

Resident Report

A newsletter for
SUNY Upstate Medical
University Residents
and Fellows

Fall 2009

For more information
about the residency
programs at Upstate
Medical University
please visit:
www.upstate.edu/gme



A Night at the Museum

More than 50 residents from Upstate Medical University's Department of Medicine took in the Turner to Cezanne exhibition Oct. 26 to gain a greater understanding of "visual thinking strategies." The teaching method enhances observation, listening and communication skills. From left are **Emily Lazzeri, MD;** **Swati Mehta, MD;** **Scott Albert, MD;** and **Ananth Shankar, MD.** The exhibit runs through Jan. 3.

UPSTATE
MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

Research Fellowship Pays Off

Whatever doubts **Brian Kubiak MD** had about taking a two-year break from his surgical residency at Upstate to do research have long since vanished.

"It was a win-win," said Kubiak, a PGY-4 who completed his research fellowship in July. "It was a two-year sacrifice, but it was well worth it. I wouldn't give it up for the world."

Well, no wonder. Here's a sampling of the exotic places Kubiak visited during his two years as a research fellow at Upstate. He worked with Gary Nieman, associate professor and senior research scientist in the Department of Surgery and director of Upstate's Cardiopulmonary and Critical Care Laboratory.

- Switzerland: 9th European Conference on Pediatric and Neonatal Ventilation
- Las Vegas: American College of Surgeons 35th Annual Spring Meeting
- Honolulu: Society of Critical Care Medicine's 37th Critical Care Congress
- Belgium: 28th International Symposium on Intensive Care and Emergency Medicine, Brussels
- Ireland: 4th World Congress on Abdominal Compartment Syndrome, Dublin

Kubiak didn't go as a paying tourist. He was invited to speak, gave presentations and won several awards — including two of only six given out in Dublin (best poster and best paper).

He gave presentations at conferences in other cities as well, including Nashville, San Francisco, Atlanta and Toronto.

His honors also include a first prize at the Medical Society of the State of New York Poster Symposium in Rochester; first place in the resident paper competition at the New York Chapter of the American College of Surgeons' 31st annual Surgical Symposium; a bronze medal in the National Medical Association Drew-Walker Surgical Resident Forum and a Department of Surgery Research Award.

One successful research presentation led to another, Kubiak said. "The reception was amazing," he said of the response to his April 2008 lecture in Montreaux, Switzerland on lung injuries. "I was able to share what we know about adult practices to pediatricians."

In Dublin, where Kubiak gave a presentation on negative pressure therapy in treating Abdominal Compartment Syndrome (a buildup of pressure in the abdomen that can lead to organ dysfunction), he had

dinner with the president of Trinity College and the president of the Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland.

Kubiak credits Nieman and Upstate with expanding his knowledge base and opening up career opportunities after he completes his residency here in 2011.

Nieman said Kubiak is one of many surgical residents who have met with success in the Cardiopulmonary and Critical Care Lab.

"The Lab offers an excellent education for the surgical resident on how to conduct effective physiologic experiments," Nieman said. "All of the residents who have gone through the lab have obtained their first choice in fellowships, including Pediatric Surgery and Plastic Surgery, which are some of the most difficult to obtain."

"Gary Nieman is a great lab leader with more than 30 years of success," Kubiak said. "He sets the residents up to succeed. I'm interested in research as part of my career goal of working in academic medicine. It was a great learning experience, and it gave me the confidence I need coming out of here as a resident."



Brian Kubiak MD

Residents, Fellows Play Key Role In Positive Changes at Upstate



Sara Jo Grethlein, MD

Greetings! I want to catch you up on some new and exciting academic efforts at Upstate.

The 2009-10 academic year is in full swing. The initial shock of beginning residency has given way to the serious work of patient care, research and self-development. One of the themes you will see at Upstate Medical University is a commitment to continuous quality improvement.

Although we are confident that our patients are receiving excellent, state-of-the-art care, we are not content to rest on our laurels. Research at Upstate is

exploring the basic underpinnings of disease, such as:

- Our newly appointed Chair of Pharmacology, **Ziwei Huang, PhD**, will be spearheading translational research in Cancer Medicine. Dr. Huang's team is focusing on exploring the pharmacological basis of protein-protein and protein-ligand interactions.
- **Rosemary Rochford, PhD**, Chair of Microbiology and Immunology, will lead efforts to understand oncogenesis related to the Epstein-Barr Virus.
- **Patricia M. Kane, PhD**, Chair of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, will continue to advance our understanding of vacuolar H⁺-ATPases. Her team is using a yeast model to study the structure, function, assembly and regulation of vacuoles and the relationship to cellular pH homeostasis, cellular stress responses and protein sorting. The resurgence of our basic science colleagues presents tremendous opportunities for collaboration.

This fall, the first students have begun work toward their **Master of Public Health degree**. We anticipate that beginning in 2010 we will also be offering a Certificate in Public Health. This may suit residents or fellows, as it requires a smaller number of courses.

The changes have not only occurred in research. Most notably, we have a new hospital CEO — **Dr. John McCabe, MD**. As Chair of Emergency Medicine, Dr. McCabe led the efforts to optimize clinical care, and to smooth patients' access to our high quality programs such as our Stroke Center and Burn Unit. Our new Chair of Surgery, **Dr. Robert Cooney, MD**, joined Upstate Nov. 1.

I have left one of our most important changes for last. The new **Golisano Children's Hospital** opened in September. In addition to the new facilities for inpatient pediatrics, the new units for **Cardiac care, Neurologic/Neurosurgical care** and **Oncology** are up and running. The new design has transformed our healthcare delivery by making it easier to be patient- and family-focused. Private rooms feature private baths and space for family members to stay over.

These exciting changes are part of a larger whole, and residents and fellows are at the heart of all of them. Now we have additional research efforts for residents to engage in and the tenor of our conversation has grown deeper. We are incorporating resident voices at every level. We are developing practices to enhance patient safety (through improved handoffs between caregivers) and residents are a key element of this effort. Residents serve on the Throughput committee, the Discharge committee and are assisting in the effort to develop and implement our electronic medical record. The **Resident Advisory Council** is the formal avenue for resident input on policy development, and is also one of the routes for residents to express their concerns.

Upstate Medical University is poised to move forward into a new era. Our residents and fellows remain our strategic weapon for patient care. We couldn't do it without you!

Sara Jo Grethlein, MD
Associate Dean, Graduate Medical Education



Anesthesia

Lucien Catania
Fatoumata Kromah
Sukhpal Mangat
Robert B. Nastasi
Yevgeny Palatnik
Remone Yousif

Dental

Tung Nguyen
Erin Parsons
Michael Quigley
Deontraneze Thompson

Emergency Med

Syed S. Ahmad
Charles I. Beaudette
Ginger D. Cotter
Mandeep K. Dhaliwal
Jerry R. Emmons
Nicole M. Gero
Long Van Nguyen
Andrew R. Poreda
Amit Rahman
Kelsey M. Stack

Medicine

Nurudin Cemer
Britton M. Chan
Brian A. Changlai
Maria M. Chaudhry
Sujith V. Cherian
Varun Chowdhry
Tuan Vu Dao
Subhraleena Das
Akbar Fakhri
Amarinder S. Garcha
Shraddha S. Goyal
Christine M. Granato
Purva G. Gumaste
Wasim A. Hamarneh
Abdul Haseeb
Rohit Jain
Shalinee Jha
Hatim Karachiwala
Sowmya Pinnamaneni
Merima Ramovic
Archana C. Rao
Shaifali Sandal
Elena Schmidt
Namita Sharma
Tulsi Sharma
Ehtesham Ul Haq
John Ulahannan
Luke Simon Yuhico

Medicine-Cardiology

Orson D. Go
Sujith Kuruvilla
Santosh Rao

Medicine-Endocrinology

Rohini Kasturi
Christine Uy

Medicine-Geriatrics

Toni O. Pacioles
Michael V. Tablang

Medicine-GI

Sekou Rawlins

Medicine-Inf Disease

Anuheat Chea
Balaji Desai

Medicine-Nephrology

Satinder Singh

Medicine-Pulmonary/ Critical Care

Krithika Ramachandran

Medicine- Rheumatology

Ricardo J. Garcia

Neurology

M. Nur-E Alam
Revathi Iyengar
Behnam Jafarpour
Sundus Latif
Samah Mohiuddin

Neurology-Vascular

Adham Kamel

Neurosurgery

Hoon Choi
Juneyoung L. Yi

Ob/Gyn

Reem Akkawi
Georges K. Akl
Shereene J. Brown
Ali J. Doyle
Lisa M. Kolb

Ophthalmology

Jacqueline R. Busingye
Tatyana Metelitsina
Adam Miller

Orthopedics

Ashley H. Anderson
Darryl Auston
Anton Kurtz
Kevin O'Keefe
Carl K. Schillhammer

Orthopedics-Spine

Satyajit Marawar

Otolaryngology

Christopher C. French
Kunal S. Jain
John R. Craig

Otolaryngology- Craniofacial

Kristin K. Egan

Pathology

Christopher M. Curtiss
Elizabeth A. Ruckdeschel

Pathology- Cytopathology

Zia Khan

Pathology-Hematology

Vivian Arguello-Guerra

Pediatrics

Frieda P. Ansoanuur
Saleh Bhar
Dany A. Curi
Timothy C. Harris
Enisa Hodzic
Kristel B. Holmblad
Priyanka Kaul
Prita H. Mohanty
Ahmad Rayes
Matthew W. Ryzewski
Jennifer Sacks
Jaclyn S. Siskind
Manika Suryadevara
Asalim Thabet
Rajoo Thapa

Physical Med & Rehab

Vincent Huang
Anthony Lebario
Juan R. Lebron Sanchez

Psychiatry

Robert P. Kallinicos
Lori B. Peppers
Seethalakshmi Ramanathan
Daniel J. Uderitz
Yajaira Y. Valdez
Katherine T. Wallia
Allison Werner

Psychiatry-Forensic

Alfonso Corona
Andrew R. Kaufman
Jacob Widroff

Rad Oncology

Paul Aridgides
Shripal Bhavsar

Radiology

Anne Marie Aden
Daniella Akibo-Betts
Kenneth J. Corse
Mohammad R. Khorasani
Marissa L. Minicolla
Mohammad R. Rajebi

Surgery

Michael O. Akinyemi
Upasna Bhuria
Mohammed R. Hamdani
Neel Karne
Samuel Mohran
Shahryar Mousavi
Ashish Padnani
Kirstie A. Schneider
Amanda B. Sosulski
Gillian L. Stearns
Adam Q. Sugihara
Xi Yang

Finding a Balance

Psychiatry residents **Sunny and Jessica Aslam** say teamwork is key to enjoying work, family.

Among Upstate's 475 residents and fellows are more than a dozen married couples, including Sunny Aslam, MD, and Jessica Aslam, MD, residents in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences.

They met 11 years ago as undergraduates (in physics class) at the University of Maine at Farmington, married in 2002 and attended medical school at Saba University in the Netherlands Antilles.

Sunny Aslam is a PGY-3 in general adult psychiatry. Jessica Aslam is a PGY-2 in general adult, intending to go into child and adolescent psychiatry. They took different paths to Upstate – Jessica worked as a forensic analyst in Washington DC, and her work included classified DNA testing on biohazard agents.

Sunny earned a master's degree in athletic administration from Virginia Commonwealth University and worked for USA Today's web site developing multimedia products.

Sunny's family history includes many generations of physicians.

"One day in medical school I met the wife of one of my father's patients in the elevator," Sunny said. "She turned to me and said, 'You know, your father saved my husband's life.' That was a very moving and proud moment for me."

The Aslams have a 4-year-old daughter and enjoy following Syracuse University sports and the Syracuse Chiefs baseball team.

Q. What is the most fascinating or compelling aspect of human behavior?

Sunny: The amazing range of behavior from love to aggression and destruction. We can all usually learn something from even the most disturbed and sick individuals if we take the time to try.

Jessica: That people can be so different and suffer from mental illness, and with the appropriate treatments (psychotherapy, psychopharmacology and proper education), can often overcome the "battles."

Q. What system do the two of you have for balancing work and family?

Sunny: Focusing on what we both do best and enjoy and then splitting up the tough jobs. Often being so busy helps us decide what needs to be done, because if one of us is working the other one has Ayesha. Thankfully, the little one is getting to the age when she actually helps us out around the house sometimes!

Jessica: Definitely teamwork. It is indeed one challenge we are constantly working on. We are fortunate enough to have a residency program that is family-friendly. We make it a point to have quality time with our daughter every night before bed, and one weekend day is family day.

Q. What brought each of you to psychiatry, and was it a direct path?

Jessica: I intended to go into pediatrics until I did my third-year clerkship in psychiatry. The mentors/attendings on service really allured me to psychiatry.

Sunny: It was the medical school experience for me. It was amazing to see patients improve on an inpatient unit. I also have had amazing mentors — they seemed very easy going, but hard-working and dedicated to helping their patients.

Q. What is the most rewarding aspect of your work?

Jessica: Having the opportunity to listen to each patient's story, sometimes seeing differences in days with meds and giving medical students an opportunity to actively be part of the team.



Sunny Aslam, MD, and Jessica Aslam, MD, outside the Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences building, 713 Harrison St.

Sunny: Working with patients, my colleagues and teaching medical students. People certainly make it all worth it.

Q. What's the best part about Upstate's Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences program?

Jessica: The faculty and the support we receive from them is outstanding! It is a warm and comforting group. Some attendings can make suggestions for improvement in a way that does not shoot you down. They all seem to want the best for each of the residents.

Sunny: The great people in our department led by Dr. Mantosh Dewan. I really believe in our curriculum; we balance the use of psychotherapy, medication and lifestyle factors in treating patients. Our wonderful faculty and colleagues make work enjoyable.

Strength in Numbers



Carruth

In these turbulent times for American medicine, it is more important than ever for physicians preparing to enter the field to stay informed on medical and political issues.

Keep your ears open and your voice heard in the debate over health care reform. Organized medicine suffers in its fight for equal footing due to our members' understandable focus on patient care and continued education, which leaves us thin in the ranks of focused advocates.

However, much of the clout

of the societies representing organized medicine comes from membership numbers alone. So, what can you do to be better informed on the current issues and debates and to be sure you join in representing the interests of your colleagues and your patients?

Join your county and state medical societies. Many departments or societies cover the cost of membership for residents.

To join the Onondaga County Medical Society and/or the Medical Society of the State of New York contact me at CarruthB@upstate.edu or the county medical society at oncms@oncms.org.

Bryant Carruth, MD, a PGY-3 resident in Ophthalmology, is winding up his one-year term as resident representative to the executive council of the Onondaga County Medical Society.

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Office of Graduate Medical Education
750 East Adams Street
Syracuse, NY 13210

New Standard Procedure Preserves Kidney Tissue



Margaret Roth MD

Upstate urologists are now routinely performing partial nephrectomies in more patients with small renal tumors.

Partial nephrectomies are more difficult procedures than removing an entire kidney, but the benefits include a shorter recovery time and preservation of kidney tissue, said Margaret Roth MD, PGY-5.

Roth is among several urology residents at Upstate who have been trained in robotically assisted “nephron-sparing surgery.” That training included rotations at Fox Chase Cancer Center in Philadelphia, where residents learned minimally invasive techniques.

While some tumors are not appropriate for a partial nephrectomy, the procedure has become the new standard at many medical centers, Roth said.

“It makes sense to preserve kidney function, especially if the patient has diabetes or hypertension,” she said. “If you remove the kidney, there’s an increase in the risk for cardiovascular problems.”

Neonatal Book a Group Effort

Current and former Emergency Medicine fellows and residents contributed to a new book by Upstate physicians Richard Cantor MD and P. David Sadowitz MD.

“Neonatal Emergencies” (McGraw Hill, October 2009), focuses on emergencies common to infants younger than 30 days of age.

Among the contributors are current and former Pediatric Emergency fellows **Jahn Avarello** and **Linnea Wittick**, and resident **Jeff Lapoint**.

Cantor and Sadowitz, associate professors of Emergency Medicine, include submissions from other Upstate faculty members — Deborah Mann, James D’Agostino, Jennifer Mackey, Derek Cooney, Norma Cooney, LaLaina Secreti, Jeanna Marraffa, Jamie Nelsen, Lisa Keough and Brian Stout.

A Day to Say ‘Thank You’

Upstate’s Graduate Medical Education office showed its gratitude to the university’s 475 medical residents and fellows Oct. 7 during Resident Appreciation Day.

The annual day of recognition was initiated this year along with the GME Awards ceremony, said Sara Grethlein MD, associate dean for Graduate Medical Education, as “a way to appreciate and recognize our residents and fellows, and all their hard work.”

The day was marked by gatherings of residents, fellows and faculty all over campus, with food the common denominator.

“We wanted to spend a little time with the residents and thank them,” said Carlos Lopez MD, director of critical care anesthesiology and the department’s residency program director.

Lopez joined residents and Nancy Nussmeier MD, chair of the anesthesiology department, for lunch in a break room on the fifth floor of University Hospital.

“This is a very small gesture,” Lopez said. “It really doesn’t speak to how fortunate we are to have them. Having been a resident myself once, I know the hours are long and the days are hard. It’s pretty stressful.”

At 550 Harrison Center, the Ophthalmology Department gave each of its seven residents personalized thank-you notes, lunch of their choice and fruit, homemade baklava and cookies. “It was easy to fuss a little over them as they



Helping to cut the cake to celebrate their special day are, from left, Pradeep Penta, MD, (PM&R); Sreyoshi Dey, MD, (Medicine); Sekou Rawlins, MD, (Medicine-GI); Vikram Bisen, MD, (Medicine); Katherine Mark, MD, (Medicine); Ross Sullivan, MD, (Emergency Medicine); Sara Jo Grethlein, MD, associate dean for SUNY Upstate’s Graduate Medical Education; and Kirstie Schneider, MD, (Surgery).

are such a great group,” said Edwina Charlton, the department’s program coordinator.

Back at University Hospital, residents streamed into the small cafeteria on the second floor all day long for breakfast, cake, free flash drives — and entry into drawings for prizes.

Twenty-one residents and fellows won free car washes, gift cards or gas cards. The grand prize, a \$50 gift card to Carousel Center, went to Charles Beaudette MD, PGY-1 in Emergency Medicine.

Katherine Mark, MD, PGY-3 in Medicine, said having an Appreciation Day “makes us feel like we’re part of the team and that we make a difference in people’s lives.” It’s easy to lose sight of that day-to-day, Mark said, and having a special day of thanks helps restore that perspective.