



## GREETINGS AND UPDATES

### FACULTY HONORS

Family Medicine and Population  
Health  
Graduate Medical Education  
Internal Medicine  
Neurology  
Obstetrics and Gynecology  
Pathology  
Pediatrics  
Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation  
Radiation Oncology

### FACULTY WELCOMES

Anesthesiology  
Internal Medicine  
Surgery

## GREETINGS

*"True success comes by leading others to greatness." -- David Reel.*

Dear Colleagues - Friends,

*Transitions -- personal and professional -- represent great opportunities for growth. Our medical school has been fortunate to have Dr. Jerry Strauss provide over 11 years of exemplary service as dean. As your new dean, I now pen my first "Dean's Quarterly." This familiar quarterly update on faculty accomplishments and hires in VCU School of Medicine is also in transition to a new format, and we welcome your input. As I write, I am ever impressed by the talent and accomplishments of our faculty, residents, students, and staff. Just a few of these are highlighted below. These accomplishments inspire us, and our colleagues are role models for us to emulate in our own future endeavors. Please take the opportunity to acknowledge and thank our faculty and students for their impressive accomplishments.*

*Finally, please also welcome our new colleagues who have joined us as faculty. Their confidence in our institution to advance their careers and aspirations is invigorating. They will make us stronger, and they will raise our profile in our community and beyond. We welcome and support these talented new colleagues.*

*Our congratulations to colleagues who are recognized this quarter for new grants and prominent research publications. Your contributions to advancing science are compelling and your work exemplifies VCU's timeless commitment to discovery. In helping to further build our research collaborations, I'm grateful to Drs. Gerry Moeller and Frank Macrina for organizing a successful research summit with our colleagues at Inova.*



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*Please submit news (faculty hires, accomplishments, etc.) through your chairman's office. Please contact Peter Buckley with feedback, questions, etc.*

*We are delighted that Mr. Paul Wesolowski has been appointed as chief operating officer at VCU Medical Center. Paul is a great leader and advocate for academia. Read more:*

*[http://news.vcu.edu/faculty-and-staff/Paul\\_Wesolowski\\_named\\_COO\\_of\\_VCU\\_Health\\_System\\_Hospitals](http://news.vcu.edu/faculty-and-staff/Paul_Wesolowski_named_COO_of_VCU_Health_System_Hospitals). We are grateful to Paul, Deborah Davis, Mary Harmon and David Cifu and colleagues who have forged a major new collaboration with Sheltering Arms. The clinical and academic potential of this collaboration is enormous. Read more: [http://news.vcu.edu/article/Sheltering\\_Arms\\_Rehab\\_Institute\\_Receives\\_COPN\\_Approval\\_to\\_Build](http://news.vcu.edu/article/Sheltering_Arms_Rehab_Institute_Receives_COPN_Approval_to_Build).*

*We have also launched another major clinical initiative -- Vision by Design. Over the coming years, this strategic and operational initiative will transform our clinical system, enhancing our clinical efficiencies, continuously improving our quality, extending our partnerships and outreach.*

*We are also participating in a new budget process for VCU. We are grateful to Provost Hackett and Ms. Karol Gray for coming to our March SOM Executive Committee to give us an update on this important initiative. More to follow.*

*This year's Residency Match was a great success. Over 16% of our medical students are staying with us in VCU Health and, overall, more than 23% of our students are remaining within the Commonwealth for the next stage of their training. This is our first class to have trained under the C<sup>3</sup> curriculum. Our colleagues also matched well to other top institutions and matched across highly competitive specialties, including 32% of our students entering primary care. We will shortly graduate our medical school class of 2017. Their accomplishments to date are impressive and we have great expectations of their future as physician leaders. More info on match:*

*<http://www.medschool.vcu.edu/stories/matchday2017/>*

*Collectively, all these accomplishments continue to inspire others and they encourage our alumni and community leaders to contribute further in support of our school. To that end, I look forward to providing you with an update on our philanthropic activities in the next Dean's Quarterly Diary!*

*Thank you for your advice and support. I welcome your thoughts, feedback, and advice. My best wishes to each of you.*



## **FACULTY HONORS**

*Raising our school's profile in the region, the nation and the world*

### **Family Medicine and Population Health**

**Steven Crossman, M.D.**, associate professor, was honored as a Community Engagement Scholar by the VCU Division of Community Engagement. Dr. Crossman leads partnerships with free clinics in both Virginia and Honduras that allow teams of health sciences students to work together in clinical settings. The collaboration with community partners allows VCU faculty to advance community-engaged teaching and scholarship while addressing critical issues in the region and the world.

**Rebecca Etz, Ph.D.**, associate professor, was appointed to the Indicator Expert Review Group for Integrated People-Centered Health Services (IPCHS) by the World Health Organization. This group, comprised of multidisciplinary colleagues, work on selecting indicators for monitoring global and national/sub-national progress on IPCHS, and key domains/indicators to track patient experience.

**Samuel Jones, M.D.**, professor, was awarded the Champion of Family Medicine award by the Family Medicine Consortium in October 2016. This award recognizes those whose body of work strengthens Family Medicine as a discipline. It is offered at the discretion of the FMEC Board of Trustees and is intended to express its appreciation to those whose contributions have had a substantive and unusual impact on the viability and sustainability of the specialty.

**Susan Miller, M.D.**, clinical professor, and team was the recipient of the American College of Physicians (ACP) Quality Connect: Diabetes Champions Award in January. Dr. Miller, was the project manager for a project, funded by ACP's Quality Connect organization, to improve diabetes care; it was a collaboration among all of the primary care clinics in Family Medicine and General Internal Medicine (Nelson Family Medicine Clinic, Hayes E. Willis Health Center, the General Internal Medicine resident and faculty clinic, and the Stony Point women's clinic). Linda Thurby-Hay, DNP, RN was the co-lead with Dr. Miller. There were 13 interprofessional "champions" from family medicine, general internal medicine (doctors, NPs, and nurses), endocrine, pharmacy, and nutrition. The award will be presented at the annual ACP meeting (March 30-April 1, 2017).

**Elizabeth Prom-Wormley, Ph.D., M.P.H.**, assistant professor, was one of 10 social scientists to receive in January the National Science Foundation Scholarship to attend the 2017 International Workshop on Statistical Genetic Methods for Human Complex Traits. This annual five-day workshop is aimed at training junior and advanced faculty in behavioral genetics.

**Mark Ryan, M.D.**, assistant professor, was honored with the National and Local Golden Apple Award for Teaching Excellence by the American Medical Student Association (AMSA) in recognition of his impact on the personal academic careers of students and his commitment to advancing and improving medical education. Dr. Ryan was recognized as the national winner at the AMSA Convention and Exposition in Washington, DC, in February.

Dr. Ryan was also awarded the Paul R. Wright Chapter Success Award by the American Medical Student Association in February. The emphasis of this award is chapter commitment to improving member solidarity by increasing awareness, recruitment, and involvement in their chapters.

## Graduate Medical Education

**VCU Medical Center** has been awarded the second annual DeWitt C. Baldwin Jr. Award by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education and the Arnold P. Gold Foundation. The award recognizes institutions with accredited residency programs that are exemplary in fostering a respectful, supportive environment for medical education and the delivery of patient care. **Stephanie Call, M.D., M.S.P.H.**, Interim Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education, VCU Health; **Mary Alice O'Donnell, Ph.D.**, former Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education, and all those who made it possible are to be applauded. Our recent receipt of the prestigious DeWitt C. Baldwin, Jr. Award for our residency training and superior educational environment is a remarkable recognition that raises our school and health system profile nationally. Read more:

[http://news.vcu.edu/article/VCU\\_Health\\_nationally\\_recognized\\_for\\_exemplary\\_graduate\\_medical](http://news.vcu.edu/article/VCU_Health_nationally_recognized_for_exemplary_graduate_medical)

## Internal Medicine

Congratulations to the recipients of the VCU Internal Medicine Outstanding Mentor Award for excellence in mentoring. This annual award was presented at the departments' Celebration of Excellence event in February. Honorees included **Todd Gehr, M.D.**, professor and chair of the Division of Nephrology; **Daniel Grinnan, M.D.**, associate professor; **Antonio Abbate, M.D., Ph.D.**, associate professor; **Stephen Bickston, M.D.**, professor; **Daniel Carl, M.D.**, associate professor; **Stephanie Call, M.D., M.S.P.H.**, professor; **Michael Stevens, M.D., M.P.H.**, associate professor; **Amir Toor, M.D.**, professor; **Rakesh Kukreja, Ph.D.**, professor.

**Stephanie Call, M.D., M.S.P.H.**, professor, was among the authors on an Entrustable Professional Activities (EPA) report in the January 7, 2017 issue of *Academic Medicine*, "Finding a Path to Entrustment in Undergraduate Medical Education: A Progress Report from the AAMC Core Entrustable Professional Activities for Entering Residency Entrustment Concept Group." David R. Brown, MD, Jamie B. Warren, MD, MPH, Abbas Hyderi, MD, MPH, Ronald E. Drusin, MD, Jeremy Moeller, MD, Melvin Rosenfeld, PhD, Philip R. Orlander, MD, Sandra Yingling, PhD, **Stephanie Call, MD**, Kyla Terhune, MD, Janet Bull, MA, Robert Englander, MD, and Dianne P. Wagner, MD, for the AAMC Core Entrustable Professional Activities for Entering Residency Entrustment Concept Group. In this article, the group presents the key to entrustment decisions is evidence that students know their limits (discernment), can be relied on to follow through (conscientiousness), and are forthcoming despite potential personal costs (truthfulness), in addition to having the requisite knowledge and skills. The group constructed a developmental framework for discernment, conscientiousness, and truthfulness to pilot a model for transparent entrustment decision making. Read more:

[http://journals.lww.com/academicmedicine/Abstract/publishahead/Finding\\_a\\_Path\\_to\\_Entrustment\\_in\\_Undergraduate.98300.aspx](http://journals.lww.com/academicmedicine/Abstract/publishahead/Finding_a_Path_to_Entrustment_in_Undergraduate.98300.aspx)

**Amanda George, M.D., Ph.D.**, assistant professor, was honored with the 2017 Academic Teaching Award by the American College of Physicians (ACP) Virginia Chapter on March 3.

**Kristin Miller, M.D.**, assistant professor, and Amy Dean, RN, School of Nursing, one of the Langston Quality Scholars teams, have been invited to present their work and participate in a follow-up panel discussion during the April 6-7, 2017, National Academy of Medicine (NAM) workshop, *Exploring a Business Case for High-Value Continuing Professional Development*. Their QI project focused on interdisciplinary huddles to improve plans for sedation, mobility and ventilation in their ICU patients.

**Arun Sanyal, M.D.**, professor, is the recipient of the 2017 Liver & Biliary (LB) Section Research Mentor Award. This award recognizes Dr. Sanyal's achievements as an outstanding mentor in a specific area of research. He will be presented with the award during Digestive Disease Week (DDW) 2017, May 7, in Chicago, IL.

### Neurology

VCU Medical Center again received the AHA/ASA GWTG-Stroke highest levels of recognition at the International Stroke Conference's annual dinner in February. This recognition reflects the ongoing efforts of **Warren Felton, III, M.D.**, professor and division chair of Neuro-Ophthalmology, and host of **interdisciplinary and interdepartmental professionals'** commitment to excellence in the care of patients with stroke and cerebrovascular disease and their families at VCU Health. This recognition includes the 2017 Gold Plus Performance Achievement Award for Stroke Achievement Measure and Stroke Quality Measure levels of adherence and the 2017 Target Stroke Honor Roll Elite Plus for IV-TPA administration.

**Victor Gonzalez Montoya, M.D.**, assistant clinical professor, will receive the 2017 A. B. Baker Teacher Recognition Award from the American Academy of Neurology in April. The award recognizes individuals who have dedicated themselves to neurology education.

### Obstetrics and Gynecology

**Aaron Goldberg, M.D.**, assistant professor, has been elected as Virginia Vice-Chair for the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG).

### Pathology

**David Wilkinson, M.D., Ph.D.**, professor and former chair, has been selected by the Association of Pathology Chairs Council as the recipient of the 2017 APC Distinguished Service Award. The APC Distinguished Service Award recognizes lifetime achievement in the field of academic pathology, encompassing the full spectrum of contributions at the local and national levels in undergraduate and graduate medical education, research, and clinical service. The award will be presented at an awards luncheon at the APC Annual Meeting in July. More info on Dr. Wilkinson:

<http://www.pathology.vcu.edu/about-us/faculty-directory/wilkinson-md-phd.html>. [More info on the award:](#)

<https://apc.memberclicks.net/awards-dsa>

### Pediatrics

**Marieka Helou, M.D., M.P.H.**, assistant professor, Children's Hospital of Richmond at VCU, is the recipient of the American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology (ASPHO) 2017 Clinician Educator Award supported by the Enriching the Future Campaign. This award supports the career development of promising pediatric hematology/oncology educators. She will be recognized as an award recipient during the ASPHO Annual Conference in Montreal, Canada, on April 27, 2017.

**Michael Ryan, M.D., M.E.H.P.**, associate professor, was among the authors on an Entrustable Professional Activities (EPA) report in the January 7, 2017 issue of *Academic Medicine*, "Implementing an Entrustable Professional Activities Framework in Undergraduate Medical Education: Early Lessons from the AAMC Core Entrustable Professional Activities for Entering Residency Pilot." Kimberly Lomis, MD, Jonathan M. Amiel, MD, **Michael S. Ryan, MD, MEHP**, Karin Esposito, MD, PhD, Michael Green, MD, ScM, Alex Stagnaro-Green, MD, MHPE, Janet Bull, MA, and George C. Mejicano, MD, MS, for the AAMC Core EPAs for Entering Residency Pilot Team. In the article, the pilot team presents

the organizational structure and early results of collaborative efforts to provide guidance to other institutions planning to implement the Core EPA framework. Read more:

[http://journals.lww.com/academicmedicine/Abstract/publishahead/Implementing\\_an\\_Entrustable\\_Professional.98299.aspx](http://journals.lww.com/academicmedicine/Abstract/publishahead/Implementing_an_Entrustable_Professional.98299.aspx)

Dr. Ryan was also among the authors on another *Academic Medicine* article, “Are Scores from NBME Subject Examinations Valid Measures of Knowledge Acquired During Clinical Clerkships?” **Michael S. Ryan, MD, MEHP, Steven Bishop, MD, Joel Browning, Rahul J. Anand, MD, Elizabeth Waterhouse, MD, Fidelma Rigby, MD, Cheryl S. Al-Mateen, MD, Clifton Lee, MD, Melissa Bradner, MD, MSHA**, and Jorie M. Colbert-Getz, PhD, MS. The National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) developed Clinical Science Subject Examinations (NBME Subject Examinations) to assess students’ clinical knowledge in the clerkship phase of undergraduate medical education. Examining VCUSOM students’ experiences, the analysis found performance on the national Step 1 can be used to identify and counsel students at risk for poor performance on the national clinical subject examinations. Read more:

[http://journals.lww.com/academicmedicine/Abstract/publishahead/Are\\_Scores\\_From\\_NBME\\_Subject\\_Examinations\\_Valid.98312.aspx](http://journals.lww.com/academicmedicine/Abstract/publishahead/Are_Scores_From_NBME_Subject_Examinations_Valid.98312.aspx)

### Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

**Jeffrey Kreutzer, Ph.D.**, professor, is the recipient of the 2017 Jennett Plum Award for Clinical Achievement in the Field of Brain Injury Medicine by the International Brain Injury Association (IBIA). This award is presented in recognition of substantive and historical research contributions to the field of traumatic brain injury, and particularly in recognition of the impact of Dr. Kreutzer’s clinical research on the field of brain injury medicine. The award will be presented at the IBIA 12th World Congress on Brain Injury, March 31, 2017, in New Orleans, LA.

### Radiation Oncology

**Douglas Arthur, M.D.**, professor and chair, and the **entire Department** are applauded for their concerted effort in achieving the full three-year accreditation by the American College of Radiology (ACR).

**Bruce Curran, M.S.**, affiliate associate professor, has been elected as Chair of the Board of Directors of the American Association of Physicists in Medicine (AAPM), January 1 through December 31, 2017. The chair serves as a member of AAPM’s Executive Committee, Board of Directors, Compensation Committee, and Nominating Committee.

**Emma Fields, M.D.**, assistant professor, was appointed to the NRG Oncology Gynecologic Cancer Committee, Cervix Subcommittee, in February. NRG Oncology is a non-profit research organization formed to conduct oncologic clinical research and to broadly disseminate study results for informing clinical decision making and healthcare policy.

**Geoffrey Hugo, Ph.D.**, associate professor, was appointed to the International Advisory Board by the *Physics in Medicine and Biology* journal for a two-year appointment, January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2018.

**Aurel Todor, Ph.D.**, associate professor, was appointed to the Editorial Board as Associate Editor of the journal *Medical Physics* for a two-year appointment from 1/1/17 to 12/31/19.

## NEW FACULTY

*Expanding our expertise and opportunities for collaboration*

### Anesthesiology

**Deanna Couser, M.D.**, joined the department as assistant professor in January. She earned her medical degree and completed her residency at Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine. Dr. Couser completed her fellowship training in pediatric anesthesiology at the University of North Carolina School of Medicine. Her research interest includes pediatric anesthesiology.

**Alice Coombs, M.D.**, joined the department as associate professor in January. She earned her medical degree from the University of Los Angeles School of Medicine. Dr. Coombs completed her residency training at Massachusetts General Hospital and her fellowships in critical care medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital and in cardiothoracic anesthesia at Tufts University. Her research interests include internal medicine, general anesthesiology, critical care medicine, and cardiothoracic anesthesiology.

**John Drago, D.O.**, joined the department as assistant professor in February. He earned his medical degree from New York Institute of Technology and completed his residency training at Northwestern University Medical Center. Dr. Drago completed his fellowship in adult and pediatric cardiac anesthesiology at the University of Pennsylvania Medical Center. His research interest includes general anesthesiology.

### Internal Medicine

**Mario Acunzo, Ph.D.**, joined the department as research assistant professor in February. He earned his medical degree from the University of Naples, Italy. Dr. Acunzo's research interests include epigenetics of lung cancer including biomarker development, cancer cell signaling and novel therapeutics.

**Silvia Daniela Delgi Esposti, M.D.**, joined the department as associate professor in September 2016. She earned her medical degree from the University of Bologna, Italy. Dr. Esposti completed her residency training and fellowship in gastroenterology at Brown University. Her research interests include pregnancy and neonatal outcome in women with inflammatory bowel disease and women's digestive health issues.

**Tiziano Scarabelli, M.D.**, joined the department as associate professor in February. He earned his medical degree from the University of Turin, Italy, and completed his residency training at Wayne State University. Dr. Drago completed his fellowship in cardiology at Mount Sinai Heart/Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, NY. His research interests include qualitative and quantitative approach to the assessment of cell death in different cardiac conditions; testing of new cardioprotective agents against ischemia reperfusion injury, including the iatrogenic ischemic insult delivered by cardioplegic arrest; molecular, translational and clinical aspects of oncocardiology, with particular focus on cardiac strain.

**Seema Patel, M.D.**, joined the department as assistant professor in January. She earned her medical degree from the American University of Antigua - College of Medicine, and completed her residency training at Mountainside-Hackensack Hospital. Dr. Patel completed her fellowship in rheumatology at National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMIS). Her research interest includes vasculitis.

**Usman Piracha, M.B.B.S.**, joined the department as assistant professor in January. He earned his medical degree from King Edward Medical College, Lahore Pakistan. Dr. Piracha completed his residency training at St. Luke's Hospital, Chesterfield, MO.

### **Surgery**

**Jaime Bohl, M.D.**, joined the department as associate professor in January. She earned her medical degree from the University of Virginia School of Medicine and completed her residency training at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. Dr. Bohl's completed her fellowship in colon and rectal surgery at Lahey Clinic, Burlington, MA. Her research interests include regenerative medicine approaches to fecal incontinence, quality improvement of surgical outcomes for colon and rectal disease.

**Emily Rivet, M.D.**, joined the department as assistant professor in December 2016. She earned her medical degree from Washington University. Dr. Rivet completed her residency training at Washington University and completed her fellowship in hospice and palliative medicine at Virginia Commonwealth University. Her research interests include advancement of knowledge regarding integration of palliative medicine into the care of surgical patients, medical and surgical ethics, research allocation in health care and how these intersect with the practices of surgery, end of life care and ethical medical practice.

## **STUDENT HONORS**

*Raising our school's profile in the region, the nation and the world*

**William Adams**, graduate student in Physiology and Biophysics, has been named a finalist for the 2017 Presidential Management Fellowship. He's one of two VCU students among 417 finalists chosen from more than 6,300 applicants. Both will be eligible for appointment as a PMF in any federal agency with an appropriate opening. They join more than 15 VCU alumni who have been selected and appointed as PMFs previously.

The Presidential Management Fellowship program is designed to recruit exceptional graduate students into the federal government and train them for management positions. PMFs are afforded rigorous professional development and networking opportunities. They enter at the mid-career level (GS9) and can convert to full-time placements at the GS11/13 level after completing the two year fellowship.

**Ph.D. Student Rebecca Mahon**, Medical Physics, is the 2017 recipient of the Susan E. Kennedy Scholarship to be awarded during the Phi Kappa Phi Scholarship ceremony at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts on April 25, 2017. Rebecca will also receive a School of Medicine Phi Kappa Phi Scholarly Achievement Award.

**The VCU American Medical Student Association (AMSA) Chapter** was selected for the National AMSA Paul R. Wright Chapter Success Award. The Chapter's leadership team includes **Class of 2019's Bret Clawson, Daniel Eames, and Avanthi Jayaweera**. The Chapter was presented at the National AMSA Convention in February. They were also recognized in *The New Physician* magazine of AMSA for their work in 2016.

Seven VCU medical students', **Class of 2019's Sirisha Dukkupati, Brandon Brockbank, Ifechukwude Ikem, Gi-Ann Acosta, Kayvon Mobarakeh, Tyler Connine, and Class of 2020's Meg Reeves**, original vascular surgery research will be presented at the 2017 Society of Vascular Surgery Annual Meeting in San Diego in June.