Message From The Chair

The start to any academic year is always full of the promise of fresh faces among medical students, residents, fellows and faculty. I see many new faculty faces already in 2018-19 as we acknowledged at our June 25 DOM General Faculty Meeting. A list of new hires for the first half of the calendar year was included in the slideshow with “Accolades and Awards” and “Research Achievements” (see links to the slideshow, photos and video in a related Faculty news item below) presented at the meeting.

We got to hear also from new Banner – University Medicine Division President Larry Goldberg on his vision for the future of Banner Health's academic division, our primary clinical partner. On June 6, we heard another vision from new UA Senior VP for Health Sciences Dr. Michael Dake (pictured left - click image for more photos) at a reception hosted by UA President Dr. Robert Robbins in the new BioSciences Research Laboratory. On June 29, Dr. Dake announced that noted cardiothoracic surgeon and former University of Virginia surgery chair Dr. Irving Kron would start July 9 as interim executive dean for the UA College of Medicine – Tucson. Both Dr. Dake and Dr. Kron are set to attend our next General Faculty Meeting on Monday, Oct. 15, in Room 5403. Look for an invitation by email.

More calendar items for you to “save the date” for include Aug. 8 (the return of Medicine Grand Rounds* from their summer hiatus with cardiologist Dr. Khadijah Breathett), Sept. 12 (the Third Annual DOM Fellows Retreat led by Dr. Jil Tardiff, our associate chair for research) and Sept. 28 (the Fourth Annual UA Cancer Center Scientific Retreat). Look too for more coming your way on a Banner Health-sponsored community physician CME event in late October and a new fall 2018 “Doc Talks” lecture series (to match the winter one) hosted by Banner Health and the UA College of Medicine – Tucson. Lastly, please save Friday, Dec. 7, 6-9 p.m., for our Faculty Year End Event. It will take place at my home this year, so I hope you can make it!
We’re gearing up also for an excellent recruiting season that reflects progress we’ve made in improving and expanding our programs, with interviews starting soon for fellowship matches announced near the New Year. So, get ready and BEAR DOWN!

* We hope to have a conference room at Banner – University Medicine North to view Medicine Grand Rounds for those whose clinical schedules don’t allow a trek to Main Campus.

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

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SPOTLIGHTS

National Expert on Colon Cancer Begins as Gastroenterology Chief

Dr. Juanita L. Merchant, a renowned physician-scientist who has made paradigm-shifting contributions to the understanding of gastric response to chronic inflammation and colon cancer, and an elected member of the National Academy of Medicine, started on July 2 as the new chief of the Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology at the UA College of Medicine – Tucson and Banner – University Medical Center…
Graduating DOM Fellows Celebrate Grand Finale to Advanced Training

Nearly three dozen fellows in advanced training in subspecialties in internal medicine graduate from their programs this month, including nine in Pulmonary, eight in Cardiology, four in Hematology-Oncology, three in Endocrinology and two each in GI, Infectious Diseases, Nephrology and Rheumatology. See photos of celebrations and where they’re off to next in their careers...

UA/Banner Kidney Transplant Team Lauded for Record-Breaking Week

Ten patients received new kidneys and a new lease on life in June in one of the busiest weeks ever for the Banner – UMC Tucson Transplant Program. Kudos to transplant surgeons Drs. Robert Harland, Tun Jie and Alexandra Turner, kidney transplant medical director and transplant nephrologist Dr. Lavanya Kodali, solid organ transplant director Darryl Lundeen and transplant administrator Deb Maurer. “This is what teamwork is all about: changing people’s lives,” said Dr. Prabir Roy-Chaudhury, nephrology chief...
RESEARCH

Final Research Seminar Caps Off Big Year for DOM

Two presentations June 14 by Endocrinology's Dr. Paul Langlais and Genetics, Genomics and Precision Medicine's Dr. Christina Laukaitis brought the 2017-18 academic year lectures for the DOM Research Seminar Series to a close with a focus on insulin proteomics and hypermobility syndrome. The series will be rolled into Medicine Grand Rounds this fall. This caps 32 speakers and 20 seminars since it began in fall 2016. See links to photo galleries and archived video…

BIO5 Institute Funds Multidisciplinary Effort to Improve Imaging of Vascular Remodeling in Dialysis Patients

The UA BIO5 Institute allocated more than $70,000 in funding to a research team led by Drs. Eleonora Tubaldi, an assistant professor in the UA College of Engineering, and the UA Division of Nephrology's Dr. Diego Celdran Bonafonte to improve imaging analyses of blood flow at the point where chronic kidney disease patients are connected to hemodialysis machines that filter their blood…

EDUCATION

New Leadership, Staff Named for Medicine Sub-Internships, Clerkship Programs

Dr. Serena Scott, an assistant professor in the UA Division of Geriatrics, General Internal Medicine and Palliative Medicine, has been named director of the Subinternship Program at the UA Department of Medicine. In addition, Celina Andrade will oversee development of the new ambulatory block that starts in February for the Medicine Clerkship…

University Campus Internal Medicine, Dermatology Residents Celebrate Graduation in Style

Twenty-eight residents, eight interns and four chief residents in the UA Internal Medicine Residency Program – University Campus graduated June 2 at a dinner at the Skyline Country Club. Dr. Laura Meinke presented awards, Drs. Tammer El Aini and J.P. Ferreira won top teacher honors, and Dr. Serena Scott gave closing remarks. Videos were shown and many laughs shared. Dermatology residents held their graduation May 17. See photos and where they’re headed…
S. Campus IM Residents Lauded at Awards Banquet

With creosote's smell strong from a rare June desert rain, the UA Internal Medicine Residency Program – South Campus celebrated the graduation of 10 residents and a chief resident at its annual awards banquet June 15 at the Westward Look Resort. Dr. Gene Trowers presented several resident and faculty awards, including to Dr. Anna Stepczynski as best teacher, and announced that Dr. Emilio Power had won the College of Medicine – Tucson’s “Residents as Teachers” program's top award. See the photo gallery and destinations...

Forty-Plus New Banner UMC Chief Residents Undergo 'Complex Care for All Ages' Training Before Starting

The Ninth Annual Interprofessional Chief Resident Immersion Training (IP-CRIT) Program in the Care of Complex Patients of All Ages was hosted June 9-10 by the UA Center on Aging at the J.W. Marriott Starr Pass Resort with more than 40 chief residents in attendance. Participating as instructors were the UA Department of Medicine’s Drs. Gordon Carr, Mindy Fain, Bree Johnston and Stacie Pinderhughes. See a photo gallery from the dinner...

UAHS BioComm Takes on Banner Health Video Profiles

Banner Health and the UA College of Medicine – Tucson are encouraging physicians and other providers with Banner – University Medical Group Tucson to schedule a video profile interview if they haven’t done so. The college's primary clinical partner has contracted with the UA Health Sciences BioCommunications video team to complete remaining videos for current faculty and new physicians during their onboarding starting in August...

Ex-Resident/Incoming Fellow Wins Banner BE Award

Dr. Wei Xiang Wong, a recent graduate of the UA Internal Medicine Residency Program at South Campus and incoming fellow in the UA Nephrology Fellowship Program, was presented recently with the April 2018 BE Award by Banner – University Medicine Tucson and South’s operations team...
Slideshow: A Whirlwind of Activity for DOM Faculty

The “Accolades” and “Research Achievements” part of the UA Department of Medicine General Faculty Meeting held June 25 was full of news for DOM physicians and investigators. Among notable new items, Dr. Marvin Slepian was elected president of ASIO, Banner – UMC was added as a site in the TRIDENT Study on diabetic kidney disease and Dr. Chip Brosius named site PI, and a Dr. Khadijah Breathett article was tagged “most impactful of the year” by the American College of Cardiology. View the video, see the photos and watch the slideshow...

Dr. Karen Herbst Takes Top Honor at 4th Annual Influential Health and Medical Leaders Awards

Dr. Karen Herbst, an endocrinologist and associate professor of medicine, medical imaging and pharmacy practice science at the UA College of Medicine – Tucson, was the big winner June 13 at the 2018 Influential Health and Medical Leaders Awards banquet, hosted by TucsonLocalMedia.com and Inside Tucson Business. She won the Lifetime Achievement Award at a gathering that UA Cardiology Chief Dr. Nancy Sweitzer addressed as keynote speaker...

Baker's Dozen Get Promotions among DOM Faculty

A dozen faculty members from seven divisions in the UA Department of Medicine have been tapped for promotion and tenure advancement. Congratulations to Drs. Tara Carr, Clara Curiel, Dawn Coletta, Ankit Desai, Linda Garland, Louise Hecker, Randy Horwitz, Raj Janardhanan, Sireesha Koppula, Kapil Lotun, Mohammed Sikder, Perry Skeath and Bijin Thajudeen...

Five DOM Faculty Elected to Six Posts on UA College of Medicine – Tucson 2018-19 Committees

In recent UA College of Medicine – Tucson elections, five faculty members from the UA Department of Medicine were among 48 elected to 16 committees for the college for the 2018-19 academic year. They include Drs. Jennifer Cook, Janet Funk, Reza Movahed, Afshin Sam and Rachna Schroff. All proposed changes to the college’s promotion and tenure guidelines also were approved...
FACULTY

**Ask Experts about Liver Disease Event Draws Crowd**

Liver specialist Dr. Jen-Jung “J.J.” Pan—with the UA Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology and UA Thomas D. Boyer Liver Institute—and abdominal transplant surgeon Dr. Alexandra Turner presented at an “Ask the Experts about Liver Disease” event hosted June 12 at Banner – UMC Tucson by the American Liver Foundation Desert Southwest Division...

**IN OTHER NEWS**

**Cardiology**

Dr. Steve Goldman, a heart research scientist and cardiology professor, was named to fill the UA’s C. Leonard Pfeiffer Chair in Cardiovascular Medicine. For 40 years, the Goldman Lab at the UA Sarver Heart Center has focused research on heart failure, its causes and development of new treatments—including pioneering a new bioengineered stem cell heart graft that has won accolades around the country and the globe for the promise it offers cardiovascular disease patients...

Dr. Rupa Bala, a cardiac electrophysiologist with expertise treating atrial fibrillation, ventricular tachycardia and complex heart-rhythm disorders, joined the faculty of UA Division of Cardiology and UA Sarver Heart Center as an associate professor. She also will serve as director of the Cardiac Electrophysiology Lab at Banner – University Medical Center Tucson. Previously, she was with the Oregon Health and Sciences University...

UA cardiology fellow Dr. Keng Pineda took first place at the Arizona Chapter Annual Meeting the American College of Cardiology for his research poster, “Persistent Fetal Cardiac Troponin.” He’ll continue his research under mentor Dr. Jil Tardiff as a clinical and research fellow at the UA/Banner – UMC Tucson. Completing the sweep with second and third places were UA medical students Giuliana Repeti and Pierce Bradley—both mentored by Dr. Jordan Lancaster...
Dermatology

UA Department of Medicine and Banner – University Medicine faculty and staff joined the UA Division of Dermatology in celebrating the successful opening of its new consolidated clinical offices at 7165 N. Pima Canyon Drive. Dr. James Sligh spoke passionately about growth in the division’s programs in recent years, the hard work to make the move possible and the promise it offers. He and Dr. Monica Kraft, DOM chair, did the ribbon-cutting honors. See photos and Facebook link...

Endocrinology

The University of Arizona Department of Medicine in July celebrated new and redesigned affiliate websites with the launch of new webpages for the Proteomics Lab in the UA Division of Endocrinology and a reformatted UA Sarver Heart Center website. The first was released in early May—the second completed by late June. Take a look today...

Genetics, Genomics and Precision Medicine

Some people who take statins to lower cholesterol have a slightly higher risk of developing Type 2 diabetes. Genetic epidemiologist Dr. Yann Klimentidis at the UA Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health received a $1.1 million NIH grant to study the connection between Type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Among members of his research team is the UA Division of Endocrinology’s Dr. Craig Stump...

A recent UAHS "Healthy Dose" blogpost highlights the work done to advance our understanding of asthma genetics by Dr. Deb Meyers, co-chief, UA Division of Genetics, Genomics and Precision Medicine, and co-director, Division of Pharmacogenomics at the UAHS Center for Applied Genetics and Genomic Medicine. Written by center administrator and director Drs. Valerie Schaibley and Ken Ramos, the post notes this complex respiratory condition afflicts up to 23 million Americans. Dr. Meyers is one of many UA investigators trying to crack the code for personalized care and a possible cure...
Genetics, Genomics and Precision Medicine

The BLAISER Minority Health Disparities Lecture Series' focus this summer on diabetes, precision medicine, clinical research and building healthy communities highlighted inequalities in health care and encouraged students from underrepresented communities interested in biomedical professions to pursue their dreams. UAHS Center for Applied Genetics and Genomic Medicine director and Pulmonary physician, Dr. Ken Ramos was among lecturers. See lecturers and links to video…

Geriatrics

Leading off the 2018-19 Advances in Aging lecture series is Dr. Mindy Fain, the Anne and Alden Hart Professor of Medicine, chief of the UA Division of Geriatrics, General Internal Medicine and Palliative Medicine, and co-director of the UA Center on Aging. Her talk on “Death By Bed Rest” runs from noon-1 p.m. in Kiewit Auditorium. Other speakers in the series this fall include Drs. Betty Glisky, Angela Brown and Cheryl Lacasse. The lectures serve also as the Geriatrics Grand Rounds. See the flyers and add them to your calendar now…

Hematology and Oncology

In the absence of Medicine Grand Rounds in July, several speakers addressed cancer care and cancer research, including Duke’s Dr. Nimmi Ramanujam, UCLA’s Dr. Nzhde Agazaryan, Yale’s Dr. Joann Sweasy and Merck’s Dr. Tomi Sawyer. In this post, see links also to the latest UACC Newsletter (with topics on pancreatic cancer, cervical cancer and the Proteomics Shared Resource) and learn about the latest funding opportunities and the UA Cancer Center Fall Scientific Retreat on Sept. 28. Save the date!...

Dr. Pavani Chalasani is the new director of the UA Hematology and Medical Oncology Fellowship Training Program in the Division of Hematology and Oncology at the UA Department of Medicine and UA Cancer Center. Effective May 1, she replaces Dr. Andrew Yeager, who was named a professor emeritus and will continue to give lectures and lead a fellows boot camp. His official retirement was June 29…
Hematology and Oncology

Drs. Julie Bauman, Andrew Kraft and Jorge Gomez play a key role in the UA Cancer Center partnership with the nation’s top cancer centers to endorse goal to eliminate HPV-related cancers in United States. The joint statement empowers parents, young adults and physicians to increase vaccination rates and screenings to eliminate such cancers, starting with cervical cancer...

A four-year, $2.5 million National Cancer Institute grant will enable the UA College of Nursing’s Dr. Terry A. Badger to study whether psychosocial interventions will help ethnically diverse survivors improve their symptoms. One tool is a Symptom Management and Survivorship Handbook featuring self-care strategies for symptoms. Another is telephone interpersonal counseling. Among research team members is Hematology and Oncology’s Dr. Pavani Chalasani...

Infectious Diseases

Dr. John Galgiani, director of the UA Valley Fever Center for Excellence, spoke on “Valley Fever (Coccidioidomycosis): In Arizona and Beyond” at the Association of American Indian Physicians Conference, July 26-29 in Scottsdale, with fellow keynote speaker former U.S. Olympian Billy Mills. A Native American, Mills also is a Valley fever survivor. UA MedCats—alumni, faculty, staff, students and friends—were invited to reception afterward...

Data from patient-ordered tests show a second seasonal surge of Valley fever since the first last fall, reported Dr. John Galgiani, UA professor of infectious diseases and director the UA Valley Fever Center for Excellence and Banner – University Medicine Valley Fever Program. This gets ahead of state statistics in a year when big numbers already were predicted and are being borne out. He urges physicians and patients to be aware of symptoms for themselves and their pets...
Nephrology

Kidney transplant recipient Paul Conway, president of the Tampa-based American Association of Kidney Patients—the oldest and largest independent U.S. kidney patient advocacy organization—was the speaker June 20 for the final Medicine Grand Rounds of the 2017-18 academic year. He was introduced by Dr. Prabir Roy-Chaudhury, chief, Division of Nephrology. Having managed his condition for four decades, Conway gave a unique view on patient-centered care...

PACCS

UA College of Medicine – Phoenix and Tucson scientists will cross-utilize plant biology, medicine and engineering to create a novel platform called a “lung-on-a-leaf” model to study lung disease using a bioengineered spinach leaf. Dr. Ken Knox is the principal investigator with co-investigators Drs. Frederic Zenhausern, Jerome Lacombe, Ting Wang, Louise Hecker and Mrinalini Kala...

Rheumatology

Division of Rheumatology chief and UA Arthritis Center director, Dr. Kent Kwoh has been named to the prestigious Division Directors Special Committee for the American College of Rheumatology (ACR). His three-year term starts in October. ACR is the world’s leading professional organization of rheumatologists and related health professionals. The committee’s charge is advancing academic rheumatology via support of clinical care, research, education and advocacy...
"Completed Clinical Trial Offers New Hope to Stroke Patients"
UA participates in development of new treatment regimen in POINT study...

"World Renowned Physician-Scientist to Lead UA Anesthesiology"
Dr. Randall O. Dull served previously at University of Illinois-Chicago, Utah...

"Dr. Bellal Joseph Named as UA Surgery's Trauma Division Chief"
At COM-T since 2009, he also gets nod as Martin Glick Endowed Chair...

"This Virus Actually May Boost—Not Weaken—Our Immune System"
UA Center on Aging co-director publishes findings on cytomegalovirus...

"Physician Startup Licenses UA-Invented Disruptive Biopsy Device"
Provides faster cancer diagnosis, treatment with optimal tissue samples...

"C. diff. Foundation Again Waives UA Fees for Fall Conference, Expo"
Join 200 HCAI prevention professionals in Philadelphia, Nov. 8-9...

"New Admins Added to UA/Banner Support Staff in Internal Medicine"
Seven members added in three divisions and chair's office; see updated list...

"UA Vascular Team Hosts Free Screening Event at Banner UMC North"
By-appointment-only screenings offer early notice for other health issues...

"Cervical Cancer May Be Driven by Imbalance in Vaginal Bacteria"
Results by UA Cancer Center-led team appear in Nature: Scientific Reports...

"UA-Led Startup Licenses Invention for Skin Cancer Prevention"
Melanin-producing compound offers systemic way to prevent skin damage...

"UA Study Links Sleep Loss, Nighttime Snacking, Junk Food, Obesity"
Dr. Michael Grandner finds night cravings lead to unhealthy weight gain...

"Conference Covers Trauma Treatment, Lessons from Mass Shootings"
UNLV's Dr. Deb Kuhls keynotes UA-led Regional Trauma Conference...