



# DEAN'S Quarterly

An update on faculty honors & hires in the VCU School of Medicine

## Spring Contents

### Faculty Honors

Biostatistics  
Biochemistry and Molecular Biology  
Dean's Office  
Emergency Medicine  
Family Medicine and Population Health  
Internal Medicine  
Neurology  
Pediatrics  
Psychiatry  
Radiation Oncology  
Social and Behavioral Health  
Surgery

### Faculty Recruits

Biostatistics  
Family Medicine and Population Health  
Internal Medicine  
Surgery

### Student Honors

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Please submit news of faculty hires  
and faculty honors through  
your chairman's office.

## Faculty Honors

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

### Biostatistics

**Roy Sabo, Ph.D.**, assistant professor, was awarded Teacher of the Year by the Biostatistics graduate students acknowledging him as an excellent, outstanding teacher.

**David Wheeler, Ph.D., M.P.H.**, assistant professor, was interviewed by a reporter from *USA Today Magazine* for an article on environmental cancer risks that will be published this summer. He also was asked by the Massey Cancer Center to author a short column called Medlines on the environment and cancer risk that is featured in about 8 newspapers around the South Hill area.

### Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

**Charles Chalfant, Ph.D.**, professor, was honored with the Research Career Scientist Award by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in April.

### Dean's Office

**Gordon Archer, M.D.**, professor and senior associate dean for research and research training, has been appointed to the Board of Scientific Counselors of the National Institutes of Health's Clinical Center, the nation's largest hospital devoted solely to clinical research. The Board of Scientific Counselors assists the Center's directors in evaluating the quality of the its intramural research programs. Dr. Archer was noted for his outstanding scientific credentials and his commitment to providing rigorous, objective reviews.

### Emergency Medicine

**Christopher Woleben, M.D.**, assistant professor, was selected by Alpha Omega Alpha as one of two faculty inductees in March. The number of faculty nominated was much greater this year than in previous years resulting in stiffer competition. The Student AOA members had glowing remarks about Dr. Woleben's achievements, contributions, professionalism, interpersonal communication, teaching style and overall energy and enthusiasm.

Dr. Woleben was also honored in April with the Administrator Award of the Presidential Awards for Community Multicultural Enrichment (PACME) bestowed by VCU President Rao. This award recognizes contributions or efforts made toward

enhancing the goals of affirmative action or racial/ethnic and cultural diversity at VCU, particularly those that go above and beyond the routine expectations of the honoree's position.

### Family Medicine and Population Health

**Steve Crossman, M.D.**, associate professor, was honored in April with the Faculty Award of the Presidential Awards for Community Multicultural Enrichment (PACME) bestowed by VCU President Rao. This award recognizes contributions or efforts made toward enhancing the goals of affirmative action or racial/ethnic and cultural diversity at VCU, especially in the areas of teaching, research or service.

Dr. Crossman was also selected as the faculty recipient of the 2014 Leonard Tow Humanism in Medicine Award sponsored by the Arnold P. Gold Foundation in April. He was nominated by a number of his students and fellow faculty members due to the tremendous impact he has made on the delivery of humanistic patient care at VCU SOM and in communities around the world. The award will be presented at the 2014 SOM Faculty Excellence Awards on October 29, 2014.

**Saba Masho, M.D., M.P.H., Dr.PH.**, associate professor, was selected to speak at the 2014 St. David's Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Research in Underserved Populations annual research conference, "Promoting Healthy Communities: Interdisciplinary Perspectives" by the University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing in April. The mission of St. David's CHPR is to improve the health of underserved people through applied research. Dr. Masho's presentation was entitled, *A Collaborative Approach in Reducing Perinatal Disparities: Experience from the Richmond Healthy Start Initiative*.

Dr. Masho also received the VCU Institute of Women's Health Best Poster Award (co-author) in April. She was the senior author on this poster, *Effects of a Guided Imagery Intervention on Stress and Anxiety in Pregnant African American Women*, presented at the Institute's research day.

**Steve Woolf, M.D., M.P.H.**, professor, was selected as the keynote speaker for the 2014 Society of Teachers of Family Medicine Annual Spring Conference in May. Dr. Woolf's presentation, "The US Health Disadvantage: What Family Physicians Can Do About It," focused on key panel findings from the 2013 report: US Health in International Perspective: Shorter Lives, Poorer Health conducted by the National Research Council and the Institute of Medicine. He served as study panel chair and co-author of the report.

**Briana Mezuk Ratliff, Ph.D.**, assistant professor, and Matthew Lohman, Epidemiology PhD student, were the recipients of the Best Early Investigator Poster award by the American Association of Geriatric Psychiatry (AAGP) at its 2014 annual meeting in March for their poster, "Suicide in long-term care and assisted-living facilities from 2003-2011."

### Internal Medicine

**Diane Biskobing, M.D.**, associate professor, was named Associate Chair of the Division of Endocrinology and Metabolism in March.

**Mary Helen Hackney, M.D.**, associate professor, was honored with the Influential Women of Virginia Award by the *Virginia Lawyers Weekly* in March. This award recognizes the outstanding efforts of women in the commonwealth in all fields, including law, business, health care, education and the arts. The honors are given to individuals who are making notable contributions to their chosen professions, their communities and society at large.

### Neurology

**James Bennett, Jr., M.D., Ph.D.**, professor and director of VCU Parkinson's and Movement Disorders Center, traveled in the UK in April as a visiting scientist at the Sheffield Institute for Translational

Neuroscience. The Sheffield Institute is one of the world-leading centers for research into neurodegenerative disorders of the motor system.

### Pediatrics

**William Moskowitz, M.D.**, professor, interim chair, and division chair of Cardiology, was honored with the prestigious Elinor Bloom Marshall Humanitarian Award by the Richmond Chapter of Hadassah for his generosity of time and spirit and exemplary medical work in the field of pediatric cardiology. The Elinor Bloom Marshall Humanitarian Award is given every other year to an outstanding person who has been unselfishly devoted to causes that benefit society.

### Psychiatry

**Danielle Dick, Ph.D.**, associate professor and lead researcher, along with other VCU researchers are conducting a massive VCU research study involving thousands of students, “spit for science” which uses spit to learn about behavior, specifically, “Why is it that some young people can control their drugs and alcohol while others get into serious trouble?” Dr. Dick hopes to collect the DNA of thousands of students and track their behavior for four years. NBC 12 took special notice of this massive research project in May and reported about it in the nightly news, <http://www.nbc12.com/story/25509001/massive-vcu-research-project-uses-spit-to-learn-about-behavior>

### Radiation Oncology

**Drew Moghanaki, M.D., M.P.H.**, assistant professor, was appointed to the Editorial Board of the *Prostate Cancer and Prostatic Diseases Journal* in April.

**Aurel Todor, Ph.D.**, associate professor, was appointed as Co-Chair of the Task Group 236 committee by the American Association of Physicists in Medicine (AAPM) in August 2013. This group is charged with developing national recommendations on 3-dimensional image-based treatment planning, dosimetry and quality management for intracavitary brachytherapy.

Dr. Todor was also appointed as Associate Editor of the premier *Medical Physics* journal by the AAPM in August.

### Social and Behavioral Health

**Magboeba Mosavel, Ph.D.**, associate professor, was awarded funding (FY 15) for her proposal, “Global Bridges Virtual Connect,” submitted for the Quest Global Impact Awards. The review panel highly commended the proposal for its ability to be a virtual global engagement model for other programs and its topical relevance. *This project is made possible in part by support from the VCU Global Education Office.*

### Surgery

**Andrea Pozez, M.D.**, professor and division chair of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, and **Austin Mehrhof, M.D.**, professor and past division chair, were recently honored by the First Lady of Guatemala for their service through involvement with Operation Kids. Operation Kids is a surgical mission trip founded by Dr. Mehrhof that has been serving Guatemala for more than 26 years. Of interest, Dr. Pozez made her first trip there with Dr. Mehrhof when she was a resident in 1988! Dr. Mehrhof continues to organize and support this mission. They received certificates of appreciation that also acknowledge the VCU Medical Center's commitment to global outreach.

## ***New Faculty***

Expanding our expertise and opportunities for collaboration

### **Biostatistics**

**Nak-Kyeong Kim, Ph.D.**, joined the department as assistant professor in February. He earned his Ph.D. from Purdue University. Dr. Kim came to VCU from Old Dominion University. His areas of interest include biostatistics in genomics, statistical modeling for ChIP-seq data and other next-generation sequencing data, Bayesian modeling and Markov chain Monte Carlo methods, transcription factor binding sites identification in DNA sequence, and protein motif identification.

### **Internal Medicine**

**Francesco S. Celi, M.D., MHSc**, was named division chair of Endocrinology and Metabolism in January. He earned his medical degree from the University of Rome, La Sapienza, and Masters in Health Sciences from Duke University. Dr. Celi completed his residency training in Internal Medicine at the Greater Baltimore Medical Center and research fellowship in Geriatrics at Johns Hopkins University and the National Institute on Aging at the NIH. He came to VCU from the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, MD. His areas of interest include thyroid disorders and thyroid cancer.

**Lori Sweeney, M.D.**, joined the department as an associate professor in January. She earned her medical degree from VCU. Dr. Sweeney came to VCU from Eisenhower Army Medical Center in Fort Gordon, GA.

**Amit Varma, M.D., Ph.D.**, joined the department as an assistant clinical professor in January. He earned his medical degree and completed his fellowship in cardiovascular medicine at VCU.

### **Surgery**

**Giao Phan, M.D.**, will join the department as an associate professor in July. He earned his medical degree from Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and completed his residency training at Ohio State University Medical Center and Washington University Barnes Jewish Hospital, St. Louis, MO. Dr. Phan also completed an immunotherapy and surgical oncology research fellowship at the National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD, and Moffitt Cancer Center, Tampa, FL. His research interests include melanoma, cancer, immunotherapy and adoptive cell therapy.

## ***Student Honors***

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

**Class of 2016's Adrian Diaz** will begin a one-year term as president of the Southeast region of the Latino Medical Student Association in June. VCU's LMSA chapter was established this past year through the efforts of Diaz and his classmate Margarita Corredor. Earlier this year, they attended the LMSA Southeast Regional Conference hosted by UNC-Chapel Hill.

**Class of 2017's Jacqueline Britz** was one of five winners in the research category of the American College of Physician's Abstract Competition. Over 300 submissions were made to the competition. She was one of 40 chosen to present her research at the American College of Physicians 2014 Internal Medicine Conference in Orlando, FL, in April. The title of her selected abstract, "Exploring challenges and policy solutions for improving access to healthcare for vulnerable populations: Lessons from the UK National Health Service."

**Class of 2017's Kunal Kapoor** was accepted to the Global Health Delivery Summer Intensive (GHD) Program at Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH), taught by GHD co-founder and senior advisor Dr. Paul Farmer. This is the first time someone from VCU will be represented in the program. The chance to connect and collaborate with other global health professionals working to improve health care delivery is a tremendous opportunity.

**Class of 2017's Jessica Regan** was awarded a 2014 Alpha Omega Alpha (AOA) Carolyn L. Kuckein Student Research Fellowship award in April. This fellowship award is one of five that was established to encourage and support student research.

**Class of 2017's Megan Zepp** was recently selected as one of five winners from a pool of 323 applicants of A Place for Mom's annual Senior Care Innovation Scholarship contest. A Place for Mom, the nation's largest senior living referral service, launched the Senior Care Innovation Scholarship program in 2013 to help encourage student interest in the senior living field.