What's Up Next for PP?

We are excited to announce that Pedi Press will take on a new “face,” starting with this issue. To better serve the department and reach more people, the editorial committee decided to offer a shorter version (newsletter) to be published more frequently. The goal is to be better connected with one another and to publish news more frequently so that it is current. We hope that you will like the format and enjoy reading about what your peers and colleagues in other Divisions are doing.
Beyond the Workplace: Drs. Nicci and Chris Greeley

Drs. Niccole (Nicci) and Christopher Greeley, Professor and Division Chief of Public Health, were honored recently with the Burrell Legacy Award at the Kids’ Meals 14th Annual Harvest Luncheon “for their countless contributions to the Kids’ Meals Foundation.”

Kids’ Meals is a first-responder to preschool-children who face debilitating hunger resulting from extreme poverty. Since 2006, the organization has been making and delivering free healthy meals directly to the homes of Houston’s hungriest children.

The Greeleys, both pediatricians, learned about Kids’ Meals 10 years ago when their triplet sons participated in a school-wide volunteer sandwich-making project. They have contributed “countless hours making and delivery meals and [sharing] their special gift of developmental knowledge and advice.” Dr. Nicci Greeley also serves on the Board of Directors, as well as on the Board of Directors of Bo’s Place, a non-profit bereavement center for those who have experienced the death of a loved one.

In October 2004, while both Chris and Nicci Greeley were assistant professors at General Pediatric at the Monroe Carell Jr. Children’s Hospital at Vanderbilt, they became parents of triplets: Grant, John, and Spencer. Until that point, their lives had been focused exclusively on pediatric medicine.

They had met during Nicci’s residency at Vanderbilt and married. Two years later, they received the unexpected news that Nicci was pregnant with twins. She recalled, “It was a little shocking, but Chris was so excited.” Three weeks later, at her 10-week ultrasound, Nicci was asked by the ultrasonographer, “What do you think about a third baby?”

Chris wasn’t with her for that visit, and Nicci said she immediately sent him a page: “9-1-1.” Being pediatricians, they knew the inherent dangers of multiple births, and Nicci was tiny at 5’2.” All was going well until Grant, the smallest, began having difficulty in the womb, and Nicci was put on bed rest. At 29 weeks gestation, the boys were born, with John weighing 3 pound 3 ounce; then Spencer came at 2 pounds, 10 ounces; and finally little Grant came, weighing only 1 pound, 14 ounces.

All three boys today are healthy and engaged with each other and their parents in serving the Houston community. Now seniors at Strake Jesuit, they spent their entire summer as warehouse help at Kids’ Meals Foundation. They brought along friends to participate, helped the drivers, and kept everyone entertained with their humor.

The boys have participated in numerous special events and have sponsored families at Christmas. Kids’ Meals noted it “is grateful for their commitment to seeing the future of the organization continue to prosper and grow.”
Vaccine to be Distributed in Indonesia

Drs. Maria Bottazzi and Peter Hotez received a “green light” to distribute their low-cost COVID-19 vaccine in Indonesia. PT Bio Farma, which oversees government-owned pharmaceutical manufacturers in Indonesia, reported that it is prepared to make 20 million doses of the IndoVac COVID-19 vaccine this year and 100 million doses a year by 2024. The announcement comes after the vaccine received authorization from the Indonesian Food and Drug Authority for emergency use in adults. Indonesia, with more than 275 million people, is the world’s fourth most populous country. Bio Farma also plans to introduce the vaccine in various international markets. IndoVac is a version of the patent-free, low-cost Corbevax vaccine developed in Houston by Drs. Bottazzi and Hotez.

Dr. Katherine King gave an engaging Keynote Presentation on growing a research program throughout career stages. In the spirit of collaboration, the Department of Internal Medicine Section Chief of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism, Dr. Mark Herman, and colleagues from Division of Psychology also presented their work.

The retreat ended with a discussion on becoming involved in national committees. The Research Retreat was an excellent opportunity to strengthen collaboration between pediatric and adult faculty and clinical fellows and learn about research and faculty development resources at the BCM, TCH, and nationally. The organizing committee was composed of Drs. Rebecca Schneider Aguirre (Chair), Serife Uysal (Vice-Chair), Maria J. Redondo, Stephanie Sisley, Lucia Hernandez, Ahjani Harris, and Jolene Joseph.
Dr. Aya Fanny, BCM PEM/GH fellow (pictured above), gave a phenomenal keynote speech at the AAP NCE during a special international reception, at the invitation of AAP Executive VP/CEO Mark Del Monte. Dr. Fanny was invited to speak on the topic of Decolonizing Global Health, which has become an important area for the AAP as they deepen their commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion. She spoke confidently and powerfully on individual-level and institutional-level changes to a room full of leaders including multiple current and past AAP Presidents, and invited international delegates.

Award Winners

Dr. Eileen D. Brewer, Henry L. Barnett Award from the Section of Nephrology

Dr. Deborah C. Hsu, Steve Miller Award for Excellence in Education and Mentorships

New Chair Elected

Dr. Sanghamitra Misra, Professor, has been elected Chair of the AAP Section on Integrative Medicine for a 2-year term. As Chair-elect, she was instrumental in creating the first strategic collaboration among the AAP, APA, and NIH to improve the quality of rigorous research in integrative pediatrics.

Faculty Honored by Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society

The following faculty were honored during the IDWeek, the premier Annual Infectious Diseases meeting, held October 19-23, in Washington, D.C.:

Dr. Jeffrey Starke, Professor, received the 2022 Distinguished Research Award from the Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society (PIDS) in recognition of his career contributions.

Dr. Katherine King, Assoc. Professor, was honored at the society's dinner, "Celebrating Women in Science and the People Who Inspire Them,"

Dr. Tara Ness, Fellow, received the St. Jude-PIDS Fellowship Award in Basic and Translational Science grant.
The American Pediatric Society announced 95 new members, including five from BCM. APS members are recognized child health leaders of extraordinary achievement who work together to shape the future of academic pediatrics.

New members will be recognized during the APS Presidential Plenary April 29 at the Pediatric Academic Societies 2023 Meeting.

- Dr. Sheryl Hughes, Professor – nutrition
- Dr. Teresia O’Connor, Assoc. Professor and Assoc. Director for human sciences at the USDA/ARS Children’s Nutrition Research Center (CNRC)
- Dr. Ricardo Quinonez, Assoc. Professor – hospital medicine
- Dr. Binoy Shivanna, Assoc. Professor – newborn
- Dr. Yong Xu, Professor and Associate Director for basic sciences at the CNRC

Faculty Recognized During Hispanic Heritage Month

Two faculty members, Drs. Flor Munoz and Maria Elena Bottazzi, were honored during a proclamation ceremony at Houston City Hall as exceptional Houstonians during Hispanic Heritage Month, by Mayor Sylvester Turner. The honor was bestowed on them to recognize them as “exemplary Hispanics who have made outstanding contributions toward improving the quality of life within the Houston Hispanic Community.”

In recognition of National Hispanic American Heritage Month in the United States (September 15 to October 15), the American Board of Pediatrics invited Dr. Ricardo Quinonez, Chief of Pediatric Hospital Medicine, to share about his life, inspirations, and thoughts on how the pediatric community can better support Hispanic patients and families. Born in the 1970s in Guatemala, during a difficult time, he grew up in a family of academics. His father was a cardiologist who worked in public health and education; he also taught medical students at the National University of Guatemala. His mother was a social work and served as the head of the social work school there. His parents, outspoken against the totalitarian regime, realized that it was too dangerous to remain in Guatemala, and in 1981 they made the decision to immigrate to the U.S. Because of their international connections, they were able to leave by plan with travel visas and to be welcomed here, where both parents had jobs waiting for them. Dr. Quinonez noted, “I am thankful for that and realize in many ways how different my story is compared to most Latin American immigrants today. The full interview can be read here: https://blog.abp.org/blog/abp-celebrates-hispanic-heritage-month
In August, the Director of the Global TB Program, Dr. Anna Mandalakas, was awarded a distinguished Leibniz Chair at the Research Center Borstel. The Leibniz Association awards honorary Leibniz Chairs to outstanding partner scientists whose work has had a substantial impact on the development of a Leibniz Institute. In addition, Dr. Mandalakas was the recipient of the Clara Southmayd Ludlow Medal that recognizes honorees for their inspirational and pioneering spirit, whose work represents success despite obstacles and advances the field of tropical medicine. This award was highlighted at the annual meeting of the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene in Seattle, Washington on October 30.

Dr. Adeodata Rukyalekere Kekitiinwa, affectionately known by her peers, staff, and colleagues as “Dr. Addy,” is an accomplished and renowned physician, lecturer, and now as of 1 November 2022, Emeritus Clinical Associate Professor of Pediatrics at Baylor College of Medicine. On 25 November 2022, the Uganda Ministry of Health (MOH), in collaboration with Xtraordinary Media, a branding, communications, and marketing firm in Uganda, recognized 29 of Uganda’s most outstanding health workers who work in both public and private facilities for their contribution to improving health service delivery in Uganda during their Heroes in Health Awards (HIHA) event. Dr. Adeodata Kekitiinwa-Rukyalekere was one of four recipients of their Lifetime Achievement Award, which is awarded to a professional or leader who has made contributions of outstanding significance to Uganda’s health sector.

Faculty Recipients of Norton Rose Fulbright Educational Grants

The following faculty members of DoP were among six recipients of the Norton Rose Fulbright Educational Grants:

Dr. Betty Del Rio Rodriguez, Asst. Professor and Dr. Jennifer Benjamin, Asst. Professor, (above, left) for “What is in the Ear? A Blended Approach for Diagnosing Ear Infections in Primary Care Clinics Utilizing Digital Otoscope,” and Dr. Teri Turner, Professor (with Dr. Bani Maheshwari Ratan), (above, right) for “Mind Makeover: An E-Learning Module for Residents to Foster Growth Mindset in Medical Students.”
In support of contributing to science, from October 10 - November 4, the Global TB Program hosted the inaugural Child Health Applied Research Training (CHART) Program in Eswatini for 15 young Swazi investigators. This intensive four-week program provided training in applied research methods and focused on education in research implementation. Competitive pilot funding was awarded to 11 CHART participants who will implement projects over the next 18 months.

On December 12, Dr. Diane Nguyen, Assistant Professor and Director of Global Programs at TCH/BIPAI, announced the outcomes from the virtual 7-part Scholarly Writing Series provided by the Global Health Scholarship Community of Practice (CoP) Program over the course of several months in 2021 and 2022. The series covered the foundations of academic writing and provided an opportunity for participants to publish their manuscripts in a peer-reviewed journal. This activity resulted in extensive collaboration across the Global Health Network and BCM/TCH and exemplifies the power of activating the Network.

The workshops were led by Dr. Lee Ligon, Instructor and Department of Pediatrics Editor (left), and Dr. Satid Thammasitboon, Director of the Center for Research, Innovation, and Scholarship in Health Professions Education (CRIS) (right).

Organizers were Dr. Nguyen; Mr. Rogers Ssebunya, Program Outcomes and Evaluations Coordinator at BCM Children’s Foundation-Uganda; Dr. Kajal Hirani, former Global Health Corps at BCM Children’s Foundation-Malawi. The seven workshops had 216 attendees from 13 cadres/disciplines, and yielded 8 published manuscripts by 31 authors from 11 countries and three conference abstracts at local and international conferences.
Global Health Hosts First Hybrid Network Meeting

The 23rd Global Health Network Meeting, hosted by the Texas Children’s Hospital Global Health Network took place November 8 - 12th. Nearly 360 participants (150 in-person; 223 on Day One), representing our 9 program countries participated in this first-ever hybrid (in-person/virtual) conference on the first day alone. Each year, the Network Meeting seeks to provide networking opportunities, discuss clinical and operational best practices, evaluate network progress, identify shared experiences, and celebrate the unity and uniqueness of the Texas Children’s Hospital Global Health Network. This year’s conference theme was “Leading Innovation & Growth.”

Academic General Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month

Academic General hosted several events for the pediatric residency program, including a Happy Hour, to celebrate Hispanic Heritage and National Latino Physician Day.

On October 14, they also hosted a faculty panel for Hispanic Heritage Month at the pediatric resident noon conference. Drs. Alex Siller, Andrea Cruz, Jesus Vallejo, Keila Lopez, and Andrea Rubiano participated as panelists, with Dr. Linessa Zuniga serving as moderator.

Further, they featured eight of their Latinx residents and one faculty (Dr. Zuniga) on the BCM instagram page (@bcmypeds), where they shared why diversity in medicine is important.
Dr. Maria Buheis, Clinic Chief of the West Campus Allergy & Immunology Clinic, has been promoted from Assistant Professor to **Associate Professor** in the Patient Care Single Mission Pathway. She is a recipient of the **BCM STAR Award for Excellence in Patient Care** and has grown the practice at West Campus to >600% increase in patient volumes since its beginning in 2011 compared to 2022.

**Dr. Joud Hajjar** successfully completed her PhD in Immunology in the Microbiology and Immunology Graduate School. Her mentor for her PhD was Dr. Farrah Karradman.

Dr. Maria Buheis, Clinic Chief of the West Campus Allergy & Immunology Clinic, has been promoted from Assistant Professor to **Associate Professor** in the Patient Care Single Mission Pathway. She is a recipient of the **BCM STAR Award for Excellence in Patient Care** and has grown the practice at West Campus to >600% increase in patient volumes since its beginning in 2011 compared to 2022.

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Neurology Faculty Create Virtual Forum for PNCC Ed Platform

In conjunction with the pediatric neurocritical care research group (PNCRG) and others, faculty in the Division of Pediatric Neurology released a study highlighting the creation of a virtual forum for pediatric neurocritical care (PNCC) education platform that reached individuals spanning 75 countries across six continents to help promote education in this relatively young field. As a result of the NEURON Study, previously, 54% of responders cited improvement in education as a vital means to improve neurocritical care training. This virtual platform was a huge success that will help to address those issues across the spectrum of neurocritical care fellowship training.

The lead author on the study published in the journal *Children*, was **Dr. Jennifer C. Erklauer**. Other authors from BCM were **Drs. Ajay X. Thomas**, and **James J. Riviello, Jr.** The title of the article was “**A Virtual Community of Practice: An International Educational Series in Pediatric Neurocritical Care.**”
Fellows from Texas Children’s Cancer and Hematology Center participated in the Periwinkle Foundation Kickball Classic. The team, led by Captain and Chief Pediatric Hematology-Oncology Fellow, **Dr. Chelsea Daignault**, placed 2nd in the tournament’s fundraising event. The Periwinkle Foundation develops and provides programs that positively change the lives of children, young adults, and families who are challenged by cancer and other life-threatening illnesses and are cared for at TCH. Each year, more than 4,000 children are touched by Periwinkle programs: Camp Periwinkle, Camp YOLO, Family Camp, Camp Periwinkle Days, Periwinkle Day Camp, the Long-Term Survivor Program, and the Arts & Creative Writing Program, which culminates each year in a traveling exhibition of art by children touched by cancer and blood disorders. Through camping, recreation, and arts programming, the Periwinkle Foundation provides opportunities for these special children and their families to heal emotionally, lead fuller lives, and make lasting connections with others.

Hematology/Oncology Faculty Participate in Community Activities

**Left:** The Blue Angels visited Texas Children’s Cancer and Hematology Center before the CAF Wings Over Houston Airshow. Welcoming the team aboard

Hematology/Oncology Faculty Receive Pilot Grants

**Dr. Susan Blaney**, Director, Texas Children’s Cancer and Hematology Center, recently announced three one-year pilot grants awarded to physician scientists in The Russell and Glenda Gordy Center for Innovative Therapies at Texas Children’s. The awardees and the titles of their research projects are:

- **Holly Lindsay, MD**, Asst. Professor and Assoc. Director, Clinical Division (Inpatient), Cancer and Hematology Center: “**PIRATE: A Phase 1 Trial of RRx-001 in Combination with Irinotecan and Temozolomide for Pediatric Patients with Recurrent or Progressive Malignant Solid and Central Nervous System Tumors**” (above, left)

- **Bilal Omer, MD**, Asst. Professor: “**CAR T Cells for Acute Myeloid Leukemia**” (above, center)

- **Robin Parihar, MD, PhD**, Asst. Professor: “**A Nanoparticle Drug-delivery Platform for Targeting the Tumor Immune Microenvironment**” (above, right)
Dr. Melissa Webb is a board-certified pediatric cardiologist with specialization in cardiac catheterization of newborns, children, and adults. She has a special interest in pulmonary hypertension and cardiopulmonary interactions in premature infants. She works in collaboration with the pulmonary hypertension team and is an active member of the BPD collaborative.

Dr. Milenka Cuevas Guaman is an attending neonatologist at TCH. She is passionate about diversity, equity and inclusion efforts, and serves on several committees at her institution and in the AAP. She serves in the Executive Committee of The BPD Collaborative and spearheads important missions of this international collaborative. She has dedicated her clinical and research career to bronchopulmonary dysplasia.

Dr. Natalie Villafranco is a board-certified pediatric pulmonologist and director of the home ventilator and severe BPD clinic. She is an active member of the BPD collaborative and the AAP. Dr. Villafranco has a special interest in taking care of children with severe BPD and pulmonary hypertension. She is particularly interested in transitions from hospital to home, home ventilator weaning, and improving communication and support for families of children with complex medical needs.

Department Annual Education Retreat Held

The Department’s Annual Education Retreat was held on December 9, 2022. The Kelly Descioli Memorial Lecture (Grand Rounds) topic was “The Social Construction of Clinical Education,” given by Dr. Peter Mantillon, Professor of Primary Care at National University of Ireland, Galway, and Co-founder of The Irish Network of Medical Educators. Morning workshops addressed “Finding Joy in Teamwork,” “Tending the Entire Garden: Cultivating Diverse Learner Identities by Creating an Inclusive Learning Environment,” and “Targeting Burnout and Fostering Wellbeing in Physicians.” The afternoon sessions addressed, “Not Okay: A Systematic Approach to Diagnosing and Supporting the Learner in Difficulty,” “Let’s Play! Team Building Improve Exercises for Educators,” and “Exploring Qualitative Research Methods for Health Care Providers.” The retreat also included educational scholarship platform presentations.

BPD Consult Service Launched

On September 15, 2022, the bronchopulmonary dysplasia (BPD) Consult Service, a multidisciplinary team that provides care to infants with severe bronchopulmonary dysplasia, was launched. The disease is one of the most common of prematurity. The team is led by Drs. Natalie Villafranco, Melissa Webb, and Milenka Cuevas Guaman.
Dr. Geoffrey Preidis, Asst. Professor, has been appointed as Associate Director of BCM’s Medical Scientist Training Program. A BCM alumnus of the medical school, residency program, and fellowship, Preidis has been a faculty member since 2018. At TCH, he leads the neonatal gastroenterology, hepatology and nutrition consultation service and attends on the pediatric liver service. Dr. Preidis’ research focuses on the prevention and treatment of early life malnutrition by targeting the liver-gut microbiome axis, and he has previously had a K08 grant and currently R01 and R03 grants to support this work. Passionate about global health and equity, he has been involved in MSTP leadership since 2019.

Dr. Aikaterini "Katherine" Anagnostou, Sr. Faculty, was honored with the Luisa Businco Lectureship at the International Food Allergy Symposium at the 2022 American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology in November of 2022 in Louisville, Kentucky.

Dr. Sara Anvari, Director of the Clinical Trials in the Food Allergy Program and Director of the COVID Vaccine Hypersensitivity & Penicillin Allergy De-labeling Program, received the 2022 Allergists' Foundation Community Grant Award for the project entitled "Improving Access to Allergy Specialty Care in Houston Through a Novel Penicillin Allergy Stewardship Program" at the 2022 American College of Asthma, Allergy and Immunology Annual Business Meeting, in November 2022.

Dr. Maria Buheis, Clinic Chief of the West Campus Allergy & Immunology Clinic, has been promoted from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor in the Patient Care Single Mission Pathway. She is a recipient of the BCM STAR Award for Excellence in Patient Care and has grown the practice at West Campus to >600% increase in patient volumes since its beginning in 2011 compared to 2022.

Dr. Ivan Chinn, Asst. Professor and Co-Chair of the Severe Combined Immunodeficiency Disease Variant Curation Expert Panel of the Clinical Domain Working Groups of ClinGen, an NIH-funded resource dedicated to building a central resource that defines the clinical relevance of genes and variants for use in precision medicine and research, has been selected for membership in the Society of Pediatric Research. He is the Principal Investigator of a U24 grant entitled, “Curation of Genetic Defects Causing Combined Immunodeficiency and Infections in Children” and the PI for the NIH funded U24 funded grant entitled, “The Clinical Genome Resource – Advancing genomic medicine through biocuration and expert assessment of genes and variants at scale”. This demonstrates his national footprint and research leadership.

Dr. Angela Chun, Fellow, -- received funding of $34,000 for project that focuses on supporting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Cultivating a New Generation of Rheumatologists. Her project focuses on educational modules that highlight diverse skin findings in rheumatologic diseases affecting children of color. -- was awarded the Korean American Medical Association of Texas’s Shin Ja So (SJS) Memorial scholarship for leadership and service, and has been invited to their Legacy of Influence biennial Gala to receive her award on November 5, 2022.

Dr. Anil George, Asst. Professor, was awarded the Clover Award by Texas Children’s Hospital in recognition of contributions to patient quality and safety.

Dr. Joud Hajja, Asst. Professor received the 2022 Immune Deficiency Foundation Michael Blaese Research Grant Award entitled, "Impact of IgG Replacement Therapy on Intestinal Microbiome and Immune Dysregulation in Common Variable Immunodeficiency."

Dr. Marisa Hilliard, Assoc. Professor, was awarded a $3.6 million R01 from National Institutes of Health/NIDDK and NIH/OBSSR to conduct a multisite, multimodal strengths-based behavioral intervention for children with type 1 diabetes. The goal of this intervention is to prevent the deterioration in medical and psychosocial outcomes often observed during adolescence. This award has the unique distinction of co-funding by NIH/OBSSR, which is reserved for the highest priority and most meritorious proposals.

Dr. Timothy Lotze, Professor, received the 2022 CNS-PECN Training Director Award from the Child Neurology Society.

Dr. Kimberly Raghubar, Asst. Professor, received the 2022 Young Investigator Award from the International Society of Paediatric Oncology in Barcelona, Spain. She received this award for "Screening of Cognitive Symptoms During Treatment for Childhood Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia Predicts Cognitive Functioning Post-Treatment."
Dr. David Steffin, Asst. Professor, was awarded the **Clover Award** by Texas Children's Hospital in recognition of contributions to patient quality and safety.

Dr. Alexandra Stevens, Asst. Professor, was awarded the **Clover Award** by Texas Children’s Hospital in recognition of contributions to patient quality and safety.

Dr. Natalie Villafranco, Asst. Professor, was invited as a panelist in the panel "Transition Challenges" in the 2023 The BPD Collaborative annual meeting in March 2023.

Dr. Tiphanie Vogel, Asst. Professor, was an invited speaker at the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) National Conference and Exhibition in Anaheim, CA, October 7-10, 2022. Dr. Vogel gave a talk on “An Update on MIS-C.”

Dr. Huda Zoghbi, Distinguished Service Professor and Director of the Jan and Dan Duncan Neurological Research Institute at Texas Children's Hospital and an investigator with Howard Hughes Medical Institute, was named the 2023 winner of the **August M. Watanabe Prize in Translational Research** and will be honored at the 2023 Indiana Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute Annual Meeting.

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**“End with Good Stuff”**

-- Dr. Gordon Schutze

**Some Therapy Comes on Four Paws**

AKC Canine Good Citizens bringing Cheer through Faithful Paws Pet Therapy

Omri Cadenhead, AKC CGD, CGC, TKE (left), owned and handled by Karen Cadenhead, MEd

Hood ‘n’ Borden’s Lady Heather Prancin’ the Liffey, AKC CGC, THDN (right), owned and handled by Dr. B. Lee Ligon-Borden