[UA Cancer Center Joins National Clinical Trials Network](#)

['Beating Odds Against Stroke' Next in Sarver Anniversary Lectures, Nov. 16](#)

[Banner Health Helping Veterans in Tucson with 'Hiring Our Heroes' Program](#)

[Arthritis Lecture Gives 'A Spine Surgeon's Inside Look at Healing Back Pain'](#)

UA Scientist Wins \$1.7M NIH Grant to Look at Epigenetics in Cancer

Oncology Surgeon Dr. William Cance to Lead UA Cancer Center in Phoenix

Skin Cancer Institute Sponsors 7th Annual Melanoma Walk, Nov. 5

Dr. Frank Porreca Honored by International Association for Study of Pain

BRA Day Folks Get Free Copy of Dr. Neumayer's 'Biography of a Breast'



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