

# Pedi Press

A Quarterly Publication of the Department of Pediatrics  
Baylor College of Medicine



# Pedi Press

A Quarterly Publication of the Department of Pediatrics  
Baylor College of Medicine



## In this issue:

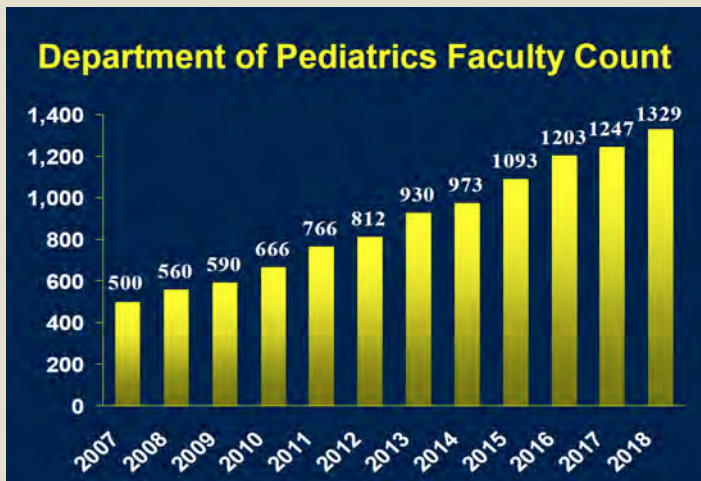
<b>Feature Article</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Events &amp; Section Features</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Faculty, Fellows &amp; Staff Features</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Research</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Mark Your Calendar</b>	<b>28</b>

*Pedi Press* is a quarterly publication of the Department of Pediatrics, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, Texas.  
Articles and other items should be submitted to Dr. Lee Ligon at [bligon@bcm.edu](mailto:bligon@bcm.edu).

**Dr. Mark Kline, Editor-in-Chief**  
**Dr. B. Lee Ligon, Managing Editor/Graphics Design**  
**Dr. Gordon Schutze, Consulting Editor**  
**Julie O'Brien Anderson, Copy and Content Editor**

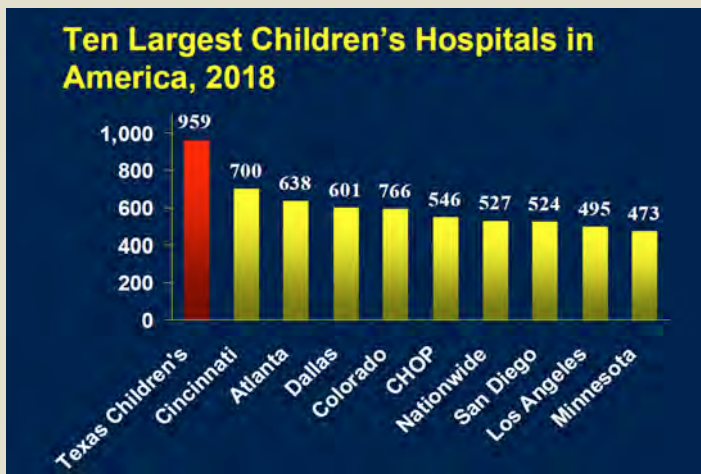
# FEATURE STORY

## Department Continues Exponential Growth in 2018

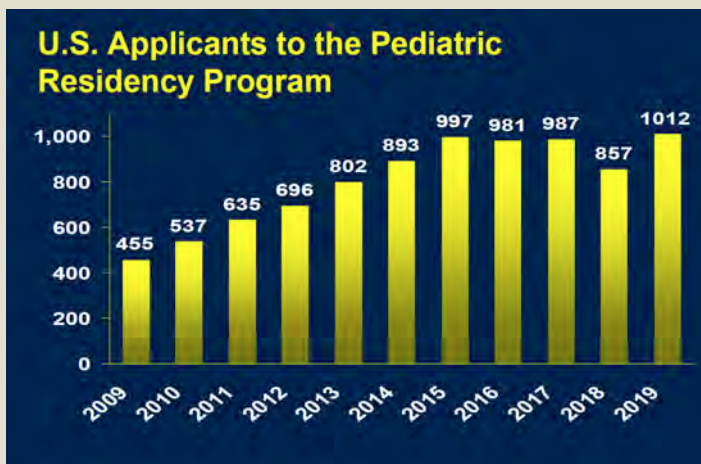


At the faculty meeting held on January 29, 2019, **Dr. Mark Kline**, Professor and Chairman, announced the many areas of growth and recognition that the Department of Pediatrics and Texas Children's Hospital experienced in 2018, including the following:

*The number of faculty in the department increased to 1329.*



*Texas Children's Hospital also set a record with 959 licensed beds, rendering it the largest children's hospital in the United States.*



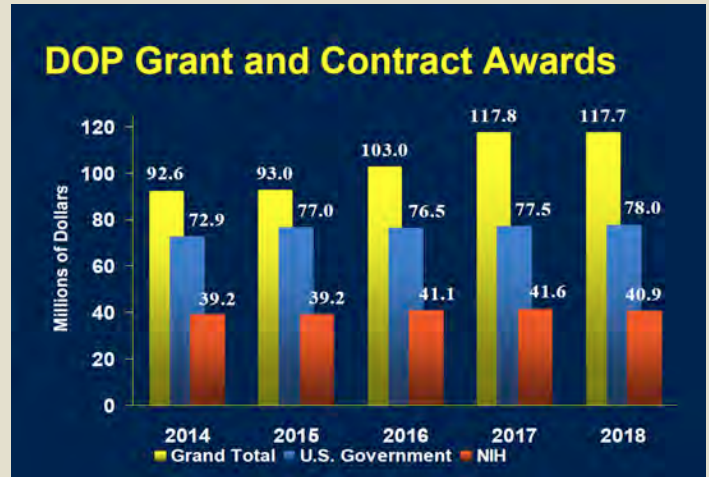
*The number of U. S. applicants to the Pediatric Residency Program hit an all-time high with 1012 applications received.*

Slides courtesy of Julie O'Brien

In addition, the Department of Pediatrics had 32 faculty members who were recipients of the **Norton Rose Fulbright (F&J) Awards** in 2018, up two from the previous year.

Dr. Kline also noted that the Department has an exceptional gender diversity among the various positions, with females filling the following percentages: Assistant Professor, 67%; Associate Professor, 53%; Professor, 31%; Section Heads, 50%; Vice Chairs, 67%; and “all faculty,” 59%.

Further, Department grant and contract awards in 2018 also set records, as seen in the accompanying figure.



# We've never been better!



**Texas Children's Hospital**

**#1** Cardiology & Heart Surgery

**#3** Neurology & Neurosurgery

**#4** Gastroenterology & GI Surgery

**#1** Pulmonology

**#3** Nephrology

**#4** Urology



Dr. Mark Kline also announced that Texas Children's Hospital continues as **#4 in the U.S. News & World Report**.

Also, six Sections (Cardiology & Heart Surgery, Pulmonology, Neurology & Neurosurgery, Nephrology, Gastroenterology & GI Surgery, and Urology) received special recognition as **USNWR "Honor Roll" Recipients**.

## USNWR Best Children's Hospitals Honor Roll, 2018

1. Boston Children's Hospital
2. Cincinnati Children's Hospital
3. Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
4. Texas Children's Hospital
5. Children's National Medical Center (DC)
6. Children's Hospital Los Angeles
7. Nationwide Children's Hospital
- Johns Hopkins Children's Hospital (tie)
9. Children's Hospital of Colorado
10. Seattle Children's Hospital



# DEPARTMENT NEWS EVENTS & SECTION FEATURES

## Featured in this Issue

Annual Education Retreat	6
Pediatric Research Symposium	7
Academic General	8
Cardiology	9
Diabetes & Endocrinology	10
Immunology, Allergy, Rheumatology	12
Psychiatry	13
Tropical Medicine	14
Center for Research, Innovation & Scholarship in Medical Education	15

# Annual Education Retreat Held in January

The **Department of Pediatrics Annual Education Retreat** featured two outstanding speakers: Dr. Kelley M. Skeff (below, left), who gave the Dr. Kelly Descioli Memorial Lecture, speaking on “Enhancing the Joy of Medical Teaching: Challenges and Opportunities,” and Dr. Kirsten Ostherr (below, right), who spoke in the afternoon on “Patients, Data, and Machines: New Models for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Medical Education.”



Kelley M. Skeff, MD, PhD, is George DeForest Barnett Professor in Medicine – Primary Care and Population at Stanford. He also is Co-Director of the Stanford Faculty Development Center for Medical Teachers at Stanford University and Director of Medicine Housestaff Program and Vice Chair for Education Programs, Department of Medicine at Stanford University School of Medicine.



Kirsten Ostherr, PhD, MPH, is Professor of English, Medical Humanities Program Director and Committee Chair, and Director of the Medical Futures Lab at Rice University. She is a media scholar and health researcher who works on the humanistic dimensions of making patient data into meaningful stories.

The guiding principles for the Annual Education Retreat are to: 1) engage faculty in relevant educational issues, 2) create a community of educators and educational scholars, and 3) facilitate the growth of clinician educators by introducing them to educational innovations.

The planning committee included Drs. Rachel Wolfe and Anhki Dutta as Co-Chairs, Drs. Danny Castro, Julieana Nichols, Satid Thammasitboon as committee members, and Remy Elizondo and Karla Gonzalez as program managers.

*(information and photo courtesy of Dr. Satid Thammasitboon and the CRIS newsletter)*



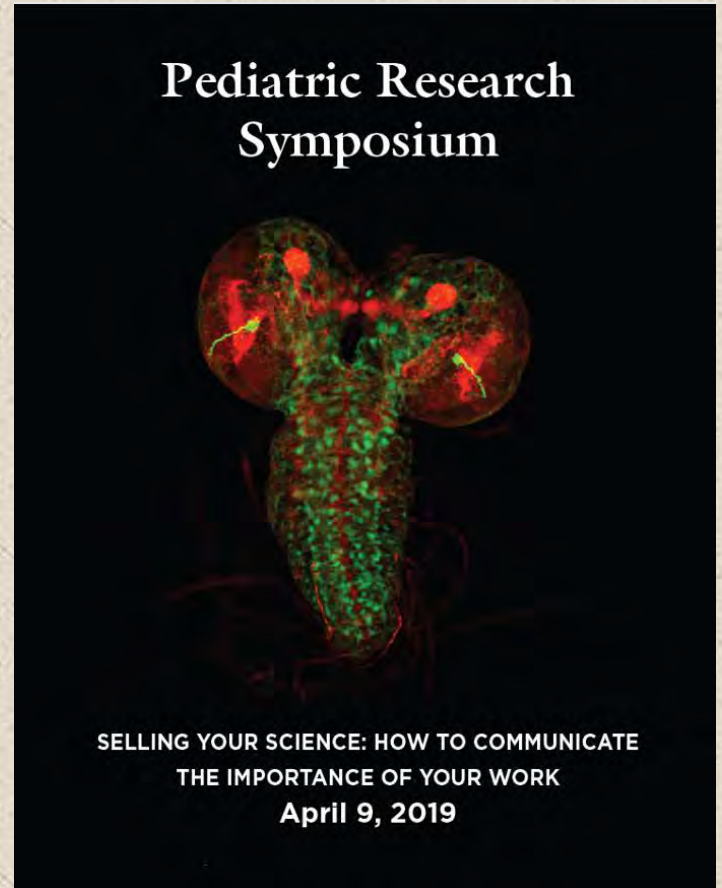
# Pediatric Research Symposium Held

The **Department of Pediatrics Annual Pediatric Research Symposium**, held on April 9, 2019, focused on “Selling Your Science: How to Communicate the Importance of Your Work.” The Symposium opened with remarks by **Dr. Sanjiv Harpavat**, Symposium Chair, followed by Top Abstracts Oral Presentations by Drs. Kyle Brown (3<sup>rd</sup>-year fellow, Critical Care), Danielle Callaway (3<sup>rd</sup>-year resident, Pediatrics), Noelle Gorgis (3<sup>rd</sup>-year fellow), Alice Lee (2<sup>nd</sup>-year fellow, Hospital Medicine), and Khaled Sanber (4<sup>th</sup>-year resident, Center for Cell and Gene Therapy and Internal Medicine). **Dr. Mark Kline**, Chairman, presented awards for the top abstracts.

The morning Keynote Research Presentation, “Translating Your Scientific Interests into a Rewarding Research Career,” was given by Dr. Ronald J. Sokol, Professor and Vice Chair of Pediatrics and Assistant Vice Chancellor for Clinical and Translational Science at the University of Colorado, Denver.

The afternoon Keynote Scholarship Presentation was delivered by **Dr. David Poplack**, Elise C. Young Professor of Pediatric Oncology, Director of Global HOPE, and Associate Director, Texas Children’s Cancer and Hematology Centers.

A Fellows’ Workshop, “Elevator Pitches: Why 30 Seconds Can Make or Break you,” was presented by Elizabeth Hoff, Managing Director of the Fannin Innovation Studio, after which Poster Awards were presented.



## Event Raises Awareness of Need for Advocacy

On February 8, 2019, the Department of Pediatrics, in collaboration with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), Texas Pediatric Society (TPS), and Texas Children's Hospital Center for Child Health Policy and Advocacy, convened an all-day conference devoted to Advocacy. The one-day event brought together an interdisciplinary group of faculty, fellows, residents, and medical students at TCH. The goal of this conference was to provide attendees with a theoretical framework and practical strategies on how to make advocacy work scholarly.

The conference was kicked off with a Grand Rounds presentation with speakers Mark Del Monte, CEO of APP, and Kim Edwards, Chapter Chair of the TPS.



During the afternoon, attendees participated in workshops on the advocacy portfolio, social media advocacy, frontline community advocacy, and subspecialty advocacy. The conference concluded with a debriefing session on the next steps to take to enhance the future advocacy experiences of attendees. Suggestions included having more collaboration across disciplines in advocacy efforts and creating a database of individuals currently engaged in advocacy.





#1 in U. S. News & World Report



## Cardiology Incorporates Psychology for Patients



**Dr. Katherine Cutitta**, Asst. Professor, approaches clinical care as a collaborative coach, learning to understand her patients and improve daily functioning with regard to health-related behaviors. She recently defined her role as a cardiac psychologist as “a specialization of health psychology focused on addressing the unique day-to-day challenges faced by pediatric cardiology patients.” She described how she follows each patient through every stage of the journey, from the initial diagnosis to adulthood.

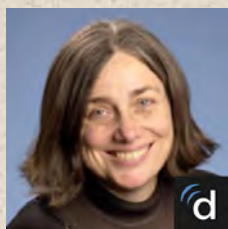
Her role as part of the cardiology care team is to help patients and their families deal with the challenges of managing a heart condition, which may include accepting a diagnosis, remembering to take medications, living with a device, adjusting to school and other social environments, and returning to physical activity after treatment or surgery. She noted in her article that “nearly 10 percent of cardiology patients experience symptoms associated with depression and other mood disorders while roughly 30 percent of patients report anxiety. More specifically, nearly 85 percent of children and young adults with implantable devices . . . report avoiding a range of activities and interactions post-implant.



# Gender Medicine Center

## Focuses on Underserved Populations

In October 2018, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) published a new policy statement urging support and care of transgender and gender-diverse children and adolescents. Its aim was to provide information for pediatricians and parents on how to address these disorders, and it advocated for ways to eliminate discrimination and stigma. The transgender condition differs from a variety of other gender-related conditions termed *intersex* or *disorders of sexual development* (DSD). A child with DSD is born with gender-related biological variations caused by different diseases or developmental deficiencies. *Gender dysphoria* reflects the subjective decision of an individual to identify as male or female.



Years ago, the Gender Medicine Program and Center addressed DSD with the cutting-edge medical approaches available at that time. Under the direction of **Dr. Lefkothea P. Karaviti**, a multidisciplinary team was formed. It was unique because it incorporated an ethicist and emphasized education for parents to allow their participation in the decision-making process.<sup>1</sup> Today, the Center is led by Dr. Karaviti, **Dr. Sheila Gunn**, and **Dr. David Paul**, who oversees the gender dysphoria section. The current **Gender Medicine Team** is composed of experts in ethics, endocrinology, gynecology, urology, psychology, and genetics.



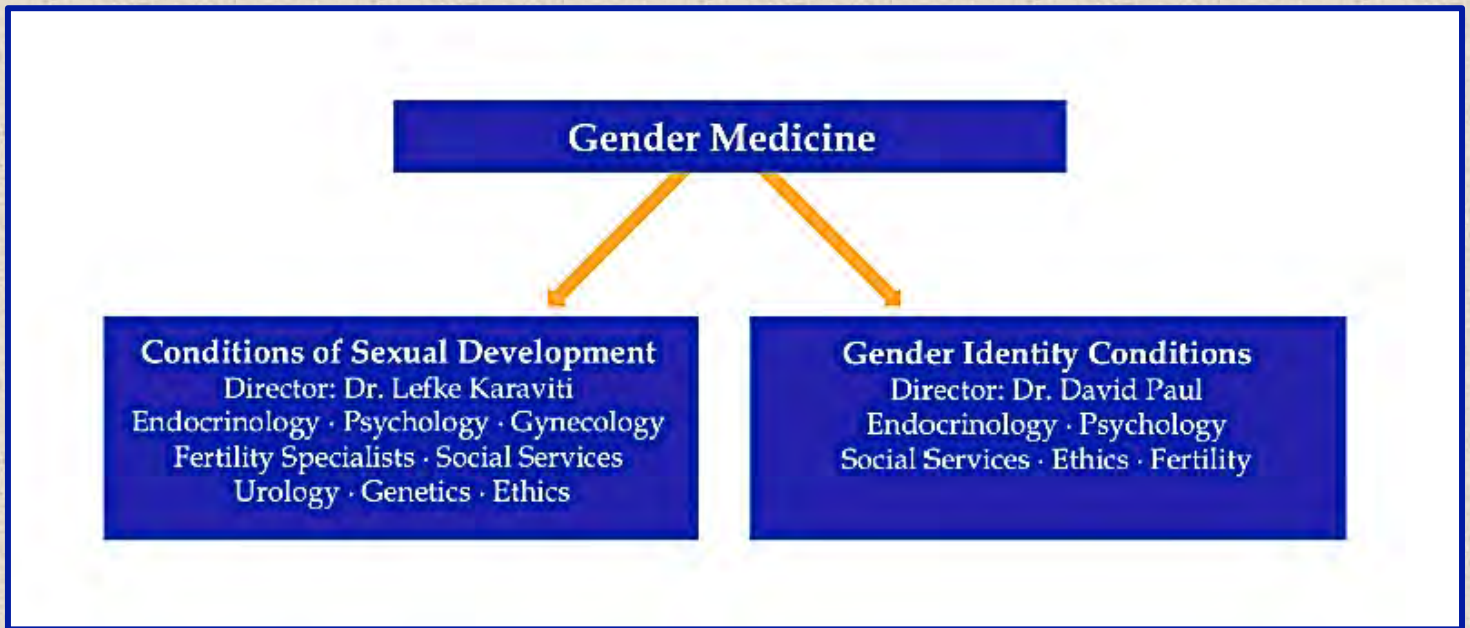
As this subspecialty became more prominent, the term used to describe the relevant patients' conditions was changed to *disorders of sexual development*. However, as Dr. Karaviti and her team pointed out in a Perspective published in *Pediatrics*,<sup>2</sup> the physical, biochemical, and mental characteristics of these patients better fit a model of fluidity. Yet, sex continues to be predominantly binary, and the decisions that families make early on often have medical, social, and legal implications.<sup>2</sup> The authors noted that a designation of "intersex" has considerable benefit for many, but not all, of these patients (e.g., 46,XX infants who are virilized due to congenital adrenal hyperplasia and 46,XY infants with absent virilization due to complete androgen insensitivity). They also explained that the intersex designation opens a world of opportunities for some of these patients, provides a better means of managing uncertainty, and avoids making an incorrect sex assignment, especially for conditions associated with a high rate of gender dissatisfaction. These authors continue to advocate for this change in nomenclature.

<sup>1</sup> Axelrad ME, Berg JS, Coker LA, et al. 2009 The gender medicine team: "it takes a village." *Adv Pediatr* 56:145-164.

<sup>2</sup> Viau-Colindres J, Axelrad M, Karaviti LP. 2017 Bringing Back the Term "Intersex." *Pediatrics* 140: 1-3.

### PRESENT & FUTURE GOALS

- Incorporate into the program the understanding and scientific evidence that support gender identity disorders and disorders of sex development
- Educate professionals and laymen by providing information and explaining the biology and continuum of sexual development, with the aim of de-stigmatization
- Host discussions with representatives from human rights organizations and world health organizations to raise public awareness and advocate for the rights of these patients
- Advance policies that do not marginalize patient and that reduce associations with mental illness
- Provide outreach publications with guidelines to benefit other communities that lack access to care for DSD or gender identity disorders
- Establish, at the social and political levels, awareness that sex and gender are not social constructs
- Maintain the multidisciplinary team at BCM/TCH. The team goals are to reach a consensus among the subspecialties to establish a standard of care for sex assignment and to increase the confidence of the parents by educating them and allowing them to participate in the process
- Attract philanthropy and eventually provide a nonprofit clinic at TCH, in the context of our humanitarian mission to protect the rights of individuals who are marginalized due to DSD or gender dysphoria



**Evidence-Based Practice Summary**  
**Identification, Evaluation and Management of Atypical Genitalia**  
 by  
**Gender Medicine Team**

**“Despite our decades of experience, we cannot answer all of these questions, and many times we struggle. However, as a Gender Medicine Program, we are in a better position to help our patients make decisions they are comfortable with.”**

Treatment of conditions of sexual development and gender identity disorders requires “a village” if they are to be addressed adequately. In order to provide a distinct evidence-based summary of practices for articulating guidelines, we ask the following questions:

- 1: What are the targets in treating a DSD case?**
- 2: What are the targets in treating and nurturing gender identity conditions?**
- 3: Who decides?**
- 4: What considerations should be give to the child or the parent?**
- 5: What are the medical consequences of hormonal or surgical treatments?**
- 6: What are the limitations and ethical constraints of managing DSD and conditions of gender identity?**

**APPLY THE EVIDENCE**

Currently, clinical practice is determined primarily by expert opinion and review articles. Evaluation and management of a neonate or infant with atypical genitalia should focus on

- Diagnosing or ruling out potentially life-threatening conditions and treating as appropriately indicated
- Using a comprehensive, multidisciplinary diagnostic approach to acquire as much information as possible
- Opening communication with parents about the information obtained and outcomes available
- Sharing decision-making with regard to sex assignment, after discussing available outcome evidence and the patient’s diagnostic results
- Exercising adequate utilization of resources

## 4<sup>th</sup> Biennial William T. Shearer Symposium Held

The 4<sup>th</sup> Biennial William T. Shearer Symposium was held on March 22, 2019. The symposium is held in honor of the late Dr. William T. Shearer, former Section Chief and a renowned immunologist responsible for numerous pioneering and meaningful discoveries that transformed the testing and treatment of primary immunodeficiency diseases. Dr. Shearer is also remembered as the physician who provided care for David Vetter, known as the “bubble boy” because he spent most of his short life in an isolation “bubble” due to his immunodeficiency.

The symposium focused on “Innovations in Primary Immunodeficiency and Clinical Immunology” and featured Dr. Sergio Rosenzweig of the National Institutes of Health, who offered the keynote address on “MOGS N-glycosylation disorder: Where agammaglobulinemia meets resistance to viral infections.” Other speakers included Carol Demaret, David Vetter’s mother; Dr. Janet Butel, Distinguished Service Professor of the Department of Molecular Virology and Microbiology, BCM; Dr. Brendan Lee, Professor of Genetics in the Department of Molecular and Human Genetics, BCM; and faculty from the Department of Pediatrics: **Drs. Tiphannie Vogel, Caridad Martinez, Cliona Rooney, Christina Nance, Mary Paul, Andrew DiNardo, and Aikaterini Anagnostou.** The tribute luncheon was hosted by Carol Ann Demaret and Drs. Christina Nance and Janet Butel.



Following welcoming remarks by **Dr. Carla Davis**, Professor and Chief, Dr. J. Patrick Whelan of Keck University of Southern California, Los Angeles, gave a tribute to Dr. Shearer. Participants then enjoyed hearing from the speakers on the main topics: Session 1, Genetic Innovations & Discovery in Primary Immunodeficiency Diseases, and Session 2, Advances in HIV and Allergic Disease. The symposium closed with another message from Dr. Rosenzweig and a short tribute video of Dr. Shearer. Dr. Lisa R. Forbes offered the closing remarks.



# Activities for 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Mental Health Awareness Week Announced



The Section of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry announced that the **Third Annual Mental Health Awareness Week Celebration** will be held on Tuesday, May 14. The dedicated providers and team members are committed to improving Mental Health Awareness.

**This years' theme is  
"It's Okay to Say...."**

The event will be held on:

**May 14, 2019  
11:00 am - 1:00 pm  
Mark Wallace Tower Auxiliary Bridge**

There will be information booths, along with freebies available highlighting characters such as Anger, Joy, and Sadness from Disney's Inside Out. They are also planning a short talk from a guest speaker to share their personal experience with their mental health journey.

The Section of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry currently has eleven full-time faculty, four part-time faculty, and thirty-two volunteer faculty at its various clinical sites. Faculty members are active in their own areas of interest, with academic endeavors such as research, community outreach, and presentations at a local and national level. Faculty members also take an active role in mentorship, through both creation of and involvement in mentorship networks. The Menninger Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at BCM is home to the Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Fellowship.



## Vaccine Expert Takes on “Anti-Vaxers”

By Nathaniel Wilder Wolf

On the heels of the publication of his book *Vaccines Did Not Cause Rachel's Autism*, a personal account of his first-hand experience with his daughter's autism, and with a relatively large outbreak of measles in various parts of the United States occurring this year, Tropical Medicine's **Dr. Peter Hotez**, Professor, has found himself fighting the anti-vaccine lobby in Texas and across the country.

Dr. Hotez testified before a congressional committee in the first week of March, urging lawmakers to curb nonmedical exemptions for parents who want to opt out of vaccinating their children with the schedule of recommended vaccines. He has done numerous interviews and written dozens of pieces during the past couple years reiterating the fact that vaccines are safe and there is no evidence that they cause harm other than in very rare cases.

Dr. Hotez recently reported that:

*“It turns out that measles is a pretty good biomarker of antivaccine activities. Because of its high transmissibility, once vaccine coverage goes below a 90 or 95 percent threshold, breakthrough measles outbreaks become possible. When this occurs, the consequences are often dire. Measles is a killer disease that, during the 1980s, probably killed more children than any other pediatric infection. Beginning in the early 2000s, as vaccine coverage began to decline, we started seeing measles outbreaks in the United Kingdom and then across Europe. During the first half of 2018, the World Health Organization reported that there were more than 40,000 cases of measles in Europe, with an abrupt rise in antivaccine activities in Italy. In the US, there was a terrible measles outbreak in Minnesota last year, and multiple cases this year. In several western states, we've seen counties where vaccines are being withheld from children. The antivaccine movement is now global, operating in multiple countries. The movement is well-organized and, in many cases, well-funded.”*

Regarding the influenza vaccine, Dr. Hotez noted, “In 2018 we had a terrible flu season, where 200 children died from the flu, and the vast majority were not vaccinated despite the recommendation that all children over 6 months get their flu vaccine,” said Hotez. “Furthermore, we see resistance to new vaccines such as the HPV vaccine which could help eliminate cervical cancer. It's very frustrating.”

# CRIS Announces Upcoming Medical Education Events



TEXAS EDUCATOR'S ACADEMIES COLLABORATIVE  
FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONS  
SOUTHEAST EDUCATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

May 3, 2019  
Galveston Convention Center  
5600 Seawall Blvd.  
Galveston, Texas

The 2019 TEACH-S will focus on "Preparing Healthcare Students for Emerging Roles and Responsibilities." It will offer a plenary speaker, breakout sessions (workshops and oral presentations) and poster viewings, one for each session, morning and afternoon.

The poster for MURMURATION features a black background with a flock of colorful birds in flight on the left side. The title "MURMURATION" is in large white letters, with "Medical Education Units for Research and Scholarship (MURS)" below it. A quote at the bottom reads: "The phenomenon that results when numerous starlings fly in swooping, intricately coordinated patterns through the sky." The bottom section of the poster is a dark red color with white text.

**MURMURATION**  
Medical Education Units  
for Research and Scholarship (MURS)

*"The phenomenon that results when numerous starlings fly in swooping, intricately coordinated patterns through the sky."*

For medical educators with innovative and collaborative minds....

Help us create networks of medical educators and scholars

The MURS being formed:

- DIGITAL SCHOLARSHIP
- EVIDENCE ACADEMY
- MEDICAL HUMANITIES
- BEDSIDE ULTRASOUND IN MEDICAL EDUCATION

INTERESTED?  
CONTACT  
CRIS@TEXASCHILDRENS.ORG  
OR  
STAY TUNED...  
FOR MORE DETAILS

# CRIS

## Offers Ongoing Academic and Educational Resources for Department of Pediatrics



### Norton Rose Fulbright Consultation

Geeta Singhal, MD, MEd  
Anne Gill, DrPH, MS, RN  
Moushumi Sur, MD

The **Norton Rose, L.L.P. Faculty Excellence Award** provides opportunities for Baylor faculty who meet certain standards of quality, quantity, and breadth to receive recognition for their sustained exemplary educational contributions to the College. Awards are given for Teaching/Evaluation, Development of Enduring Educational Materials, Educational Leadership, and Educational Research.

---

### Developing and Evaluating Educational Scholarship Consultation

Satid Thammasitboon, MD, MHPE  
Geeta Singhal, MD, MEd  
Teri Turner, MD, MPH, MEd

CRIS faculty provide **consultation** for medical educators who aim to transform academic tasks or services into educational scholarship. For more information, contact [CRIS@texaschildrens.org](mailto:CRIS@texaschildrens.org)

---

### Statistics, Instrument Development & Validation Consultation

Shelly Kumar, MS, MSC

CRIS provides **consultation** on statistics, developing research instruments, and validating research results. For more information, contact [CRIS@texaschildrens.org](mailto:CRIS@texaschildrens.org)

---

### Writing Workshops & Retreats

B. Lee Ligon, PhD, MA, MA, MAR  
Satid Thammasitboon, MD, MHPE

CRIS offers **interactive workshops** on writing the educational scholarship manuscript. The workshops cover topics such as publication ethics, crafting a rhetorical statement, and establishing personal boundaries for writing, along with hands-on, practical exercises for writing the different components of the manuscript and group and individual consultations. For more information, contact [bligon@bcm.edu](mailto:bligon@bcm.edu)

---

### Editing & Didactic Writing Presentations

B. Lee Ligon, PhD, MA, MA, MAR

CRIS and the Department of Pediatrics also provides **writing and editing resources** for medical educators, including:

- **editing** of manuscripts, grant proposals, and other documents for Pediatrics faculty/fellows
- **presentations** on writing academic research manuscripts, case studies, abstracts, ethics of publication

For more information, contact [bligon@bcm.edu](mailto:bligon@bcm.edu)





## DEPARTMENT NEWS FACULTY, FELLOWS & STAFF FEATURES

### Dr. Ward Steps Down as Program Director

"I want to express my personal gratitude to Mark for his friendship, support and leadership. I also want to express the gratitude of the entire Department for the incredible job he has done in fostering the careers of a generation of fantastic young pediatricians and pediatric subspecialists."

-- Dr. Mark Kline, Chairman



On March 21, 2019, Dr. Mark Kline, Chairman, announced that **Dr. Mark Ward** was stepping down from his position as Pediatric Residency Program Director, after "14 years of exemplary service . . . and completion of another stellar Match." Dr. Ward will continue in this position until a successor is selected and will work closely with that successor during the coming year to ensure a seamless transition. Dr. Gordon Schutze will chair a search committee for a successor and make recommendations to Dr. Kline regarding a new Director. In his letter to the faculty, Dr. Kline noted that "We are eager to identify faculty who want to be considered for the role. If you are such an individual, please e-mail [Dr. Gordon Schutze or Dr. Mark Kline] regarding your interest. This is a fabulous career opportunity for a clinician passionate about medical education and training. Please let us know if you would like to be considered."

# Chairman Announces New Leadership Positions

In February, **Dr. Mark Kline**, Chairman, announced several new leadership appointments: Vice-Chair for Behavioral Health and two Section Heads/Service Chiefs of newly formed Sections.

**Dr. Julie Kaplow**, Assoc. Professor and Chief of Psychology, was named **Vice-Chair for Behavioral Health**. Dr. Kaplow received her PhD in Clinical Psychology from Duke University. She served an internship at Boston Children's Hospital/Harvard Medical School, followed by a post-doctoral fellowship at the Center for Medical and Refugee Trauma/Boston Medical Center. She is a strong proponent of a scientist-practitioner approach, focusing her research interests primarily on the biological, behavioral, and psychological consequences of childhood trauma and bereavement, with an emphasis on therapeutically modifiable factors that can be used to inform psychosocial interventions. Her ongoing interests deal with the effectiveness of treatments for various populations of youths, including those with a history of trauma, those exposed to traumatic bereavement, and those anticipating the death of a loved one. Dr. Kaplow has served as Director of the Trauma and Grief Center, TCH, where she oversees evidence-based assessment, treatment, and research with youth and families exposed to traumas and/or losses, and develops and disseminates trauma- and bereavement-informed "best practices" to community providers nationwide. She also co-leads a practice-research network of sites across the country that use "common denominator" theory, assessment tools, and interventions to address the unique needs and strengths of bereaved youth and families.



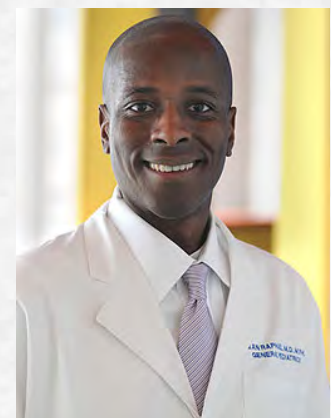
---

**Dr. Eyal Muscal**, Assoc. Professor, was named **Section Head and Service Chief for Rheumatology**, which was separated from Immunology, Allergy and Retrovirology. Dr. Muscal received his M.D. from Jefferson Medical College. His Internship and Residency in Pediatrics were served at Children's Hospital-Pittsburgh, after which he completed a fellowship in pediatric rheumatology at Baylor College of Medicine. He holds a Master's of Science Degree in Clinical Research, and his research interests include neurologic manifestation of systemic autoimmune disorders.



---

**Dr. Jean Leclerc Raphael**, Assoc. Professor, was named **Section Head and Service Chief for Academic General Pediatrics**, which was separated from Public Health and Child Abuse. Dr. Raphael received his M.D. from Harvard Medical School. He served his residency at Boston Children's Hospital/Boston Medical Center and has a post-doctoral fellowship from Commonwealth Fund Harvard University Fellowship in Minority Health Policy. He also holds a Healthcare Management Certificate from Rice University. His research combines health outcomes research and behavioral interventions to enhance care delivery for minority children with chronic conditions. He is Director for the TCH Center for Child Health Policy and Advocacy and serves on the Public Policy and Advocacy Committee of the Academic Pediatric Association.



# New Deputy Director of Cancer Center Announced



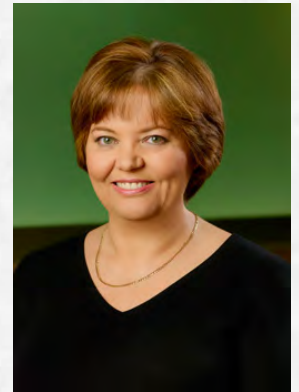
**Dr. Will Parsons**, Assoc. Professor, was appointed **Deputy Director of Texas Children's Cancer and Hematology Centers**. Dr. Parsons, a board-certified oncologist, received his M.D. and Ph.D. from Ohio State University College of Medicine. He did a residency in pediatrics at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, followed by a Clinical Fellowship in pediatric hematology-oncology at National Cancer Institute and a Clinical Fellowship in neuro-oncology at Johns Hopkins University. He also serves as Co-Director of the Brain Tumor Program, Co-Director of the Cancer Genetics and Genomics Program, and Director of the Center for Precision Oncology in the TCH Cancer Center. He is nationally recognized in the area of cancer genomics and the use of precision oncology for the diagnosis and treatment of pediatric cancer patients.

---

## Lifetime Achievement Awards Bestowed



**Dr. David Poplack**, Professor and Elise C. Young Chair in Pediatric Oncology at BCM and longtime director of the Texas Children's Cancer and Hematology Centers and now Associate Director, as well as Director of the Global Hope program, received the **Angel Award** in recognition of Lifetime Achievement at the **Children's Brain Tumor Foundation's** Dream and Promise Awards Benefit.



**Dr. Helen Heslop**, Professor and Director of the Center for Cell and Gene Therapy, received the **Lifetime Achievement Award** from the **American Society for Blood and Marrow Transplantation** at the Transplantation and Cellular Therapy Meeting held in February in Houston. Her key contributions to the field are on adoptive T Cell immunotherapy to improve hematopoietic stem cell transplantation and cancer therapy.

---

## Faculty Receives Preceptor of Year Award

Academic General proudly announced that **Dr. Nicholas Eric Lindsay**, Asst. Professor, was the recipient of the 2018 Community Preceptor of the Year Award. Dr. Lindsay, a former Baylor graduate, has been a clinical preceptor of BCM medical students since 2012. He was selected for his ongoing commitment to teaching and mentorship, as well as the feedback received from medical students describing him as an excellent teacher and role model.





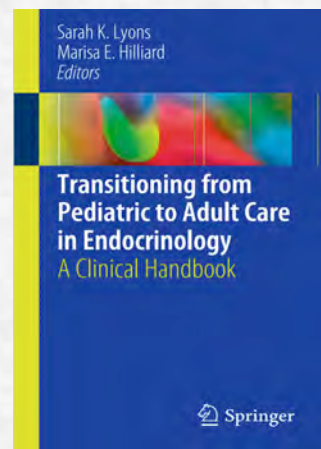
## Department Presents Teaching Awards

The Department of Pediatrics Teaching Awards were presented at the January Department Meeting. Pictured right: **Dr. Mark Kline**, Chairman, far left, and **Dr. Teri Turner**, Director of CRIS, far right, with the awards recipients, l-r, **Drs. Joan Shook** (Arnold J. Rudolph Award for Lifetime Excellence in Teaching), **Keila Lopez** (Outstanding Grand Rounds, Junior Faculty), **Julie Kaplow** (Outstanding Grand Rounds, Senior Faculty), **Elaine Fielder** (Excellence in Teaching), **Daniel Chelius** (Excellence in Teaching, Non-Pediatrics Faculty), and **D'Juanna White Satcher** (Excellence in Educational Innovation). (photo by Paul Kuntz)

## Faculty Edit First Book on Endocrine Transition Care



Two faculty members, **Drs. Sara Lyons** (Diabetes & Endocrinology) and **Marisa Hilliard** (Psychology), Asst. Professors, edited the first edition of *Transitioning from Pediatric to Adult Care in Endocrinology: A Clinical Handbook*. Published by Springer International, the book provides endocrinologists with a guide to understanding developmental and psychosocial issues of young adulthood and how they affect healthcare and disease self-management. The handbook has two parts: Part 1 describes transition interventions and strategies that can be integrated into routine care and offers practical considerations for transitions processes; Part 2 focuses on transition issues specific to common endocrine conditions such as type 1 and type 2 diabetes, Turner syndrome, congenital adrenal hyperplasia, endocrine sequelae of childhood cancer, and transgender care.



# 2020-2021 Pediatric Chief Residents Announced

On February 8, 2019, Dr. Mark Ward, Professor..... announced the pediatric chief residents for academic year 2020-2021: Drs. Elit Hadad, Julie Lovin, Liz May, and Alex Siller.



The chiefs for this upcoming 2019-2020 academic year are Drs. Daniel Chilcote, Kirby Deshotels, Teddy Jones, and Bev Lee.

---

## Tropical Medicine Researcher Wins 1<sup>st</sup> Place

"We had no doubt he would do well, and we are incredibly proud of Tim. I feel very fortunate to have such a bright and articulate PhD student in my lab. "

--Dr. Kristy Murray

By Nathaniel Wilder Wolf

Tropical Medicine researcher **Tim Erickson** won first place in the 3-minute thesis competition at UT School of Public Health in February, followed up by the "People's Choice Award" in the national version of the contest in Knoxville, Tennessee a few weeks later.

Erickson discussed his work on neurocysticercosis, a parasitic infection caused by ingestion of the intestinal pork tapeworm *Taenia solium*. His presentation was titled "Worms on my Mind: Tracking Neurocysticercosis in Houston."

Whereas infection with neurocysticercosis has in the past been associated with immigration or travel, Erickson explained, "Recently, we've started to see case reports that suggest patients without any travel history outside of the United States are developing this disease."

Erickson, a PhD student at UT School of Public Health, also works in Dr. Kristy Murray's Laboratory for Zoonotic and Viral Diseases. "



# faculty briefs . . .

**Dr. Austin L. Brown**, Asst. Professor and member of the Dan L Duncan Comprehensive Cancer Center, was awarded \$1,187,006 for his research project, "Multiomic Biomarker Discovery for Therapy-Related Neurocognitive Impairment in Childhood Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia."

**Dr. Hsiao-Tuan Chao**, Asst. Professor and faculty at the Jan and Dan Duncan Neurological Research Institute and Associate Program Director of the Basic Neuroscience Pathway in Pediatric Neurology, has been named the newest McNair Scholar at Baylor College of Medicine. She is the College's first M.D./Ph.D. McNair Student Scholar alumna to also be named a McNair Scholar. Dr. Chao's research focuses on neurodevelopmental disorders, such as intellectual disability, epilepsy, and autism.

**Dr. Teresa Davis**, Professor, was selected to be a member of the 2020 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee. The independent advisory committee works to ensure America's dietary guidance reflects the latest science. Davis was one of 20 nationally recognized scientists named to the committee by U.S. Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

**Dr. Charleta Guillory**, Assoc. Professor, was awarded the President's Cup Award at the American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Federal Government Affairs Conference. The award is one of the most prestigious pediatric awards given nationally.

**Dr. Andras Heczey**, Asst. Professor and DLDCCC member, received \$2.4 million from CPRIT for his research project, "Interleukin-15- and -21- Armored Glypican-3-Specific CAR T-Cells for Patients With Hepatocellular Carcinoma."

**Dr. Marilyn Hockenberry**, Director of Nursing for Global HOPE, launched a 9-month nurse training course in Botswana for more than 20 nurses at Princess Marina Hospital.

**Dr. Omar Jaber**, Clinical Postdoctoral Fellow in pediatrics, has been honored with the Distinguished Alumni Humanitarian Award from his alma mater, Ross University. The award recognizes physicians whose significant contributions of leadership or service has enriched the well-being of others. Jaber has participated in international humanitarian missions in the West Bank, Jordan and the Philippines, and he also has been involved in healthcare issues within the immigrant and refugee population, particularly among Muslims.

**Dr. Henri Justino**, Assoc. Professor, and the company he co-founded, PolyVascular, won Pediatric Health Pitch Competition awards in the Medical Devices and Health Disparities and Equity categories at the 2019 SXSW festival in Austin in March. His company designs heart valves that grow with the child; he received a \$25,000 grant in the competition.

**Dr. Susan Kirk**, Physician Assistant, has been nationally recognized for earning a specialty credential, a Certificate of Added Qualifications, from the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants. She received the certificate in pediatrics by meeting licensure, education, and experience requirements a passion a national exam. She is one of 13 certified Pas in Texas to earn a CAQ in Pediatrics since the program's inception in 2014.

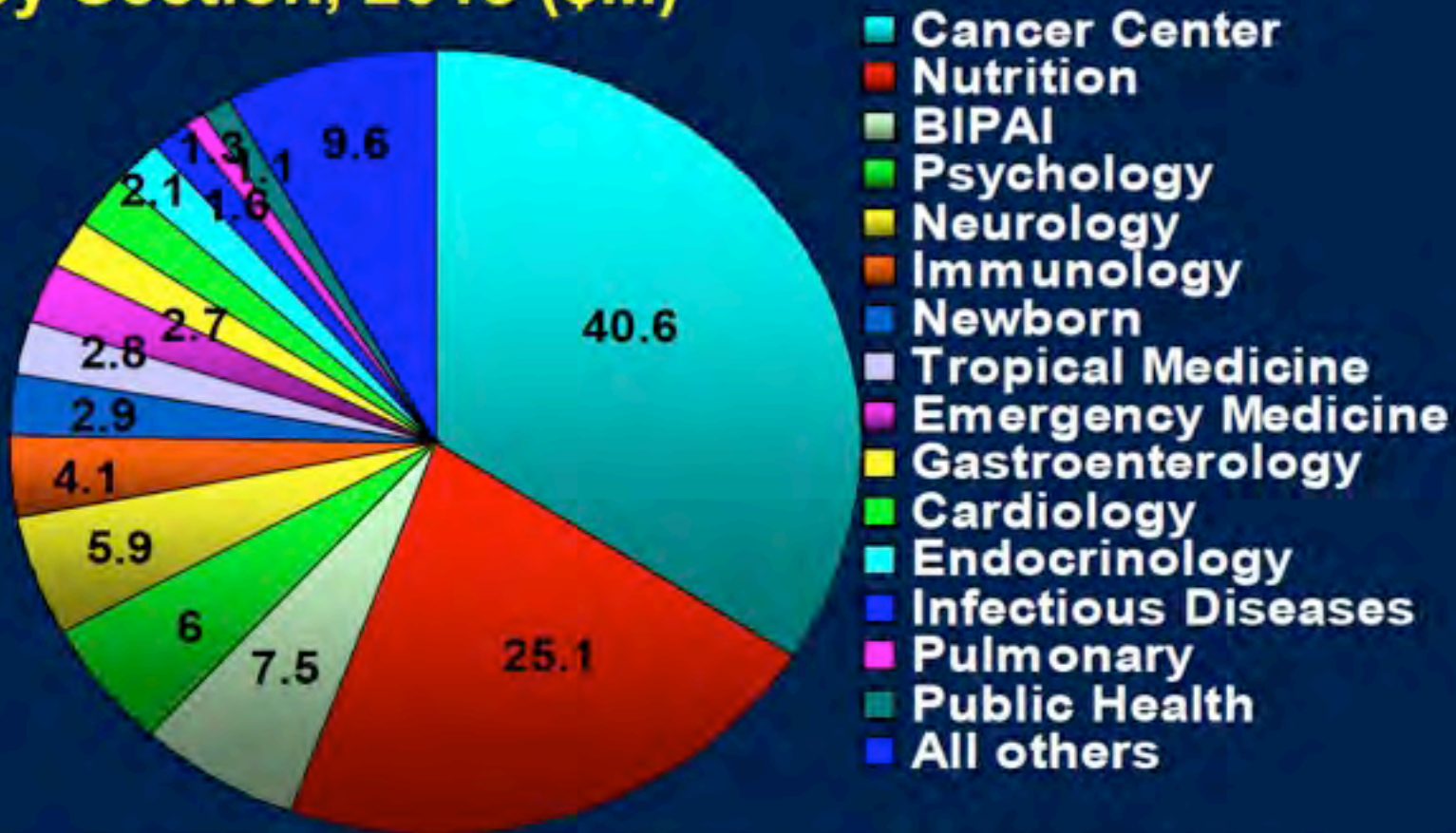
**Dr. Keila Lopez**, Asst. Professor, was named one of Houston's Top 25 Multicultural Leaders in Healthcare by the National Diversity Council and Healthcare Diversity Council and served as a panelist at the Healthcare Diversity Week event on February 28. She also received an Award of Excellence in Teaching for the most outstanding presentation at Baylor Pediatric Grand Rounds by a junior faculty member. She was named an Associate Director of Community Engagement for the Office of Institutional Diversity, Inclusion and Equity.

**Dr. Bhukumusa Lukhele** has assumed his role as the Executive Director for Baylor-eSwatini After returning from Houston for a week-long orientation, he spent his first week in Baylor-Eswatini meeting the staff and key stakeholders including Ministry of Health Management, World Health Organization, and UNICEF, and the Board of Directors for Baylor-eSwatini.

**Dr. Craig Pymonto**, Fellow, PGY 5, received the American Academy of Pediatrics Society of Critical Care Advocacy Award.

**Dr. Rayne H. Rouse**, Asst. Professor, was named an Associate Director of Community Engagement for the Office of Institutional Diversity, Inclusion and Equity.

# Grant and Contract Awards by Section, 2018 (\$M)



## DEPARTMENT NEWS RESEARCH

### Department Ranks 7<sup>th</sup> Nationally in NIH Funding

In March 2019, Dr. Adam Kuspa, Senior Vice President and Dean of Research, Baylor College of Medicine, announced the listing of grant funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), published by the Blue Ridge Institute of Medical Research. He noted that in 2018, Baylor College of Medicine faculty successfully competed for more than \$259 million in NIH funding. BCM is ranked 20<sup>th</sup> among the national medical schools in funding from NIH and is ranked first in Texas for the 12<sup>th</sup> consecutive year. Thirteen BCM departments ranked within the top 30. **The Department of Pediatrics ranked 7<sup>th</sup> nationally.**

**Dr. Mark Kline**, Chairman, also noted at the Department of Pediatrics Faculty Meeting in January that total extramural research funding totaled \$117.7 million, including \$40.9 million from NIH.

# Treatment Option for Pediatric *C. difficile* Infections

A study led by **Dr. Richard Kellermayer**, Assoc. Professor and Director of the Pediatric Inflammatory Bowel Disease program at Texas Children's offers a new option for treating infections caused by *Clostridioides* or *Clostridium difficile*.



Published in the *Journal of Pediatric Gastroenterology and Nutrition*, the article offers guidelines for safe use of fecal microbial transplantation (FMT) to treat children with recurrent infections caused by these organisms. The procedure involves using human feces from healthy donors (termed *fecal microbiota transplantation*) to treat severe infections that are unresponsive to standard antibiotic treatments, according to a recent position statement issued by the leading professional bodies of pediatric gastroenterologists in the U.S. and Europe.

*C. difficile*, a bacteria that causes diarrhea, fever, nausea, and loss of appetite, infects approximately a half million people annually in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Typically, infection is associated with microbial imbalance created in the gut due to frequent or prolonged use of antibiotics. Because antibiotics kill "good" gut bacteria as well as the "bad" bacteria, the lack of microbial diversity allows *C. difficile* to grow excessively and produce toxins that cause diarrhea and other symptoms. The bacteria is passed in stools of infected individuals and can survive for long periods of time on surfaces such as toilets, soiled sheets, clothing, or furniture. Hence, it is a special concern in healthcare settings and public places.

It also poses a major public health concern. The spores formed by the bacteria are resistant to alcohol-based hand washes, allow infection to spread easily from person-to-person. If an individual is resistant to antibiotic therapy, the infection can lead to other health complications or even death. Another concern is that some people can carry these bacteria in their intestines without having any symptoms but transmit them to others.

Until recently, the only treatment for *C. difficile* infections were antibiotics such as metronidazole and vancomycin, but they pose several issues. For instance, approximately 20 to 30 percent of patients treated with these antibiotics have frequent recurrences and, because the antibiotics are also broad-spectrum their frequent and prolonged use can further disrupt the microbial balance in the individual's gut, thereby exacerbating the problem in the long-run. Hence, FMT is being used more frequently to manage recurrent infections in adult patients, with cure rates approaching 90 percent.

The article points out that incidences of *C. difficile* infections among hospitalized, as well as healthy children in the community, have increased exponentially in the last decade. Similar to adults, pediatric patients often have recurrent infections and the repeated and/o prolonged use of antibiotics in children may increase their risk of developing other gastrointestinal disorders later in life. Hence, pediatricians are seeking better treatment options to manage *C. difficile* infections. FMT may provide a safe and effective treatment option for these infections in children.

Because no controlled clinical trials of the use of FMT to treat recurrent *C. difficile* infections in children have been conducted, and only isolated pediatric cases and case series have shown therapeutic success using FMT, most recommendations for its experimental use in children are based on adult studies. The authors note that extreme caution should be exercised when treating children. They also emphasize that experimental therapy should be performed only for those children who have recurrent infections that have failed to respond to standard antibiotic therapy, and only in established medical centers or hospitals with clinical staff who are trained and experienced in using the procedure.

The paper resulted from collaborative efforts of leading experts in the North American Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology, and Nutrition and the European Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition.

*Information in this article is derived from the Texas Children's Hospital website.*



# Researchers Report New Treatment for Hepatitis C

**Dr. Daniel Leung**, Assoc. Professor and Director of the Viral Hepatitis Program at Texas Children's Hospital/Baylor College of Medicine, led a study that recently reported a new treatment for adolescents affected by chronic hepatitis C infections (HCV). A part of an ongoing, three-part clinical trial called ZIRCON, a multicenter international effort to develop effective therapies to treat HCV in children, the study was published in *Hepatology Communications*.

HCV infection is a global health problem that affects some 175 million people, including approximately 11 million children, worldwide. The infection, which has no symptoms, follows a slower progression in children, compared to adults. If left untreated, it predisposes affected children and adolescents to life-long, liver-related complications including cirrhosis and liver cancer.

The researchers also evaluated the manner in which a combination of DAAs (ombitasvir/paritaprevir/dasabuvir and ritonavir) given with or without ribavirin is absorbed, distributed, and processed in adolescents. Previous studies have shown this drug combination to be safe and effective in treating adults with chronic HCV.

The study reported that the combination therapy was metabolized in adolescents similar to how it is in adults and that the safety profile of the regimen was excellent, causing no serious adverse events or discontinuation of treatment because of such events. A few patients experienced mild symptoms such as headache, fatigue, runny nose, or itching, but they lasted only for a few weeks; other patients experienced no side effects.

Also, the combination therapy was found to have excellent efficacy, irrespective

"Through clinical trials, some of our most vulnerable patients can have access to safe and highly effective therapies for treating HCV. This study is a great example of how Texas Children's Hospital combines its clinical and research mission to benefit our patients."

-- Dr. Daniel Leung



The standard of care for these patients previously was an injectable form of pegylated interferon that promotes the body's immune response to clear HCV, but because of its adverse side effects and low efficacy, it no longer is recommended. Hence, another treatment is needed. The ZIRCON trial was designed as an effort to address the urgent unmet need for an alternate option that is safe and effective in treating chronic HCV.

In this study, the researchers investigated the safety and effectiveness of oral administration of three direct-acting, anti-viral agents (DAAs) in reducing HCV infection in 38 adolescents. These particular patients had HCV infection genotype 1 or 4, which are the most common types of HCV cases occurring in the United States. Dr. Leung noted that DAAs are "non-structural proteins that specifically target the HCV replication cycle. The highly targeted nature of their action reduces the potential for serious side effects."

of the patient's age, prior treatment history, or degree of liver damage. In 95 percent of the study population, the viral load dropped to undetectable levels within 4 weeks of initiating treatment, and 100% of patients achieved the Sustained Virologic Response (SVR) (the absence of detectable HCV RNA levels 12 weeks after treatment), which is considered a cure. There was no evident relapse or reactivation of the virus.

Dr. Leung noted that the presence of HCV infection usually can be suspected as early as pregnancy, depending on the maternal or family history. Although the natural defense mechanism of the body clears the infection over time in some children, if spontaneous resolution has not occurred by the time the child reaches 7 years of age, the risk of developing liver damage increases significantly. Hence, he and others recommend that patients not wait until their children are symptomatic before taking action.

*Information in this article is derived from the Texas Children's Hospital website.*

# Pediatric Faculty Among Recipients of CPRIT Awards

**"Grants from CPRIT are essential to advancing cancer research and care and enable us to support physicians and researchers right here in Texas"**

**-- Dr. Kent Osborne, Director of the Dan L. Duncan Comprehensive Cancer Center.**

Physicians and scientists from Baylor College of Medicine and Texas Children's received a combined \$9,266,605 in research grants for projects in breast cancer, childhood cancer, T cell therapy, and lung cancer prevention.

Pediatric faculty who were among the recipients were:

**Dr. Austin L. Brown**, Asst. Professor and member of the Dan L. Duncan Comprehensive Cancer Center, for his research project, "Multiomic Biomarker Discovery for Therapy-Related Neurocognitive Impairment in Childhood Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia," \$1,187,006

**Dr. Cory Noel**, Asst. Professor, for his project, "Utilization of imaging and Serum Biomarkers to Predict the Development of Cardiac Dysfunction in Childhood Cancer Survivors," \$1,192,412

**Dr. Debananda Pati**, Professor and member of the Dan L. Duncan Comprehensive Cancer Center, for his research project, "Development of a Precision Drug to Target STAG2 (SA2) - Mutant Ewing Sarcoma," \$1,189,218

**Dr. Andras Heczey**, Asst. Professor and member of the Dan L. Duncan Comprehensive Cancer Center, for his project, "Interleukin-15- and -21-Armored Glypican-3-Specific CAR T Cells for Patients with Hepatocellular Carcinomas," \$2,400,000

**Dr. Cliona M. Rooney**, Professor, for her project, "Improving T-Cell Therapy of Neuroblastoma with a Novel Cytokine Modulator: A Phase 1 Clinical Trial," \$1,499,252

**Dr. Bhagavatula Moorthy**, Professor and member of the Dan L. Duncan Comprehensive Cancer Center, for his project, "Mechanisms of Prevention of Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbon (PAH) - Mediated Lung Carcinogenesis by Omega3 Fatty Acids," \$899,151

---

## Pediatric Faculty Receive Seed Awards

The Southwest National Pediatric Device Consortium awarded seed grants for four projects led by Baylor College of Medicine and Texas Children's Hospital faculty:

**Dr. Kwon Soo Chun**, Instructor, with **Dr. Henri Justino**, Assoc. Professor of Pediatrics, and **Dr. Daniel Harrington** for PolyVascular, novel transcatheter polymeric pulmonary valves for children.

**Dr. Julie Hakim**, Asst. Professor, with **Dr. Ashok Gowda** of BioTex for novel vaginal stents for use in pediatric gynecology patients with congenital abnormalities that require surgical reconstruction.

**Dr. Christopher Rhee**, Asst. Professor, with **Graham Randall** and **Dr. Donald Prough** for Noninvasix, which uses patented optoacoustic technology to non-invasively monitor cerebral oxygenation in at-risk babies in the neonatal intensive care unit.

**Dr. Leonard Weisman**, Professor, for Vax-immune Diagnostics, unique platform technologies that improve diagnoses by moving the laboratory to the patient for the diagnosis of perinatal infections in pregnant women and children.

# Announcing Ligums Family Research Grant Opportunity



Through a generous gift from the Ligums family, BCM is pleased to announce that the Ligums Family Transition Medicine Grant will be available again this year to support projects focusing on late adolescents and young adults (1) who have chronic conditions originating in childhood and (2) who are transitioning from pediatric to adult care.

The purpose of this funding is to support quality improvement in the transition experience of this patient population, with the ability to partner with community leaders or interest groups. The maximum amount of annual support has been increased to \$30,000, with the possibility of renewal for a second year upon successfully meeting proposed goals and objectives. Please see the attached announcement for more information.

Projects should:

- Focus on quality improvement, incorporating true process and outcomes metrics
- Target late adolescents and young adults who have chronic conditions originating in childhood and are transitioning from pediatric to adult care
- Demonstrate partnering with appropriate organizational leaders and / or interest groups

The grant awards are open to all healthcare providers, but must be submitted by two co-principal investigators, one from Pediatrics and one from BCM; non-faculty investigators must have a faculty sponsor.

Letter of Intent due:	April 26, 2019
Applications due:	May 24, 2019
Applicants notified:	July 5, 2019

For more information, please contact Maggie Weimer directly at  
margaret.weimer@bcm.edu  
Office: 713-798-3323  
Clinic: 713-798-6333  
Mobile: 832-696-8992

# MARK YOUR CALENDAR

## Upcoming Medical Events



**Texas Children's Hospital - West Campus**  
18200 Katy Freeway, Houston 77094  
Saturday, May 11, 2019  
10:00 am - 3:00 pm

The section of **Diabetes and Endocrinology** will sponsor a Type 1 Transitions Event for older teens (age 16+ years) with type 1 diabetes and parents to learn about topics that are important for living with diabetes as young adults. It will feature Keynote Speaker Kerri Sparling, from sixuntilme.com; physicians, nurses, and behavioral health professionals from the Diabetes Care Center and Psychology Service; and young adults with T1D. It will afford opportunities for young adults to meet other young people with T1D who are currently in college or the workforce and provide information about finding an adult diabetes provider. The Diabetes Preparation for Transition to Adult Care Program is run by **Drs. Sarah K. Lyons** and **Marisa Hilliard**.

**TEXAS EDUCATOR'S ACADEMIES COLLABORATIVE  
FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONS  
SOUTHEAST EDUCATIONAL SYMPOSIUM  
May 3, 2019  
Galveston Convention Center  
5600 Seawall Blvd.  
Galveston, Texas**

### **LIGUMS FAMILY RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY**

**Letter of Intent due: April 26, 2019**  
**Applications due: May 24, 2019**  
**Applicants notified: July 5, 2019**

**THIRD ANNUAL MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS ACTIVITIES  
May 14, 2019**