



Pediatric Crier

Department of Pediatrics Newsletter

<http://www.upstate.edu/gch/academics/newsletter.php>

Good as (if not better than) Gold

The Crier was excited to learn that not one, not two, but THREE of our Peds Faculty were notified that they had been selected to receive a 2025 Faculty Gold Standard Award! Congratulations to Drs. Joshua Bonville, Melanie Comito, and Tyler Greenfield. All winners for this year will be honored at the Celebration of the Faculty, to be held on April 23rd at 4pm in NAB 4414 B/C. And hopefully the Crier will have pictures for you!

The Faculty Gold Standard Award was created to “recognize and honor those members of our faculty who are role models, exemplifying the values of Upstate with emphasis on professionalism, mentoring, and support of others.” The Gold Standard Awards have taken place annually since 2008.

Heading to UPMC!



Congratulations to Michael Markel who has accepted a position at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, for a one-year pediatric urgent care fellowship starting in July.

Resident Appreciation

The week of Feb 24-28 was hospital-wide resident appreciation week. Each day of the week featured some special token of appreciation, from program director snacks in the workroom, to special laptop cases from the GME office, to an appreciation cake, gift cards from the Residency Program, and a few other random gifts throughout the week. We really do appreciate our residents every day of the year but enjoy having a week set aside to let them know how much they mean to us!

Exceptional Teaching

Congratulations to Dr. Jaclyn Sisskind who was honored as the February 2025 recipient of the Exceptional Moments in Teaching recognition. As explained by the College of Medicine, the award recognizes exceptional teachers with this monthly program. Honorees are selected via nominations on student assessments from courses and clerkships. Recognized teachers are those

who challenge students and provide an exceptional learning experience. (See attached w/student comments)

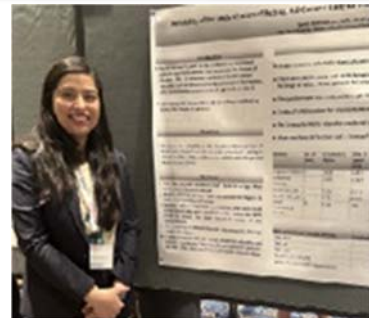
A Feather in her CAP!

Congratulations to Stephanie Tom who was awarded a scholarship to attend the Ray E. Helfer Society 2025 Annual Meeting in April.

We learned a little more about this great honor from Dr. Pekarsky who told us that “Dr. Tom won one of the five highly coveted Helfer NextGen (Next Generation) scholarships to attend the meeting. The CAP team submitted two abstracts for the Helfer Society Annual Meeting, both of which were accepted. Congratulations to Drs. Lizzy Ray (Simmerman) and Heather Ross on the acceptance of their abstract as well as to Dr. Alicia Pekarsky and Kristin Razawich, PNP on theirs. This is remarkable given that this year the planning committee received a record breaking number of abstracts.”

The CHOP Report

As we reported last month, we had several residents who had their abstracts accepted at the Pediatric Cardiology Conference at CHOP in February.



Congratulations to Fatima Raza, Karishma Desai, and Ibrahim Habib who apparently had a great time (while the rest of us were home shoveling snow) at the conference in Orlando. We are so proud of all three of them.



He's a (Beautiful) Boy!!

Congratulations to Sarah Sloan on the arrival of baby boy, Morgan Edgar Anand. Sarah tells the Crier that Moran “decided to make his appearance earth side last night!! [Feb 26th] at 8lbs 15oz of pure perfection hehe. We love him so much already!!” We are all so happy for you and your family, Sarah!



Last Pre-Match Interview Update

The interviews are now over, and in just a little over two weeks we will know who the new intern class of 2025 will be. We had almost 1400 applications, and thanks to all of the residents and faculty who participated in interviews and social hours, we were able to interview 191 candidates for our 15 spots. Our two virtual “second look” social hours were a big success with 25 applicants attending our URiM event on February 13th, (led by Lauren Thomas, with Abimbola, Sara T, Lina, and Precious), and 65 attending our social hour for all applicants hosted by Ayat on February 27th). Thank you to all of you who participated, and thank you again to Dr. Holly Chebaya for overseeing the whole interview process.

Justice for Families

Our very own Dr. Steve Blatt was invited to join this new “landmark” state commission called the Permanent Commission on Justice for Families. The “landmark” panel of more than 50 members will fashion a collaborative study of the panoply of justice issues impacting families, youth, and children across the state. The court leaders state that “The panel’s aim, simply stated, is to promote equity, access, transparency, and understanding within the family justice system statewide. Our family courts and justice system handle urgent matters involving deep-rooted, systemic issues,” Zayas said. “We are striving to do better in responding to the essential needs of New York’s children and families in crisis.” Congratulations, Dr. Blatt, in being chosen for this honor.

Superhero of the Month!

Congratulations to Katie Walburger, RN (PICU) who was chosen as the GCH March Superhero. It was noted that “she leads by example in her hardworking and dedicated commitment to her job. She is always in rooms helping with baths, assisting with anything a nurse may need a second set of hands with. She is also a member of the critical care transport team and is always willing to go on a transport to get sick children while at work or coming in from home. She is an asset to the unit and the children’s hospital”. Katie received some fun swag and parking in the Children’s Hospital parking lot for the month of March.

March is Child Life Month

The entire month of March is National Child Life month. As explained on the national child life website: “Anywhere you find a certified child life specialist you will encounter compassion, generosity, and a tenacious dedication to the emotional and psychosocial well-being of all children and their families.”

Our GCH Child Life has a full month of activities to help celebrate. Support our Child Life team by participating in their Weds theme days throughout the month.

3/5 – Tie Dye Day

3/12 – Disney, Marvel, etc Character Day

3/19 – Fav. Sports Team Day

3/26 – Kindness (hearts) Day

And don’t miss the annual Pinewood Derby on 3/19 at 1 PM in the Kinney Center. Most importantly, thank a Child Life Specialist when you see one.

<https://www.upstate.edu/gch/patients-families/child-life/staff.php>

And the Winner is....

Congratulations to Dr. Bill Hannan who was one of two recipients of Upstate’s Community Giving Campaign Grand Prize. Dr. Hannan was the winner of a \$3,000 debit card courtesy of M&T Bank. Dr. Hannan was eligible for this award because he had increased his annual pledge to the campaign administered by the United Way of Central New York. It is a great reminder to us all that it pays to be a generous giver (even if we don’t all win the grand prize). Congratulate Dr. Hannan when you see him!



In The News

Radiothon for the Kids!

The Upstate Foundation’s Radiothon for Kids raised \$221,906 in two days of fundraising on Feb. 11 and 12. All of the funds will directly support children and families in need at the GCH. Nearly 1,400 donors contributed to the Radiothon. Volunteers working the phone bank came from all corners of our campus.



<https://www.upstate.edu/news/articles/2025/2025-02-13-radiothon1.php>

Where are they now? Neelam Pandhi

Former resident, Neelam Pandhi (Intern Class of 2017), dropped us a note to say hi. “I am now a NICU attending in North Carolina. I have a 5 yr old boy and a 14 mo little girl. I will forever cherish my experience at Syracuse.”



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

3/6 Melanie Comito

3/9 Tobey Kresel

3/16 Jennifer Zuccaro

3/19 Josh Baldwin

3/23 Vidhi Khanolkar

3/25 Lexi Sirota, Ann Botash

3/29 Sarah Sloan

3/31 Lizzy Simmerman