



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA  
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE TUCSON  
Department  
of Medicine

INTERNAL  
DIGEST

Winter 2025

Colleagues:

As the College of Medicine – Tucson’s largest department, the Department of Medicine is proud to be the center of education and training, patient care and research. Our faculty engage in impactful research and clinical programs as well as the training of future leaders in medicine. I hope this monthly newsletter serves to increase awareness and appreciation of the many wonderful things occurring in our incredible department.

**James K. Liao, MD**

The Robert S. and Irene Flinn Endowed Professor in Medicine  
Professor and Chair, Department of Medicine  
Member, Sarver Heart Center  
University of Arizona College of Medicine – Tucson

**Top Headlines**

**Fanfare at 2025 College of Medicine – Tucson Faculty Teaching Awards Rewarding for All Hematology & Oncology’s Aaron Scott, MD, and Endocrinology’s Jennifer Stern, PhD,** got top research awards as the Department of Medicine took 19 of 68 honors presented Feb. 27 at the HSIB Forum. Eight divisions were represented by faculty winners, with three each to [Inpatient Medicine](#) and [General Internal Medicine, Geriatrics & Palliative Medicine](#) (GGP), two to Hematology & Oncology, [Pulmonary, Allergy, Critical Care & Sleep Medicine](#) (PACCS) and [Nephrology](#), and one each for [Cardiology](#), Endocrinology and [Infectious Diseases](#). See who won and a mini-photo gallery.



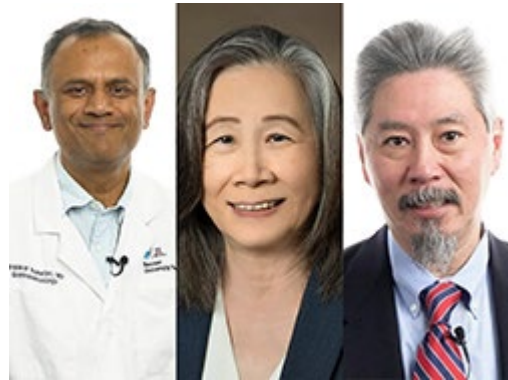
## U of A Cancer Center at Banner – University Medicine North re-accredited for breast care

Accreditation by the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers, a quality program of the American College of Surgeons, makes it the only accredited breast cancer center in Tucson and one of just three in Arizona. The [Breast Clinical Research Team](#) leader at the Cancer Center is the Department of Medicine's **Sima Ehsani, MD**, a [Hematology & Oncology](#) associate professor who joined the U of A faculty in 2016.



## DOM gets 3 of 5 new Professors Emeriti named at College of Medicine – Tucson

[Gastroenterology](#)'s **Bhaskar Banerjee, MD**, [Hematology & Oncology](#)'s **Hsiao-Hui "Sherry" Chow, PhD**, and [Rheumatology](#)'s **C. Kent Kwoh, MD**, are among the newest Professor Emeritus members at the college. The Department of Medicine now has 16 retired faculty members who've gained this august status due to their many career achievements. See who they are.



[MORE HEADLINES](#) ▶▶▶

## Honors + Awards

**Stefano Guerra, MD, PhD, MPH**, the Henry E. Dahlberg Chair in Asthma Research and professor in the PACCS Division, as well as population sciences director at the [Asthma & Airway Disease Research Center](#), won a Fulbright Fellowship Award for an upcoming six-month sabbatical starting in August.

**Indu Partha, MD**, a general internal medicine associate professor, GGP Division, Internal Medicine Residency – Tucson associate program director and vice chair, Academy of Medical Education Scholars (AMES), U of A College of Medicine – Tucson, was named chair of the [SGIM National Women's Caucus](#) at the [Society of General Internal Medicine](#).

**Anna Morenz, MD**, a general internal medicine assistant professor, GGP Division, was the recipient of the U of A Cancer Center's CPC FY25 Pilot Award given through its [Cancer Prevention & Control Program](#). A primary care physician, she's developing a research program focused on addressing inequities in cancer screening.

**Kris Abbate, MD**, a general internal medicine assistant professor, GGP Division, DOM IM Sub-Internship associate program director, and COM-T Youth Program medical director, was selected as a [Societies Mentor](#) by the College of Medicine – Tucson.

**Abby Fuoto, DNP, ANP-BC, AOCNP, ACHPN**, a GGP Division special instructor and U of A Cancer Center member, was chosen as a Tucson Fabulous 50 nurse for 2025. She and the other 49 will be recognized at Nurses Week 2025 – May 6-May 12. Tucson celebrations include a Conference & Health Fair, May 9, and Nurses Week Gala, May 10, at Loews Ventana Canyon Resort. [Learn more and register to attend.](#)

Division of Pulmonary, Allergy, Critical Care & Sleep Medicine associate professor **Christian Bime, MD, MSc**, who's Medicine Intensive Care Unit medical director at Banner – UMC Tucson, was named a Fellow of the American Thoracic Society in January. A Cameroon native, he serves on ATS' African interest group and membership committee. He'll be inducted in May at the ATS 2025 International Conference in San Francisco.

Hematology & Oncology Chief **Rachna Shroff, MD, MS**, also interim clinical affairs director and associate director of clinical investigations at the U of A Cancer Center, was elected to the [Association of American Cancer Institutes' Physician Clinical Leadership Initiative Steering Committee](#).

Division of Infectious Diseases' **Alex Perry, MD**, joined fellow ID faculty, **Steve Klotz, MD**, and **Larry York, PharmD**, as presenters in an Arizona Telemedicine webinar series, "Envenomations, Intoxications and Travel-Related Diseases. More Common Than You Think! What To Do," March 12. [View this and other webinars in the series here](#).

PACCS' Interventional Pulmonology director **Billie Bixby, MD**, Infectious Diseases Fellowship associate director **Monica Hinestroza Jordan, MD**, and GGP geriatrician **Julia Jernberg, MD**, who heads the DOM's Ambulatory Clerkship Program, are among five new members elected to the Pima County Medical Society Board. [Learn more](#).

PACCS' **Josh Malo, MD**, associate medical director for the Lung Transplant Program at Banner – University Medical Center Tucson, spotted an incorrect measurement on a patient's donor wait list data. A quick update got the person a donor offer soon after and earned Dr. Malo a Banner Health Good Catch Award. [Learn more](#).

## WellDOM

The Department of Medicine, in conjunction with the Andrew Weil Center for Integrative Medicine is excited to launch the **WellDOM** initiative, as a commitment to the wellness and wellbeing of our faculty. Wellness is a term used often. This initiative is meant to find concrete and actionable ways to support and improve healthcare professional wellness and wellbeing within the DOM. **The first and most important step in this process is to get honest feedback from you!**

Please take 10-15 minutes to complete this [WellDOM needs assessment](#), as your answers will directly help inform our next steps in this endeavor. **All responses are anonymous.**



## Media Mentions

For all faculty in the Department of Medicine from Dec. 2 to March 18, there were nearly 140 mentions in the media for research and seasonal issues related to their subspecialties from cardiology to rheumatology. In all, 23 faculty members were associated with these stories.

At the top of the list for Department of Medicine faculty in the news in the last quarter was **Hesham Sadek, MD, PhD**, chief of the Division of Cardiology and

director of the Sarver Heart Center, with more than 36 media outlet pickups, largely associated with two published studies – one on [“Common drug shows promise against rare type of heart disease”](#) (Feb. 17, 2025) another on [“Can the heart heal itself? New study says it can”](#) (Dec. 20, 2024).

Next with about a dozen media mentions each were PACCS division chief **Sairam Parthasarathy, MD**, regarding a study on how [“Peer support could help millions with sleep apnea slumber easier”](#) (Dec. 3, 2024); Hematology & Oncology division chief **Rachna Shroff, MD, MS**, regarding [“Clinical trial advances research in treatment of biliary tract cancers”](#) (Jan. 13, 2025), and Hematology & Oncology’s **Sara Centuori, PhD**, and **Alejandro Recio Boiles, MD**, who were among co-authors on [“Study reveals hope for immunotherapy as prostate cancer treatment”](#) (March 4, 2025).

Dermatology’s **Daniel Butler, MD**, GGP/Neurology’s **Lalitha Madhavan, MD, PhD**, and Infectious Diseases’ **John Galgiani, MD**, had about six stories with them mentioned – including one based on a [Lancet Regional Health study](#) Dr. Galgiani was co-author on that explores AI and machine learning as a tool to predict when it might be best to stay inside to avoid Valley fever ([KJZZ-Radio NPR Phoenix](#), Feb. 14).

And notable one-offs included PACCS’ **Tara Carr, MD**, on early onset of allergy season ([KGUN9-TV](#), March 6); Cardiology’s **Iniya Rajendran, MD**, on improving cardiovascular disease diagnoses for women ([KGUN9-TV](#), Feb. 12); PACCS’ **Stuart Quan, MD, PhD**, on digital cognitive behavioral therapy for chronic insomnia ([Frontiers Sleep](#), Feb. 19); and Nephrology’s **Frank “Chip” Brosius, MD**, on revised clinical practice guidelines on diabetes, obesity, CVD, and CKD ([Cardiovascular Diabetology](#), Feb. 7).

**MORE MEDIA MENTIONS ►►►**

## Events

### DOM EVENTS/SPEAKERS/ORGANIZERS:

March 21 | 12:30-1:30 p.m. | TMC Marshall Auditorium

[TMC Internal Medicine Grand Rounds with U of A’s Dr. Billie Bixby: ‘Updates in diagnosis & treatment of early lung cancer’](#)

March 25 | 11 a.m.-Noon | Virtual

[Infectious Diseases Grand Rounds with Houston Methodist’s Dr. William Miller: ‘Resistance to Novel  \$\beta\$ -lactam Antibiotics in Pseudomonas aeruginosa’](#)

March 28 | 8-9 a.m. | Virtual

[Sleep Medicine Grand Rounds with NYU Langone’s Dr. Omonigho Babu: ‘Impact of obstructive sleep apnea on neurodegenerative & Alzheimer’s disease pathogenesis’](#)

March 26 | Noon-1 p.m. | COM-T 5403 & Virtual

[Medicine Grand Rounds with NYU’s Dr. Daniel Serman: ‘The future of interventional pulmonology’](#)

March 27 | Noon-1 p.m. | SHC 4137

[‘Providing energy to the heart’: Sarver Heart Center Research Seminar](#)

March 29 | 7:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. | DuVal Auditorium & COM-T Social Hall

[THE MULTIDISCIPLINARY MANAGEMENT OF NET DISEASE – Arizona Regional Conference](#)

(Course directors: Drs. Rachna Shroff & Junaid Arshad)

April 2 | Noon-1 p.m.

[Medicine Grand Rounds with UWash’s Dr. Jonathan Himmelfarb at HSIB Forum for COM-T Research Day](#)

April 4 | 8 a.m.-Noon | COM-T Social Hall  
[Department of Medicine 2025 New Faculty Retreat](#)

April 4 | 8 a.m.-2:30 p.m. | HSIB Forum  
[2nd Annual Translational Medicine Symposium](#)  
(Host: Dr. Jennifer Carew)

**OTHER EVENTS:**

March 19 | Noon-1 p.m. | BHP 1233 & Virtual  
[Psychiatry Grand Rounds: 'Geriatric Psychiatry' & 'Advanced Care Planning'](#)

March 19 | Noon-1 p.m. | SHC 4137  
[CMM Seminar Series: 'Importance of signaling modulations in obesity, heart disease & fibrosis'](#)

March 19 | 4-5 p.m. | HSIB 880 & Virtual  
[Genetics & Genomics Grand Rounds: 'Internet- and Mobile Lab-Based Approaches for the Study of Cognition – Scale and Diversity to Empower Precision Aging'](#)

March 19 | 5-6:30 p.m. | COM-T Social Hall  
[WIMS Panel Discussion & Mixer: 'Moving Forward Together and Inspiring Change'](#)

March 20 | 11 a.m.-1 p.m. | BioSciences Research Lab  
[Take a PAWS – dogs on campus: BSRL](#)

March 20 | 2-3 p.m. | Virtual  
[CB2 Seminar: 'Empowering tomorrow's clinicians – Interactive AI in health care education'](#)

March 21 | 7:30-11 a.m. | Outside Old Main Building  
[MATCH Day 2025 | University of Arizona College of Medicine – Tucson](#)

March 21 | 11 a.m.-Noon | Drachman Hall B111  
[Immunobiology Seminar: 'Imprinting Durable Antibody-Mediated Immunity'](#)

March 21 | 11:30 a.m.-4 p.m. | AWCIM Iris Cantor Building  
[U of A Campus Health 2nd Annual Wellness Summit](#)

March 24 | 1-2 p.m. | UACC Kiewit Auditorium & Virtual  
[Cancer Biology GDP Seminar: 'Revealing the mechanisms of tumorigenesis through multi-omics analyses'](#)

March 25 | Noon-1 p.m. | HSIB 322 & Virtual  
[March Health Sciences Pathways to Success Speaker Series with Precious Craig](#)

March 28 | 11 a.m.-Noon | Drachman Hall B111  
[Immunobiology Seminar: 'High-Throughput Genomics in Cancer Immunotherapy'](#)

March 28 | 3-4 p.m., Holsclaw Hall; 6-7 p.m., Centennial Hall  
[U of A 2025 Black Faculty Speaker Series: Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr.](#)

April 2 | 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. | HSIB  
[College of Medicine – Tucson Research Day 2025: 'Unity in Discovery'](#)

April 2 | 5-8 p.m. | U of A Mall (near Old Main Building)  
[Wildcats Roar Against Sexual Violence 5K Run/Walk/Roll & Resource Fair](#)

April 3 | Noon-1 p.m. | HSIB Forum

## [2025 COM-T Community Engagement Lecture Series: 'Belonging in Health Care'](#)

April 3 | 4:30-7 p.m. | Keating Building and BSRL  
[Behind BIO5 2025: Meet the Scientists & More](#)

April 4 | 11 a.m.-Noon | Drachman Hall B111  
[Immunobiology Seminar: 'Living Pharmacy – Engineering Implantable Devices for Long Term Cell-Based Therapy'](#)

[MORE EVENTS ▶▶▶](#)

## Vice Chair Reports

### Faculty Affairs

We look forward to hosting the **2nd Annual DOM New Faculty Retreat**, on Friday, April 4, 8 a.m.-Noon, in the COM-T Social Hall. If you joined the DOM after Jan. 1, 2024, you should have received an invite to this event. Please contact [Serena Scott, MD, MBA](#), vice chair for faculty development, if any questions.

We have four DOM faculty scheduled to present at **TMC Internal Medicine Grand Rounds** in Tucson Medical Center's Marshall Auditorium [tomorrow](#) through September. More spots are open. To present via this venue, email [Serena Scott, MD, MBA](#).

[The Banner Health Blog](#) invites Banner physicians to contribute to their health topic blogs, a nice way to share information with the public (*and add media presence to your CV!*). If interested, fill out [this quick survey](#) with your contact information and areas of expertise. A program manager will reach out when a relevant topic comes up.

The American College of Physicians now offers **physician peer coaching** to help advance your academic medical career! Your CME funds can be used towards this. [Learn more](#).

**Cultivating Happiness in Medicine**, or CHIM, funds ([click here for flyer](#)) are available from Banner Health for multiple ways to improve physician and APP wellbeing. You'd be amazed what all you can use this resource to support. [Learn more & apply](#).

For new and continuing DOM faculty, here's a reminder that **Banner Wellness Center memberships** are open to all DOM and Banner faculty, including residents and fellows. The exercise center is in the basement of Banner – University Medical Center Tucson. The cost, \$180 a year. [Learn more & sign up](#).

### Research

#### Save-the-Dates for Upcoming DOM Research Events:

- A number of you may have received an email about a **DOM Early Career Research Development Workshop**, Thursday, March 27, at 4 p.m. It will be virtual. If you'd like to participate, reach out to [Janet Funk, MD](#), DOM vice chair of research, or [Crystal Escobar](#) in the Chair's Office. An Outlook calendar invite will be sent shortly. This event is open to all DOM Faculty.
- The DOM is launching a **Sharing Opportunities & Achievements in Research in the Department of Medicine (SOAR in the DOM)** event series that will begin with a **SOAR Forum**, Thursday, April 24, 4-6 p.m., at the BIO5 Institute (Keating Building, Lobby & Room 103). Posters are being solicited for presentation at this DOM research event, which will also feature awards—and food! [Learn more here](#).

**Upcoming UA RII R01 Proposal Writing Workshop:** The Office of Research, Innovation & Impact's **Meg Barnett, PhD**, is hosting this Wednesday, March 26, 11 a.m.-Noon virtual event (focused on a June 5 NIH proposal submission deadline). [Register here](#).

**Survey of Interest in Southwest Center for Metabolic Health:** Any DOM faculty or researchers interested in being involved in a proposed, NIH-supported, regional center focused on improving metabolic health in the Southwest involving UA, ASU, NAU and UNM and other regional partners, please [complete this survey](#) by March 21.

**Upcoming Internal RII Funding Opportunities:** Bridge Funding Investment Program for delays in Federal Grants. [Learn more here](#).

**Internal Submission Deadline: April 2, 2025**

- [FY25 Research Development Grants - Publication Grant](#): April 2, 2025, deadline (\$3K for prior TRIF supported research).
- [FY25 Research Development Grants - Workshop Support Grants](#): April 2, 2025, deadline (\$25K to discuss research findings/plan interdisciplinary team science applications).
- [FY26 Research Development Grants - Faculty Seed Grant](#): April 2, 2025, deadline (\$15K: Early or Mid-Career).

**Notable published papers from the Valley Fever Center for Excellence:** Infectious Diseases' **Fariba Donovan, MD, PhD**, a VFCE researcher, was recently first author on, "Coccidioidomycosis: a growing global concern" ([Journal of Antimicrobial Chemotherapy](#)) and "How I Do It: Managing Cavitory Coccidioidomycosis Expert Opinions for Improving Patient Outcomes" ([CHEST](#) – among DOM co-authors: **Josh Malo, MD, John Galgiani, MD**, and **Neil Ampel, MD**). She also was second author on "Burden of Hospitalization for Coccidioidal Meningitis: An Analysis of the National Inpatient Sample, 2019-2021" ([Open Forum Infectious Diseases](#)). These are in addition to a [Lancet Regional Health paper](#) noted in Media Mentions above with Dr. Galgiani as an author.

**Research support when you need it:**

- DOM has a full-time biostatistician, **Maryam Emami Neyestanak, PhD**, available to support DOM faculty in their preparation of grant proposals or manuscript submissions. Email Dr. Emami to discuss your biostatistical needs at: [maryame@arizona.edu](mailto:maryame@arizona.edu)
- Running into roadblocks when initiating a clinical trial? **Alejandro Roman**, Clinical Trials Activation manager for COM-T, can help: [alejandr1@arizona.edu](mailto:alejandr1@arizona.edu)

**Become a member today:**

- Involved in cancer research? Take advantage of **U of A Cancer Center** resources and become a member today. [Apply here](#).
- Interested in joining the **BIOS Institute**? Take advantage of research cores and other resources, including internal funding to jump start projects. [Apply here](#).

## Education

The biggest news of the moment for Education in the Department of Medicine is March 21's [MATCH Day celebration](#) (7:30-11:30 a.m.) near the Old Main Building. It's always a rewarding experience attending and sharing the joy of students who've come through clerkship, sub-internship and other rotations with us as they find out where they're headed as resident physicians in training. If you can't be there in person, organize a watch party to view it LIVE at [this link](#).

**Amy Sussman, MD**, the DOM vice chair for education, issued a reminder about the **AAIM Academic Internal Medicine Week** hosted April 6-9 in New Orleans in hopes that U of A clinician educators could join the Department of Medicine cohort attending the Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine annual conference. [Learn more here](#).

Be on the lookout for a special invitation for April 29, 5:30-7:30 p.m., Arizona Inn, for the **Annual DOM Education Awards Ceremony** during which we recognize outstanding

medical students and housestaff – i.e., resident and fellow physicians. It's by invitation only, so mark your calendars if you get one. [Learn more.](#)

And for the latest **Faculty Instructional Development** calendar, clinician educators can see [this flyer](#). For remaining sessions March 28, April 2 and April 2, [learn more & register here!](#)

## In Other News

### [U of A Health Sciences names new director of Arizona Cancer Center](#)

**Dan Theodorescu, MD, PhD** – director of the Samuel Oschin Comprehensive Cancer Institute at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles since 2018 – will begin his duties as the new director of the University of Arizona Cancer Center on March 1.



### [Sarver Cardiovascular Research Symposium shines at Loews Ventana Canyon Resort](#)

The inaugural event, held in close collaboration with UT Southwestern, provided a platform for exchange of groundbreaking ideas, cutting-edge presentations and dynamic discussions that showcased progress in both cardiovascular research and clinical practice.



### [Connecting with James Liao, MD: A Q&A](#)

The leader of the College of Medicine – Tucson's largest department envisions an inclusive, collaborative environment for future health care professionals to thrive. Via the range of specialties and expertise among its faculty, he notes the DOM is the center of education and training, patient care and research within the college.



### [Local AHA chapter nominates DOM stroke survivor Dominica Padilla as 'Woman of Impact'](#)

### [Dr. Rachna Shroff lauded as 'Arizona Champion' at UA v. Utah men's basketball game, Feb. 26](#)

### [Rheumatology's Dr. Dylan Lee promote Joint Space podcast, gout health via Instagram reel](#)

### [Drs. Juneman, Rajendran among 8 honored at UA vs. ASU women's basketball game, Feb. 8](#)

### [Dermatology's Drs. Clara Curiel, Nathan Chow assist in new CUP Clinic for skin care needs](#)

### [Inaugural walk-with-a-doc event for Sarver Heart Center at La Encantada a triumph](#)

### [Thank A Resident Day, Feb. 28, offers chance to show 'housestaff' our appreciation](#)

### [Dr. Parthasarathy's Expert Insights video highlights peer support for sleep apnea therapy](#)



[Joint investiture on endowed chairs for Sarver's Drs. Hesham Sadek, Sakthi Sadayappan](#)  
[Cardiology fellows win Jeopardy contest at American College of Cardiology – Arizona Chapter](#)  
[Connecting with Sarver Heart Center's Dr. Hesham Sadek: A Q&A](#)  
[Dr. Marvin Slepian advises government on AI strategy for Intellectual Property at USPTO](#)  
[Sarver Heart Center gets \\$2M in gifts to found cardiovascular research institute](#)

**MORE NEWS ►►►**

Submit items to be considered for publication in this newsletter to [David Mogollon](#).



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### **Land Acknowledgment**

*We respectfully acknowledge the University of Arizona is on the land and territories of Indigenous peoples. Today, Arizona is home to 22 federally recognized tribes, with Tucson being home to the O'odham and the Yaqui. The University strives to build sustainable relationships with sovereign Native Nations and Indigenous communities through education offerings, partnerships, and community service.*

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