



## Dr. Marc R. Moon Named Chief of Cardiothoracic Surgery

**Dr. Marc Moon**, an expert and pioneer in the most advanced forms of cardiac surgery, has been named chief of the division of cardiothoracic surgery at Baylor College of Medicine, chief of the adult cardiac surgery section at Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center and chief of adult cardiac surgery at Texas Heart Institute.

"Dr. Marc Moon is a renowned cardiac surgeon and we are thrilled to have him taking on these leadership roles," said Dr. Paul Klotman, president, CEO and executive dean of Baylor College of Medicine. "His wealth of experience and expertise will be a great addition to the Texas Medical Center and Houston communities."

"Marc Moon's assumption of one of the most storied legacies in American surgery - DeBakey, Cooley, Crawford and Coselli - is truly an historic watershed moment," said Dr. Todd Rosengart, chair of the Michael E. DeBakey Department of Surgery at Baylor College of Medicine. "We here at Baylor College of Medicine and the Texas Heart Institute are joined by colleagues around the world in cheering his leadership of cardiac surgery now brought here to the Texas Medical Center."

Moon comes to Houston from Washington University School of Medicine, where he served as chief of

cardiac surgery, director of the Center for Diseases of the Thoracic Aorta, co-director of the heart and vascular center and surgical lead of the Center for Women's Heart Disease. He has been in practice in St. Louis for more than 20 years.

Moon specializes in aortic and valve surgery and sees some of the most complex cardiac surgery cases, including performing cardiac procedures in pregnant women. He also has been a leading advocate for diversity in the field of cardiac surgery.

"Dr. Moon is a world class surgeon, and we are excited to welcome him to our department and division," said Dr. Joseph Coselli, professor and vice chair of surgery at Baylor College of Medicine. "We know he will contribute to and support our leadership in a way commensurate with the reputation and history of the department."

"I'm excited to be joining these three institutions," said Moon. "I have spent my career to date at some of the most historic cardiac centers in the world, but none compared to the heritage of it all here at Baylor College of Medicine, Baylor St. Luke's and the Texas Heart Institute."

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# Dr. Martin D. Zielinski Joins Department as Inaugural Chief of our New Division of Trauma and Acute Care Surgery

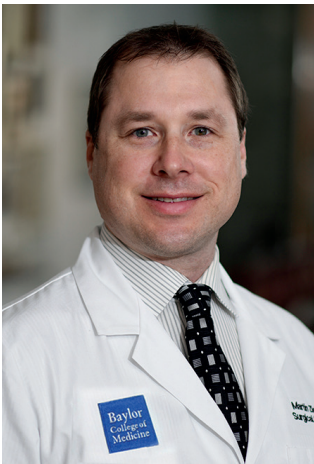
**Dr. Martin Zielinski** has joined the Michael E. DeBakey Department of Surgery as the inaugural chief of our new Division of Trauma and Acute Care Surgery. He serves as medical director of the Section of Acute Care Surgery at Ben Taub Hospital and will be advancing the development of the Emergency General Surgery service at Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center. He also has oversight responsibilities for all trauma and acute care surgery programs at our other affiliate institutions.

"When I heard about the potential opportunity at Baylor, I quickly became intrigued due to its long-standing tradition of surgical excellence, said Zielinski. Every surgeon knows about the legendary Dr. Michael E. DeBakey. Just as importantly, the opportunity to join Ben Taub—undisputedly one of the premier trauma hospitals in this country—and lead its legacy into the future was an offer I couldn't refuse. These past months have confirmed my initial impressions and have me excited me for the opportunities to come."

Dr. Zielinski received his undergraduate and medical degree at the University of Minnesota

in Minneapolis before transitioning to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN as a resident in surgery. He stayed at Mayo Clinic for additional training in surgical critical care and was later hired as a staff surgeon in the Division of Trauma, Critical Care and General Surgery. While there, he developed research interests in small bowel obstruction management and novel blood products for hemorrhage resuscitation. He quickly advanced and was named the first professor of surgery within his division.

Dr. Zielinski has authored more than 160 publications, written 11 book chapters and been an invited lecturer at more than 80 professional meetings and symposiums. He has also held leadership positions and membership roles in numerous professional societies including the American Association for the Surgery of Trauma, the Eastern Association for the Surgery of Trauma, and the American College of Surgeons.



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We have come to the point where cardiac surgery is considered routine in many circumstances, but it's never routine for the patient who's undergoing that operation. It's our duty as cardiothoracic surgeons in an academic medical center to continue to advance the field and develop new research to make it even safer for the future."

"As the top ranked cardiac program in Houston, we are pleased to welcome Dr. Moon to the extraordinary team of cardiac surgeons and physicians at Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center," said Liz Youngblood, president of Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center and senior vice president and chief operating officer of St. Luke's Health Texas Division. "His exceptional skills and capabilities in the field of cardiac surgery will be an asset to our current and future cardiac surgeons as well as to our patients, their families and our community."

A native of Detroit, Moon completed his medical training at Wayne State University School of Medicine and went on to train at the Medical College of Wisconsin, Stanford University School of Medicine and University of Oxford.

Moon served as president of the American Association for Thoracic Surgery, considered the world's most prestigious professional society for cardiothoracic surgery, in 2020 and is also a member of numerous national and international scientific organizations, including the American College of Surgeons and the Society of Thoracic Surgeons.

"Cardiothoracic surgery is an incredible field to be a part of and I'm looking forward to the future and learning what we're going to be doing 25 years from now that we're not doing now. Moving forward, cardiothoracic surgery is going to continue to become more complex, but less invasive at the same time. The combination of those two makes the field very unique," Moon said.

"Dr. Moon's remarkable clinical expertise coupled with his outstanding abilities to collaborate, mentor and lead are in keeping with the rich history of cardiac surgery at the Texas Heart Institute, Baylor College of Medicine and Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center," said Dr. Joseph G. Rogers, president and CEO of Texas Heart Institute.

He will see patients at Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center, THI Outpatient Clinic, 1101 Bates Avenue, Houston, TX 77030. For appointments, call 832.355.9910.

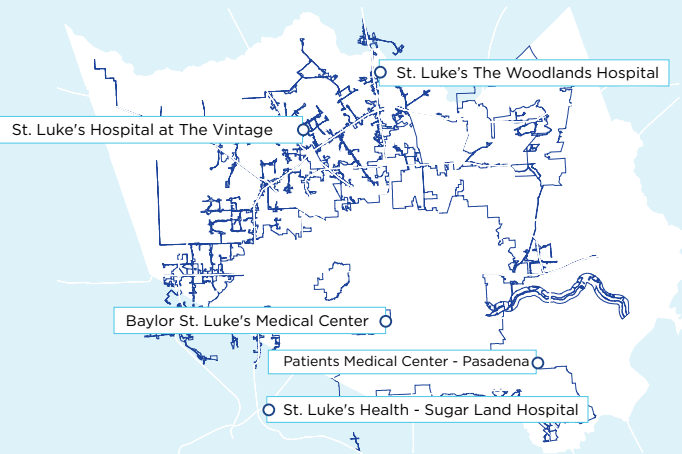
## CLINICAL NOTES

### Department Expands Clinical Practice Across Houston Region

We understand how difficult it can be for our patients to travel to the Texas Medical Center (TMC) and are consequently excited to have added several clinical sites across the Common Spirit Health (CSH) Texas Division to bring our surgical care closer to our patients homes and affiliated hospitals. This patient-centered approach in opening office hours at many locations in Houston suburbs sited with CSH hospitals will make it easier for our patients to access the surgical expertise of the TMC closer to home. Routine surgical procedures including peripheral vascular surgery, endocrine surgery breast surgery and thoracic procedures can now all be performed at affiliate hospitals by full-time Department faculty.

Highly complex operations and sometimes even more straightforward operations in patients with serious medical problems are still best performed at Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center where the most complicated operations are performed routinely. Initial work ups, preparation for surgery, and follow-up for these more complex procedures performed at the TMC can now all also be performed at our more convenient office locations closer to home.

A growing number of Department physicians in multiple specialties have expanded their practice outside of the clinics within the TMC. These include:



#### Sugarland Clinic:

- **Endocrine Surgery:** Dr. Feibi Zheng, assistant professor in the Division of Surgical Oncology
- **Thoracic Surgery:** Dr. Robert Taylor Ripley, associate professor in the Division of General Thoracic Surgery
- **Vascular Surgery:** Dr. Ramyar Gilani, associate professor in the Division of Vascular Surgery & Endovascular Therapy

#### Pasadena (Patients Medical Center):

- **Vascular Surgery:** Dr. Ramyar Gilani

#### The Woodlands:

- **Breast Surgery:** Dr. Stacey Carter, assistant professor in the Division of Surgical Oncology
- **Cardiac Surgery:** Dr. Vivek Patel, assistant professor in the Division of Cardiac Surgery (anticipated Fall, 2022)

### Leading the Way in Lung Transplantation

Our lung transplantation team performed a record-high 71 lung transplants in 2021, making Baylor St. Luke's one of the top performers for transplant volume nationwide and the largest volume program at the Texas Medical Center for this past year. The team has also performed 12 transplants for COVID -induced lung injury, one of the largest experiences with this procedure in the US for COVID patients.

Led by Dr. Gabriel Loor, associate professor of surgery and lung transplantation director, our lung transplantation program at Baylor St. Luke's

Medical Center is one of the premier center in the United States for treating complex end-stage lung diseases. Our team consisting of experienced transplant pulmonologists, cardiothoracic surgeons, and cardiothoracic ICU staff works in a collaborative fashion to provide compassionate care for these patients. The program employs bridge to lung transplant with novel extracorporeal membranous oxygenation circuits with the ability to keep patients extubated and ambulatory, and performs multi-organ transplants (heart-lung,

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# LEADERSHIP NOTES

## Dr. Coselli Named Executive Vice Chair of the Department of Surgery

The Michael E. DeBakey Department of Surgery announced the appointment of **Dr. Joseph S. Coselli**, professor of surgery, as the first executive vice chair to serve in the history of the department. As he transitions his cardiac surgery leadership roles to Dr. Marc Moon, Dr. Coselli will serve in this new role helping to lead the department overall while maintaining his other position holding the Cullen Foundation Endowed Chair.

An internationally respected innovator and a leader in his field, Dr. Coselli has performed 7,500 repairs of the aorta and over 3,300 repairs of thoracoabdominal aortic aneurysms – the most of these ever performed by one surgeon. His surgical expertise also includes complex aortic repair, such as repair performed in patients with connective tissue disorders (such as Marfan and Loeys-Dietz syndromes), as well as emergent repair performed in patients with conditions such as acute aortic dissection or aortic rupture. Dr. Coselli will continue to maintain his highly active clinical practice.



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lung-liver, lung-liver-kidney) as well as redo-lung transplantation and other complex cases such as transplantation for scleroderma-interstitial lung disease with esophageal involvement.

Our lung transplantation program has also established a transplant biorepository and databases to investigate chronic lung allograft dysfunction, novel non-invasive tests to detect rejection of the lung allograft, and are also involved in collaborative research with institutions both in the United States and worldwide.

Baylor St. Luke's is an established premier referral center in the United States for complex end-stage lung diseases. Our team consisting of experienced transplant pulmonologists, cardiothoracic surgeons, and cardiothoracic ICU staff that works in a collaborative fashion to provide compassionate care for these patients. We are experts in COVID19 lung transplants, bridge to lung transplant with novel mobile extracorporeal membrane oxygenation circuits, multiorgan transplants (heart-lung, lung-liver, lung-liver-kidney), redo-lung transplantation,

scleroderma-ILD with esophageal involvement, patients with prior thoracic surgery and co-existing coronary artery disease.

We strive to provide timely & efficient evaluation for patients referred for a lung transplant. The wait time for a lung transplant at our center is shorter than the regional and national average. In 2021 the transplant team performed 73 lung transplants, including 3 heart lung transplants. The team has also performed 14 transplants for COVID ARDS to date. Our program will continue to grow and shall provide accessible advanced lung disease care in an outreach clinic at St Luke's Woodlands by Spring 2022. To help improve patients' physical conditioning both pre-and post-transplant we will be offering an online rehabilitation program run by our exercise physiologists. We have established transplant biorepository and databases to investigate chronic lung allograft dysfunction, novel non-invasive tests to detect rejection of the lung allograft, and we are also involved in collaborative research with institutions both in the USA and worldwide.

## Dr. Eberlin Named Director of Translational and Innovations Research

**Dr. Livia Schiavinato Eberlin**, an internationally recognized engineer recently recruited to the Department from the University of Texas-Austin, has been tapped to serve as the new Director of Translational and Innovations Research for our department. In her new role, Dr. Eberlin will lead the basic science program and laboratories in partnership with **Deborah Surman**, manager for laboratory research operations. Dr. Eberlin will also continue to serve as the Scientific Director of the Interdisciplinary Surgical Technology and Innovation Center (INSTINCT).

A world-renowned leader who specializes in the application of mass spectrometry to the treatment of human disease, Dr. Eberlin is the recipient of many honors and awards for their scientific research, including an NIH/NCI K99/R00 Pathway to Independence Award, a Forbes 30 "Under 30" listing in the healthcare category, a Moore Inventor Fellowship, and a MacArthur Fellowship. Her research group is funded by grants from the NIH, CPRIT and other research foundations. Dr. Eberlin has published more than 80 peer-reviewed research articles in top-rated journals such as *PNAS*, *Science Translational Medicine*, *Nature Communications*, *Cancer Research*, and *Clinical Chemistry*. Additionally, Dr. Eberlin is passionate about mentorship and involved in many efforts to promote women and underrepresented minorities in STEM, including the L'Oréal For Women in Science program.



## Dr. Loor Named Inaugural Vice Chair for Outreach and Inclusion

**Dr. Michele Loor**, associate professor and medical director, Surgical Intensive Care Unit at Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center, has been appointed the inaugural vice chair for outreach and inclusion in the Michael E. DeBakey Department of Surgery. Dr. Loor in this role will help lead efforts promoting an inclusive environment across the department, while advising the department chair on matters related to gender, equity, and inclusion.

"My goal in this role is to help make this department a place where all members feel that they are given the tools and opportunities needed to reach their individual professional goals and achieve personal well-being," said Dr. Loor.

To achieve this goal, Dr. Loor has assembled our department Outreach and Inclusion Committee, which includes representatives from all divisions and groups within the department of surgery. This committee interfaces with other key departmental committees, including the newly formed Staff Council representing non-faculty members of the department on career, professional development and workplace wellbeing matters. In addition, Dr. Loor will serve as an integral part of the department leadership team, providing guidance on how to increase and sustain diversity among our faculty, training programs, and staff. The department plans to bring on a director for staff development to assist Dr. Loor in carrying out these goals and projects.



Dr. Fisher Named VP of Medical Staff at Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center

The Department of Surgery is pleased to share news of the appointment of **Dr. William E. Fisher** as vice president of the medical staff for Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center. This is the first time a Baylor faculty member has served as an officer on the executive committee of Baylor St. Luke’s since the creation of Baylor St. Luke’s Medical Center as a joint venture between Baylor College of Medicine and the then St. Luke’s Episcopal Hospital in 2013. Per hospital bylaws, Dr. Fisher’s two-year term as vice-president will be followed by two additional two-year terms as president-elect and then president of the medical staff at Baylor St. Luke’s. Dr. Fisher’s service in these roles will help us advance our pursuit of excellence both within the Department of Surgery and for the entire hospital.



Dr. Chung Named Medical Director for Vascular Surgery

**Dr. Jayer Chung**, associate professor of surgery, has been named as medical director for vascular surgery at Baylor College of Medicine. In this role, Dr. Chung will be responsible for overseeing and ensuring the successful growth of the Baylor Medicine vascular surgery clinical program.

Since arriving at Baylor, Dr. Chung has published more than 70 peer reviewed papers and chapters and given over 100 invited lectures and presentations. He has received numerous awards, including reviewer of the year for the Journal of Vascular Surgery, the Early Career Faculty Award for Excellence from Baylor College of Medicine, and as Houstonia magazine’s top Vascular Surgeons for 2021.



Dr. Barshes Named Chief of Vascular Service Line at VA

Dr. Neal R. Barshes has been named chief of the section of vascular surgery at the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center, succeeding Dr. Panos Kougias who recently accepted a position as chair of surgery at SUNY Downstate in New York. Dr. Barshes has contributed more than 100 articles to scholarly professional journals including the Journal of Vascular Surgery and the Journal of the American College of Surgeons. He also serves as program director for our vascular surgery residency program.

Dr. Barshes’ clinical efforts are focused on preventing leg amputations among patients with foot infections and peripheral artery disease. He also specializes in all aspects of the diagnosis and treatment of vascular disorders, including a wide variety of arterial, venous and lymphatic problems.



New Leadership Appointments Named for CfAST, Office Based EndoVascular Lab

**Dr. James W. Suliburk**, associate professor and chief, endocrine surgery, has been named medical director for our Center for Ambulatory Surgery Therapeutics (CfAST). In this role, he will be working with CfAST manager **Jacqueline Auletti** leading a team of four clinical staff members supporting our office-based ambulatory surgery program.

CfAST is a boutique-style multispecialty surgical center that provides personalized outpatient care for same-day surgical procedures. Services currently range from specialties such as plastic, endocrine, breast, and vascular surgery, to urology and more. The facility features patient intake rooms, state-of-the-art procedure rooms and recovery spaces. The staff includes board-certified surgeons, registered nurses, and radiation techs, all trained to provide the highest levels of individual care based on each medical provider.

**Dr. Zachary Pallister**, assistant professor for the Division of Vascular Surgery and Endovascular Therapy, has also accepted a position as medical director of our Office Based EndoVascular Lab (OBL) program, a unit of CfAST focused on outpatient vascular procedures. OBL offers in-office consultation, vascular imaging, vein procedures and excellent post-operative care, eliminating the need for hospital visits in most cases. Surgeons in the clinic are able to perform certain procedures in the lab and then send the patient home at the end of the day, while preserving safety, quality, and efficacy of care. Some of the common conditions treated in the OBL include peripheral arterial disease, claudication, hemodialysis access failure, venous insufficiency, and varicose veins.





RESEARCH NOTES

Baylor Receives \$3 Million to Advance At-Home Wearable Technology Research

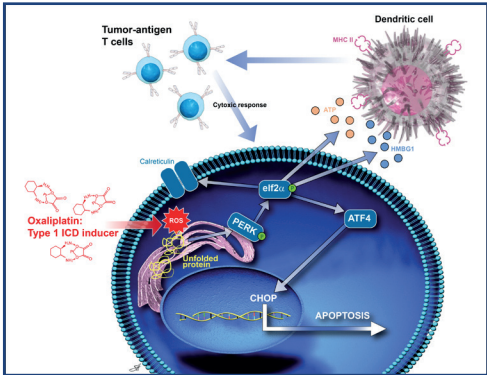


Baylor College of Medicine is one of four sites named as a recipient of a \$3 million award from the National Science Foundation’s Industry-University Cooperative Research Centers. The Center to Stream HealthCare in Place brings together experts in the industry to research, develop and promote wearable devices that help providers gather patient data without the patient having to leave their home. Other partner institutions for this national center include the University of Arizona, the University of Southern California and the California Institute of Technology.

According to **Dr. Bijan Najafi**, the center’s co-director, professor of surgery and director of clinical research in our Division of Vascular Surgery and Endovascular Therapy, this grant will allow focus on accelerating translation of cutting-edge technologies to patients’ care in-place, while training students and fellows in remote patient care. The center will accelerate innovation through partnerships, multispecialty collaborations, resource sharing, and preparing an educated workforce to promote wellness through self-care technologies.

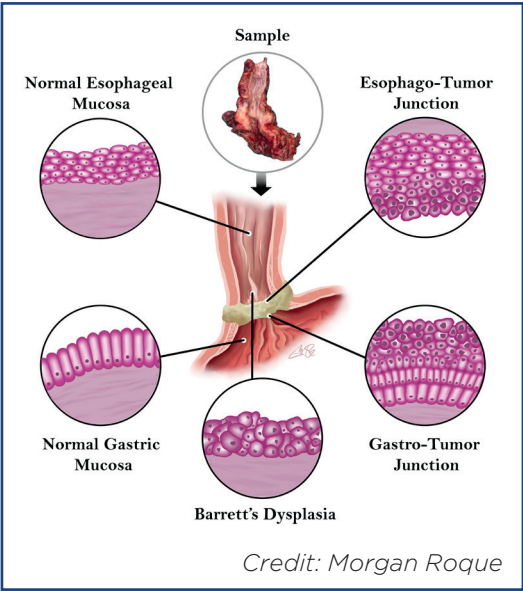
Dr. Camp Awarded \$1M for Pancreas Adenocarcinoma Study

**Dr. E. Ramsay Camp**, professor and chief of the Division of Surgical Oncology, has received \$1M in funding plus a supply of pembrolizumab from the Merck Investigator Studies Program. The goal of Dr. Camp’s study entitled “Phase II Study of Neoadjuvant Folfirinox Chemotherapy Followed by Pembrolizumab Followed by Surgery for Patients With Localized, Resectable Adenocarcinoma of the Pancreas” is to determine if the chemo-immunotherapy combination will lead to improved clinical response and pathological evidence of enhanced immune cell infiltration into surgically resected tumors. This trial will investigate how pembrolizumab and folfirinox induce changes within the tumor immune microenvironment that can be leveraged in the design of next-generation immunotherapy clinical trials.



Dr. Ripley Awarded NIH Grant to Study Mitochondrial Apoptosis Pathways

**Dr. R. Taylor Ripley**, associate professor of surgery for the Division of Thoracic Surgery, has received a \$160,000 two-year R03 grant from the National Institute of Health for his project titled “Dynamic BH3 Profiling with Patient Derived Organoids of Esophageal Cancer and Mesothelioma Enable Precision-Based Targeting of the Mitochondrial Apoptotic Pathway.” The R03 grant mechanism supports small research projects that can be carried out in a short period of time with limited resources.



EDUCATION NOTES

Michael E. DeBakey Department of Surgery Spotlights General Surgery Residency Movie Night

Borrowing from the world of professional athletes, Movie Night is a new and innovative program coordinated by the education office of the Department of Surgery to help improve resident technical skills and learning. The program collects videos of routine operations performed by residents in an exercise wherein residents can anonymously “compare notes” and learn from each other and expert faculty mentors on the progress of their developing technical skills. All of the videos collected are either free of patient and surgeon identifiers and are edited so that all participants remain anonymous. Edited videos are reviewed with faculty mentors and with corresponding resident classes invited to review each operation in a constructive and educational environment. With refreshments provided of course!

The first two Movie Nights, which focused on laparoscopic cholecystectomy and laparoscopic appendectomy, were extremely successful and received glowing feedback. Future Movie Nights will include more complex laparoscopy as well as open procedures. The program also aims to contribute to educational literature in the future.

“We are very excited about Movie Night!” said Dr. R. Mario Vera, assistant professor of surgery in the Division of Trauma and Acute Care Surgery and associate program director for simulation training in our general surgery residency. Said Vera, “I believe it’s a uniquely Baylor experience that will benefit our residents immensely.”

Movie Night and our accompanying Chalk Talk series, which provides wisdom from faculty experts on technical and clinical “helpful hints,” aim to equip residents with key expertise, filling potential gaps in their technical knowledge and clinical experience. The programs were born from concerns raised by residents regarding their curtailed clinical experience during the COVID-19 pandemic. By instilling transparency and the trust of experienced faculty members in their sharing these experiences with our residents, the programs have helped reinforce a “Just Culture” of candor and respectful sharing of information.



# In the OR Light

## Faculty - Alexis Shafii

*Dr. Alexis Shafii, associate professor of surgery, is a cardiothoracic surgeon with expertise in thoracic transplantation and adult cardiac surgery. His clinical focus includes thoracic organ failure, heart and lung transplantation as well as implantation of mechanical circulatory support devices. Born and raised in Tampa, Florida, Shafii is the surgical director of the heart transplant program at Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center and previously directed transplant programs at major medical centers in Dallas and Kentucky. He has been appointed the inaugural director of Heart Transplantation and Mechanical Circulatory Support leading our new heart transplant and ventricular assist device (VAD) program at the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center, one of only a very limited number of such programs in the entire US Veterans Affairs medical system.*

*Dr. Shafii attended medical school at University of South Florida in Tampa and served his residency and fellowship at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation in Cleveland, Ohio.*



**Q. What made you decide to go into medicine?**

**A.** It just seemed right. I understood the science and had a humanitarian upbringing.

**Q. What made you choose your specialty? How did you get into it and what do you like most about it?**

**A.** I was very fortunate to be exposed to special and driven mentors that had lasting impressions early on; in my mind it was all about surgery. As I went further into the field of surgery, I appreciated the refined craftsmanship of cardiovascular surgery and thought the science of transplant immunology was so extraordinary. I was also captivated by the history of surgery, and how far we have come in such a short time. The most enjoyable aspect for me these days is watching a trainee do it perfectly.

**Q. What do you like most about being a surgeon?**

**A.** The operating room. It's where the magic happens.

**Q. Is there anything you would tell someone thinking about getting into your profession?**

**A.** You have to have a calling to do it. It's going to consume you, but the purpose will find you. Protect your time with family and the rest will be alright.

**Q. What do you enjoy doing when you're not working?**

**A.** In my free time I enjoy spending time with my family, traveling, gardening, and fishing.

**Q. What is something about you that most people would be surprised to learn?**

**A.** Something most people would be surprised to learn is that I grew up on a farm in Florida.



# In the OR Light

## Resident - Zachary Chizmar

*Dr. Zachary Chizmar, a PGY-4 general surgery resident and social chairs for the general surgery program, grew up in South Florida in a small city called Weston. As an undergraduate, he went to Tulane University where he majored in art history and studied abroad in Cape Town, South Africa. He met his wife Maddie just after starting medical school and adopted his dog Scout right before he started clinical rotations.*



**Q. What made you decide to go into medicine?**

**A.** It wasn't always so straightforward, but I knew that I wanted a career where I thought I could make the biggest difference in the world. My grandfather was a urologist and I always admired him and the impact he had on his patients' lives. Although I did not feel that urology was my calling, I believed that pursuing a career in medicine, and more specifically surgery, would give me the opportunity to do a lot of good.

**Q. What made you choose your specialty? How did you get into it and what do you like most about it?**

**A.** For as long as I had wanted to be a doctor, I always wanted to be a surgeon. I wanted to work with my hands, and I wanted to make tangible improvements in the lives of my patients. When I rotated through surgery in medical school, I was on the transplant and MIS services. It was there that I found a mentor who really inspired me to pursue general surgery. Now, four years into residency, I am still confident I made the right choice. My favorite part of my specialty is, to put it simply, operating. Having the opportunity to operate and perform such a wide variety of procedures has been a privilege. Some of my favorite operations have included the Nuss procedure and the sleeve gastrectomy.

**Q. What do you like most about being a surgical resident?**

**A.** What I have enjoyed most about being a surgical resident has been the operative experience. We have faculty that love to teach and that affords us a great deal of autonomy to help us grow as surgeons. At Ben Taub, once I have my music playing in the background and the case is rolling, I really feel like I am in my element.

**Q. Is there anything you would tell someone thinking about getting into your profession?**

**A.** Get a good pair of shoes, some compression socks, and a comfortable scrub cap. You spend a lot of time on your feet in and out of the OR, and these little things really make a difference day after day.

**Q. What do you enjoy doing when you're not working?**

**A.** When I am not working, I spend my time outside running or biking and with my wife and dogs. I am very passionate about the food scene in Houston and trying to find the next big restaurant.

**Q. What is something about you that most people would be surprised to learn?**

**A.** I think most people would be surprised to learn that I rowed in college for two years.





## Staff – Ashley Benning

Ashley Benning, senior coordinator for business operations, is from Houston and decided to pursue a career in medicine out of a genuine desire to help people. For the past 15 years, the work she does has accomplished this goal and given her the greatest sense of joy and a job well done at the end of each day. She attended the University of Houston – Clear Lake obtaining a Bachelor of Applied Science in Health Care Services there and Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center where she is a Master of Healthcare Administration candidate, expected to graduate in 2023.

**Q. What made you choose your specialty? How did you get into it and what do you like most about it?**

**A.** The second job I ever had was as a unit clerk on an as-needed basis in an emergency room, and from there I became a certified nurse aid and gained experience on various inpatient and outpatient floors. After doing patient care work for so long, I went back to being a unit clerk and strictly doing administrative tasks. Eventually, I wanted to learn more about hospital operations, management and human resources. I decided to take a leap of faith and apply for an administrative role that I thought I wouldn't be that qualified for, and I got it! What I love most about this field is the countless number of things there are to learn and become proficient in. I like the job growth and stability, how it's face-paced and exciting, and I appreciate the opportunity to make a difference in people's lives.

**Q. What do you like most about your job?**

**A.** I know that everything I do still pays itself forward in patient-centered care, and I am able to gain new skills that will help me secure a leadership role in the future.

**Q. Is there anything you would tell someone thinking about getting into your profession?**

**A.** There will always be a need for jobs in all areas of medicine. Don't be afraid. Do what your heart desires, pursue it with passion, dedication, eagerness and a willingness to learn, and utilize your resources.

**Q. What do you enjoy doing when you're not working?**

**A.** When I'm not working, I like to watch Law and Order: Special Victims Unit, go decor shopping, and workout.

**Q. What is something about you that most people would be surprised to learn?**

**A.** I'm afraid of birds!



## HONORS AND AWARDS

**Dr. Christy Y. Chai:** 2021 Association of Women Surgeons (AWS) Break the Glass Ceiling Award

**Dr. Subhasis Chatterjee:** Member, American Association for Thoracic Surgery (AATS)

**Dr. Subhasis Chatterjee:** 2021 James T. Willerson, MD Editor's Choice Award, Texas Heart Institute Journal

**Dr. Joseph S. Coselli:** Lifetime Achievement Award, Baylor College of Medicine

**Dr. Ronald Cotton, Dr. Jayer Chung, Dr. Louisa Chiu, Holly Clayton, Dr. Alice King, Dr. Claire F. Ozaki, Dr. Yesenia Rojas-Khalil and Dr. Galina Toneva:** 2022 Women of Excellence Award, Baylor College of Medicine

**Dr. N. Thao N. Galvan and Dr. George Van Buren II:** Fellows, Texas Surgical Society

**Dr. Samer Mattar:** Board of Governors Fellowship Council, American College of Surgeons (ACS)

**Dr. Ourania Preventza:** Member at Large, Council of the Southern Thoracic Surgical Association (STSA)

**Dr. Cathy Yao:** Roderick D. MacDonald Research Fund grant. "Mesothelin modulates tumor microenvironment and mediates resistance of human pancreatic cancer to FOLFIRINOX treatment."

**Dr. Nandan Kumar Mondal:** Travel Award, 42nd International Society for Heart and Lung Transplantation Annual Meeting

**Dr. Feibi Zheng:** AAES Visiting Professor, Association of Endocrine Surgeons

## RESIDENTS AND TRAINEES

**Dr. Bjoern Burckhardt:** 2022 Marie Sklodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Global Fellowship; Mass spectrometry imaging

**Dr. Vivi Chen:** Best Poster, Annual Meeting of the Society of Surgical Oncology

**Dr. Lily Cheng:** Franklin H. Martin Faculty Research Fellowship, American College of Surgeons

**Dr. Kevin Huang:** Raleigh R. Ross Scholar, Texas Surgical Society

**Dr. Ishan Kamat:** Medical device accelerator seed ( ZeroTo510 [\$50,000]). Mentor: Dr. William Cohn

**Dr. Kimberly Rebello:** Best Clinical Postdoctoral Fellow Poster Award. 9th Annual Cardiovascular Research Institute (CVRI) Symposium. Mentors: Drs. Scott A. LeMaire and Ying H. Shen

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