

# Pedi Press 2.0

A Monthly Publication of the Department of Pediatrics

from the desk of Lara Shekerdeman . . .



Hello Team

I was thrilled to host our second annual Department of Pediatrics Leadership Retreat this month, which centered on the vital theme of wellbeing. Our very own fantastic Dr. Kelley Slack and Dr. Gia Washington, along with friend of the department Dr. Lacey Schmidt, facilitated this event, in which the content was inspired by the US Surgeon General's Workplace Mental Health and Well-Being Framework. The retreat served as a platform for fostering collaboration, nurturing leadership skills, and prioritizing the holistic health of our faculty and staff. Looking ahead, we remain committed to advancing our mission, while paying particular attention to wellbeing, access to care, education, and research. In our field, prioritizing wellbeing is not just a luxury; it is a necessity and the root system giving life to all that we do!

With well-being in mind, it was such a pleasure to host our very first bi-annual faculty promotions celebration this past month! Faculty who promoted this academic year were invited to come and celebrate their hard earned and well-deserved promotions, and it was truly a pleasure to congratulate so many in person. This event not only recognizes the outstanding achievements of our colleagues but also highlights the collective dedication to excellence that defines our department. I look forward to hosting these at least twice a year among other initiatives to ensure that members of our department feel connected and valued.

This edition of Pedi Press 2.0 is packed with exciting news, amazing achievements, and examples of phenomenal teamwork by many of our friends and colleagues in the Department of Pediatrics.

Happy reading!  
Lara



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**Carl E. Allen, M.D., Ph.D.** is our new **Vice Chair of Research** for the Department of Pediatrics, taking over this role from Dr. Kristy Murray D.V.M. after she transitioned to her new position as Chief Research Officer at Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta on April 1. Dr. Allen did his undergraduate degree at Duke University and obtained his doctorate degrees from The Ohio State University. After graduating from medical school, he completed his Pediatric training at Nationwide Children’s Hospital and then moved to Texas to complete his Pediatric Hematology/Oncology fellowship at Baylor College of Medicine/Texas Children’s Hospital. He joined the Faculty in the Department of Pediatrics, Division of Hematology-Oncology in 2008 and has been a tenured Professor since 2020.



**Dr. Joanna Schwartz** was named TCH Austin Faculty Development Leader. Dr. Schwartz graduated from Tulane University School of Medicine in 2001 and did her internship at Naval Medical Center, Portsmouth, in 2001-2002. She completed her residency at Baylor College of Medicine in 2007 and fellowship in Pediatric Emergency Medicine at University of Florida College of Medicine Jacksonville in 2010. Before coming to BCM, she was with Dell Children’s Medical Center in Austin.

## **Pediatric Legends: Dr. Desmond (1916-2003)**

by **Dr. Gordon Schutze**

I was on a TMC Library meeting today and they talked about their newest collection that is out about **Dr. Murdina Desmond**. As you may know, Dr Desmond was one of the giants of the past from the DOP. She was a pediatrician and worked as a neonatologist at Jefferson Davis Hospital but really established the neonatal follow-up clinic and was pretty much responsible for our Developmental/Behavioral Division. Here is something from the library if you want to know more:

Dr. Desmond was born in the Hebrides Islands of Scotland in 1916. Her family immigrated to the United States when she was 7. She attended Smith College on scholarship, graduating in 1938, and obtained her M.D. in 1942 from Temple School of Medicine. Following her internship and six months of pediatric residency, Dr. Desmond joined the U.S. Naval Reserve as a physician and actively served through World War II, including time at Pearl Harbor.

In 1956, Dr. Desmond and two other physicians were alarmed at the death rate from staphylococcus infections at Jefferson Davis Hospital . . . Shortly thereafter, Dr. Desmond began the first neonatal intensive care unit in the nation at the hospital. Dr. Desmond also worked with infants born with



Dr. Paul Gillette and Dr. Murdina Desmond examine an infant in an incubator, circa 1970.

drug addictions. . . During the outbreak of rubella in 1963-64, Dr. Desmond worked with about 200 affected infants and children. She recognized that many at-risk infants, whom medical care was able to save, developed conditions that required comprehensive evaluation and long-term care. In 1973, she became the director of the Leopold Meyer Center for Developmental Pediatrics at TCH. During this period she was on the team that cared for David Vetter, the "Bubble Boy." The Desmond Neonatal Developmental Follow-up Clinic, named for Dr. Desmond, was established in 1994.

<https://library.tmc.edu/mcgovern/2024/03/15/selections-from-the-papers-of-murdina-macfarquhar-desmond-md-digitized-and-online/>

# Innovative Care Providers

## Partnering with Children's HeartLink

Texas Children's Hospital Heart Center's International and Global Health Program is honored to be a volunteer partner program to Children's HeartLink (CHL) in the fight for a brighter future for children and families affected with cardiac disease around the world. CHL is a renowned NGO with more than 50 years of history saving children's lives by transforming heart care in underserved parts of the world. CHL works in six countries building sustainable cardiac programs, and ultimately, helping them become Centers of



TCH and Real Hospital Portugues

TCH Heart Center's Global Program is partnered with the cardiac center at **Real Hospital Portugues**, in Recife (Brazil). It has been an academic non-for-profit cardiac center providing pediatric cardiac surgical care in the State of Pernambuco, Northeast Brazil, since the 1970s. The Northeast of Brazil is one of the most populated areas in the country and, unfortunately, also one of the most underserved. With an educational focus and a train-the-trainer approach, we hope to improve cardiac care in the region and help many children with congenital heart disease. The chief faculty player is **Dr. Patricia Bastero** (Critical Care and Heart Center International Programs), and this particular trip involved her and **Dr. Silvana Molossi** (cardiology).



Debriefing after "just-in-time" simulation

## ARK Clinic Offers Pilot for At-Risk Families

The ARK "At-Risk Kids" Clinic is a short-term follow-up clinic for families with high social needs (but low medical needs) being discharged from TCH. It is a pilot clinic to help families before CPS gets involved... ideally, we can help families who are struggling and keep them from "falling between the cracks." The initial intent is to help families transition out of the hospital into a good trajectory. The goals of the ARK clinic are to provide comprehensive follow-up visits focusing on a family's social needs and coordinating care, as well as to support caregivers transitioning to a community primary care provider.



Many parents struggle with a lack of stability in their life circumstances, which impact their ability to do the best for their children. Our intention is to be able to identify and assist young families who are having challenging life circumstances, and provide social support, parenting support in conjunction with a PCP, social case navigation and warm hand off, and potentially even home visitation. In this way, we can serve as a stabilizing force for them, moving "upstream" to disrupt potential situations often associated with child neglect. The lead providers for the ARK clinic are **Dr. Marcy Donaruma-Kwoh**, **Ms. Sharon Record**, and **Dr. Dhvani Shanghvi**.



This Clinic is available at Main Campus (M/W/Th/F) and Woodlands campus (each Tues). To make a referral, call **Casey Weary**, ARK Clinic Nurse Manager (832-824-6065) or email [cweary@texaschildrens.org](mailto:cweary@texaschildrens.org).

# HIGHLIGHTS

## Department Hosts First Faculty Promotions Celebration

Dr. Lara Shekerdeman and the Department of Pediatrics hosted the first **Faculty Promotion Celebration** on **April 9, 2024**, inviting more than 50 faculty members who had been promoted in the first half of this academic year to come together in recognition of their hard earned and well deserved promotions! Division Chiefs of those promoted faculty were also invited, along with the promotions committee members. It was a wonderful evening, and the department is thrilled to start this new tradition. We look forward to celebrating more promoted faculty in the Fall!

If you are considering a promotion in the near future and would like a consultation, please align with your Division Chief and check out the link:

<https://orit.research.bcm.edu/PediatricPromotionConsultation>

We encourage you to check out the DOP Faculty Development webpage as well at

<https://www.bcm.edu/departments/pediatrics/faculty->



The **Center for Houston's Future** has released **Houston's Future: The Intersection of Climate Change and Health Care**, a groundbreaking report highlighting escalating health threats, from heatstroke to mosquito-borne illness, our region faces due to climate change and includes recommendations to address these challenges. Collaboration within and among health systems is vital to address climate-driven medical issues and to decarbonize the sector. The report can be read here: <https://lnkd.in/gibtAzQT>. It was made possible with funding from **St. Luke's Health**.

BCM also has a Green Team and a new public website for sustainability ([www.texaschildrens.org/about-us/sustainability](http://www.texaschildrens.org/about-us/sustainability)). The Department of Pediatrics hosted a table on the bridge on the morning of Earth Day (April 22), and Pediatric residents provided education on climate change's impacts on child health. On April 17, **Dr. Daniel Mahoney** presented a lunch and learn for the BCM.



Members of the **Rheumatology Division** participated in the Department of Pediatrics March Madness. Round one of the third annual friendly basketball-shooting contest was held on Wednesday, March 20 in the Mark Wallace Tower.



March 21 was World Down Syndrome Day, and PHM celebrated people with Down Syndrome and their differences. **Joey Rodriguez** (son of PHM faculty **Dr. Lisa Ayoub-Rodriguez**) showed off his baseball skills during the spring session on Miracle League. Miracle League removes the barriers that keep children with mental and physical disabilities off the baseball field and lets them experience the joy of America's favorite pastime.

**Run for the Rose** honoring **Kelly DeScioli** (former faculty who passed away from brain cancer) and **Avya** (child of PHM faculty member who passed away from childhood)



# EVENTS

## Pediatric Research Symposium 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

On April 2, **The Pediatric Research Symposium** held its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Featured speakers were **Drs. Carl Allen, Morey Haymond, and Nabil Ahmed**. In addition to their presentations were Award presentations, Top Abstracts Presentations, a poster session, and a workshop.



Keynote Presentation: 8:15 – 9:00 a.m.  
“Pediatric Research at TCH: A Case Study and Future Directions”  
Carl Allen, MD, PhD  
Professor, Vice Chair for Research, Department of Pediatrics - Oncology  
Director of Research, Global HOPE  
Co-Director, Histiocytosis and Lymphoma Programs  
Baylor College of Medicine



Keynote Presentation: 1:30 – 2:00 p.m.  
Morey Haymond, MD  
Distinguished Professor Emeritus  
Department of Pediatrics – Nutrition  
Baylor College of Medicine



Keynote Presentation: 2:00 – 2:30 p.m.  
“Twenty Years of CAR Engineering”  
Nabil Ahmed, MD  
Professor, Department of Pediatrics - Hematology/Oncology  
Center for Cell and Gene Therapy  
Baylor College of Medicine

## Introducing the Neuroscience and Unity (NEU) Group

**Dr. Mikael Guzman Karlsson**, Pediatric Neurology and Developmental Neuroscience, is a member of **NEU**, a multidisciplinary team of pediatric and adult neurologists and other allied health professionals from TCH, BCM, and NRI, who are committed to reshaping neuroscience by promoting equitable access, inclusive educational ecosystems, and innovative research. The NEU recently held a ‘Brain Fair’ for Northbrook Middle School students, to inspire and educate them about brain function, research, and neurological disorders.



## News from Texas Children's Cancer and Hematology Center

Texas Children's Cancer and Hematology Center welcomed three former NFL players to see their researchers and physicians in action! Thanks to Grainne Owen, Co-Founder and President of Curing Kids Cancer, for organizing the visit, and Drs. Susan Blaney and Eric Schafer for sharing their passion for what they do. It was a pleasure to meet Ben Cavin, who played for Baltimore, San Diego, and Philadelphia; Michael Holmes, who played for San Francisco, Buffalo, and Miami; and, Reggie Rusk, who played for Tampa Bay, San Diego, and Seattle.



Happy Social Work Awareness Month! A huge thank you to Texas Children's Cancer and Hematology Center Social Workers. Through integrity, advocacy, and empathy, you play a crucial role in supporting our patients and their families. We appreciate everything you do!



Texas Children's Cancer and Hematology Center is celebrating our art and music therapists, who enhance the lives of the children and families with whom they work. **Happy Creative Arts Therapies Week!**



Happy Child Life Month! A huge thank you to all of Texas Children's Hospital Cancer and Hematology Center's child life specialists and activity coordinators! Through dedication, compassion, and creativity, you work every day to improve the lives of children, adolescents and their families. We have so much gratitude for your contributions and your unwavering commitment.

# News from Texas Children's Diabetes and Endocrinology

## Community Diabetes Event

was held in  
March 2024

for families and children with diabetes

## Pediatric Diabetes & Endocrinology Annual Division Volunteer Event

Houston FoodBank  
December 2, 2023



## Texas Children's Hospital/Baylor College of Medicine Pediatric Obesity Symposium

Keynote Dr. Claudia Fox  
with organizers

**Drs. Stephanie Sisley and Sharonda Taylor**



The 7<sup>th</sup> annual  
**Virtual Diabetes  
Management  
Conference for  
School Nurses** was  
held Saturday,  
February 3 and  
featured 13 different  
TCH and BCM staff and  
providers as content  
expert speakers. The  
conferenced saw 270  
registered participants,  
with 216 attending the live  
conference. A recording was

provided for those unable to attend the live event. Participants included RNs, LVNs, APRNs, MDs, RDs, and other healthcare and school professionals and students.



## News from Immunology, Allergy and Retrovirology

The IAR's 6th Annual Cooking Up a Cure at The Revaire on Thursday, January 25th was an amazing evening and a resounding success! The event focuses on spreading awareness of food allergies and raising money to fund research into the causes and potential treatments for deadly food allergies. This year, more than 275 guests raised over \$200,000 to continue this vital work. This event is a food allergy safe event catered by some of the most renowned chefs in Houston, but the ultimate goal is to support the research necessary to make every dining experience a safe one for those with food allergies.



TCH/BCM was well represented at the **American Academy of Allergy Asthma & Immunology (AAAAI) Annual Meeting** in Washington, DC on February 23-26. **Drs. Lisa Forbes Satter, Ivan Chinn, Sebastian Gonzalez,** and

**Joud Hajjar** gave course presentations; **Dr. Aikaterini Anagnostou** was a featured speaker in a debate session; **Dr. Sara Anvari** gave a presentation on food protein enterocolitis syndrome; and **Drs. Carla Davis and Meera Gupta** moderated courses on eosinophilic disorders and asthma, respectively. **Dr. Shifaa Alkotob** was selected to present two oral cases during interesting case workshops.

The **12<sup>th</sup> Annual William T. Shearer Lectureship** was held on March 22 at Texas Children's West campus. **Dr. Harry Malech**, Chief of the Genetic Immunotherapy Section, Deputy Chief of the Laboratory of Clinical Immunology and Microbiology, National Institutes of Health's (NIH) National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) gave a lecture on "Update on a Clinical Trial of Lentivector Gene Therapy for Older Children and Young Adults with X-linked Severe Combined Immune Deficiency." It was followed by A&I Fellows' **Drs. Gail Tan and Shifaa Alkotob** on Difficult Case Presentations.



## GRAND OPENING

Congratulations to **Dr. Hannah Bradfield, Patsy Keegan, RN, and Sherry Grant**, Manager Nursing Outpatient, Ambulatory Nursing on the opening of our newest **Rheumatology** clinical location at the **Heights** on February 24 (left) and to the Rheumatology & Allergy Immunology Divisions of the **North Austin campus** ambulatory opening on February 5 (below).



The **Division of Rheumatology** recognized **World Encephalitis Day 2024** on February 21, and the Miracle Bridge was lit red to mark the occasion. Kudos to all our participants, to our organizers who participated and organized this event (**Drs. Eyal Muscal, Sarah Brick, Nikisha Foster, Patsy Keegan, Olivia Trzepacz**), and our Research Coordinators (**Monica Guevara, Abigail Hernandez, Priscilla Vasquez, and Divya Thomas**) and to **Dr. Alex Sandweiss**, who presented an animation overview of NMDAR encephalitis at the molecular level.



Pediatric Hospital Medicine watched the eclipse at work

## Cardiac Development Outcomes Celebrates at Zoo

by **Allie Johnson, BSN, RN**

This spring, the **Cardiac Developmental Outcomes Program (CDOP)** had the honor of celebrating their **Ten-Year-Anniversary** with patients and families, and our chair, **Dr. Lara Shekerdemanian**, at the Houston Zoo. The Cardiac Developmental Outcomes Program supports babies and children with congenital heart disease (CHD) by providing regular neurodevelopmental assessments and support.

The event had a fantastic turnout with numerous CDOP patients and families in attendance. Patients had a blast getting their faces painted, connecting with others that share similar stories, and getting to explore the spectacular zoo with their families. There were also physicians, nurses, social workers, and medical assistants in attendance that volunteered their time to make the experience memorable for patients and families. While this is the first event of this kind for the program, the CDOP team is hopeful to host additional events and virtual workshops for patients and families in the future.





**Immunology, Allergy & Rheumatology**  
employees who were honored for their dedicated service to  
**Texas Children's Hospital,**  
at Minute Maid Stadium on Tuesday, February 27, 2024

**Chivon McMullen-Jackson - 30 years**  
**Kathy Green - 30 years**  
**Quinton Phillips - 30 years**  
**Gloria Sierra - 26 years**  
**Joseph Carnot - 25 years**  
**Karen Johnson - 20 years**  
**Kim Nguyen - 20 years**

All of these dedicated IAR employees  
go above and beyond to give excellent care to the IAR patients and families.

**Dr. Mohammad Abu-Arja** received a St. Baldrick's Foundation Fellowship award for his project, *Enhancing the Cytotoxic Capacity of CAR T Cells in High-Grade Gliomas*. This award is designed to support the brightest young investigators in the field and provides support for budding researchers to explore innovative ideas in pediatric cancer research.

**Dr. Aikaterini Anagnostou**  
--received Woman in Allergy Award  
-- elected regent for American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology

**Dr. Eveline Barbieri** received an investigator research award from Cancer Prevention & Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT).

**Dr. David Bauer** was inducted into BCM's chapter of the Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society.

**Dr. Lisa Beckner** was accepted to APA Health Policy Scholars Program for 2024-2027.

**Dr. Lisa Bomgaars** has been appointed Vice Chair of the American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology (ASPHO)'s Quality and Safety Special Interest Group. In this role, she will advance global quality and safety initiatives for the care of pediatric hematology/oncology patients.

**Dr. Carla M. Davis** was inducted as the incoming Secretary-Treasurer of a leading membership organization of more than 7,000 allergists / immunologists in the United States.

**Dr. Daniel DeSalvo** was named T1D Exchange Outstanding Pediatric Principal Investigator award recipient.

**Dr. Jennie Foster** was invited to serve as mentor for the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Robert A. Winn Clinical Investigator Leadership Award (CILA). CILA is a three-year career and leadership development program designed to provide clinical cancer researchers with advanced clinical trials knowledge, leadership skills, mentorship and sponsorship to succeed as independent clinical researchers, team members and leaders.

**Dr. Miriah Gillispie-Taylor** was elected to serve on the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Section of Rheumatology Executive Committee.

**Dr. Dan Gombos** was inducted into BCM's chapter of the Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society.

**Dr. Sharada Gowda**

-- elected as the Curriculum Chairperson by the AAP Section on Early Career Physicians Early Career Leadership Alliance.  
-- selected to serve as the Associate Chair for membership and nominations of the PediECMO Committee.  
-- selected to serve a committee member of Nominations and Membership Committee at ELSO.

**Dr. Monica Gramatges** received an investigator research award from Cancer Prevention & Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT).

**Dr. Meera Gupta**

-- received a faculty Award for Excellence in Pediatrics Grand Rounds presentation with Dr. Mariana Sockrider, pulmonologist, entitled, "Updates in Chronic Asthma Management."  
-- was elected to Secretary-Treasurer of the Texas Allergy, Asthma and Immunology Society (TAAIS) in March 2024. She will elevate to President-Elect in August.

**Dr. Heather Haq** was re-elected as Chair for the Section on Global Health and will continue to lead this section within the AAP.

**Dr. Andras Heczey** received a grant from Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation for a project entitled, "Synthetic gene expression regulator switches (SynGERS) expressed in CAR T cells to cure children with solid tumors."

**Dr. Kelly Hicks** was named 2024 Star Faculty Award recipient for Excellence in Patient Care.

**Dr. Mariasa Hilliard** received a k26 from the NIH/NIDDK.

**Dr. Emily Hopkins** is a New Co-Assistant Program Director for the PHM Fellowship.

**Dr. Sharanya Joginpalli** was selected a Fellow into the Texas Beta Chapter of Alpha Omega Alpha (AOA) Honor Medical Society. The induction ceremony was held on March 5, 2024

**Dr. Lisa Kahalley** was elected as co-chair of the Pediatric Psycho-Oncology Network for the International Society of Paediatric Oncology. In this role, she will co-lead the psycho-oncology initiatives of the largest global multidisciplinary society entirely devoted to pediatric and adolescent cancers.

**Dr. Stella Kalu** was named Physician of the Year (2024) for Houston Methodist West.

**Dr. YoungNa Lee-Kim** was appointed Chair-Elect of the Fellowship Directors' Executive Committee by the Association of Pediatric Program Directors (APPD).

**Dr. Yasmine Koukaz** was selected as one of two fellow representatives on the national Global Health Fellowship Pediatric Accreditation Committee.

**Dr. Philip Lupo**

-- was invited to serve as a member of the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Initial Review Group's (IRG) Developmental Biology Study Section (CHHD). The four-year position, which begins on July 1, 2024, will enable him to contribute to and help guide national biomedical research efforts.  
-- is corresponding author of a paper on germline cancer-predisposition variants (CPVs), which can be helpful in predicting risk in some pediatric cancers. Their new report evaluates the association of germline CPVs with rhabdomyosarcoma outcomes in a cohort of children enrolled in Children's Oncology Group studies. The findings are published in *JAMA Network Open*.

**Shelby Lopez** is now IAR Supervisor for Business Operations. Shelby's former role was Senior Coordinator of Business Operations in the BCM/TCH Pediatrics-Oncology Department.

**Dr. Marina Masciale**

-- is a New Co-Assistant Program Director for the PHM Fellowship.  
-- graduated from the Academic Pediatric Association's Health Policy Scholar's Program for 2021-2024.

**Dr. Bonnie McCann-Crosby**

-- was appointed Associated Director of Faculty Development at the Woodlands Campus.  
-- was named 2024 Star Faculty Award recipient for Excellence in Patient Care.

**Dr. Lindy McGee** will be featured on an upcoming AAP podcast about adolescent tobacco counseling.

**Dr. Leonid Metelitsa** received a 2024 Michael E. DeBakey, M.D., Excellence in Research Awards. These awards recognize faculty members who have made significant published scientific contributions to clinical or basic biomedical research during the past three years.

**Dr. Eyal Muscal** gave an invited Grand Rounds virtually at Children's Minnesota. His talk was entitled, "Neuroinflammation in Children: Breaking Down Silos of care?"

**Dr. Katerina Nella** was named 2024 Star Faculty Award recipient for Excellence in Patient Care.

**Regina Okhuysen-Cawley** received the 2024 BCM Clark Faculty Service Award for Exemplary and Enduring Service Contributions.

**Dr. Debra L. Palzzi** received the 2024 BCM Master Clinician Award for Excellence in Patient Care.

**Dr. Debananda Pati** received a \$1.5 million United States Army Medical Research Acquisition Activity (Department of Defense) grant that will fund his project titled, *Development of Novel Separase Inhibitors from the Natural Products to Treat Refractory Breast Cancers*.

**Dr. Michael Petrus-Jones** was awarded an AAP Health Equity Grant to support his curricular research in LGBTQ+ allyship and health inequities.

**Dr. Veena Ramgopal** received the BCM Early Career Award for Excellence in Patient Care

**Dr. Andrea Ramirez** received the Star Faculty Award for Excellence in Patient Care, which will be recognized during Baylor's Awards Day celebration on May 22, 2024.

**Dr. Eric Russell**, along with partners at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Stanford, and the Migrant Clinicians Network, has been awarded a 10-year NIH COMPASS (Community Partnerships to Advance Science for Society) award for the work "Humanitarian Health Care Network: Bring the Most Vulnerable to Care." This award will support border health work, identifying medically complex and high risk, newly arrived immigrants and connecting them to medical care in their final destinations.

**Dr. Lisa Forbes Satter** was appointed new Director of the William T. Shearer Center for Human Immunobiology.

**Brooke Smith** is now IAR Manager for Research Administration.

**Dr. Mariana Sockrider** received a faculty Award for Excellence in Pediatrics Grand Rounds presentation with Dr. Meera Gupta, entitled, "Updates in Chronic Asthma Management."

**Dr. Michael E. Speer** stepped down as the Past President of the Texas Collaborative for Healthy Mothers and Babies Executive Committee earlier this year.

**Dr. Ryan Stewart** was appointed Medical Director of the Austin Campus.

**Dr. Pavel Sumazin** was awarded an R21 grant from the National Institutes of Health for his project, "Discovery of Chemoresistant Tumor Subclones in Pediatric Liver Cancers."

**Dr. Michael Taylor** served as this year's Viking Lecturer as part of the annual Scandinavian Course in Neurosurgery. Using a highly motivational approach, he delivered three plenary lectures, each focusing on a different aspect of the link between research and neurosurgery in the field of pediatric brain tumors.

**Dr. Cagri Toruner** received the Star Faculty Award for Excellence in Patient Care, which will be recognized during Baylor's Awards Day celebration on May 22, 2024.

**Chanel Tran** was accepted to AAP APEX program.

**Dr. Jenny Werdenberg** received her NRF in Educational Materials.

**Victoria Wright, MSN, APRN, CPNP-PC, BC-ADM, CDCES**, was named Director of Advance Practice Providers.

**Candance Zenger, BSN, RN, CMGT-BC, CCM** received the *Houston Chronicle* Salute to Nurses award.

## FEEDBACK ON PEDI PRESS 2.0

We would love to have your feedback on Pedi Press 2.0! You can go to the link below and enter the code (7FPJJCKMW), or scan the QR Code.

<https://tch-redcap.texaschildrens.org/REDCap/surveys>



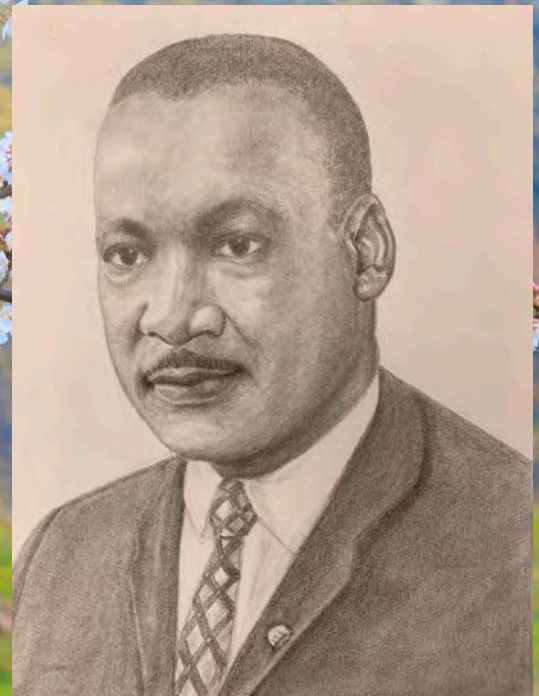
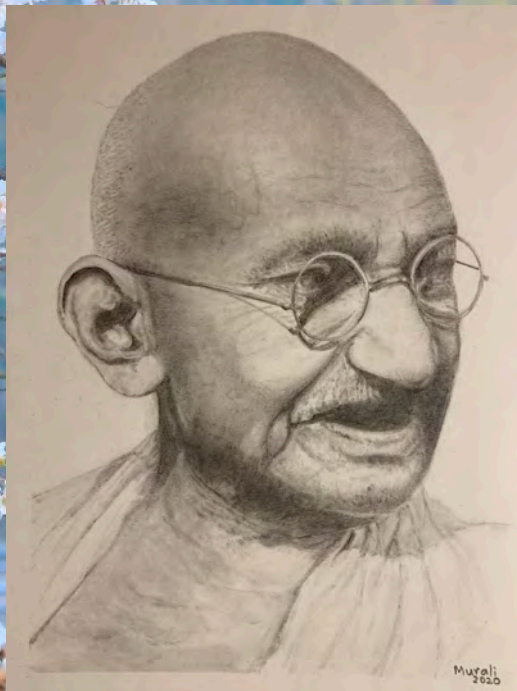
## FRIENDS, AND OTHER FUN



**Dr. Le Lien** has been cast in a play entitled “The Father” at 4<sup>th</sup> Wall Theatre Company (located at Spring Street Studios). It opens on April 26 and runs through May 11. “ I don't have a huge part, but I really like the script and I'm excited about this production!” - Le Lien



Sketches of Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., by Neonatology faculty member **Dr. Muralidhar Premkumar**. Dr. Premkumar has been taking art lessons for the past four years. He makes sure to spend at least 90 minutes every week on art. He finds it very therapeutic.





Pediatric Diabetes and Endocrinology 1<sup>st</sup> year Fellow **Dr. Collene Macke** and Bill Kennedy were married on February 2024. Congratulations!

**Dr. Heather Moore**, Academic General, and husband Chris went on a biking tour of the French/Italian Riviera.



**Drs. Teresa Duryea and Mitra Misra** recently volunteered with Undies for Everyone during a BCM volunteer day event. They spent a morning packing underwear for children who need it most.

Congratulations to **Dr. D’Juanna White-Satcher**, pictured here with her son Robbie Satcher, who was recognized for his fundraising efforts by the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.





We continue to celebrate our baby boom—Cristian Regla (**Dr. Ana Monterrey**), Bonaventure Gehrig (**Dr. Diane Nguyen**), and Marcelo Morales (**Dr. Amanda Padilla**).

Academic General Pediatrics stays active in other activities beyond their academic roles: **Dr. Marc Hanfling** competes in tennis doubles competitions and volunteers as a tennis coach for a number of organizations. **Dr. Sutapa Khatua** traveled to Alaska and Yellowstone Park. And lastly, **Dr. Loan Nguyen's** daughter Eloise made her piano recital debut.



Congratulations to **Dr. Vibha Szafron** (IAR) and her husband on the birth of their daughter, Nora Acharya Szafron, on February 21, 2024. Nora weighed 6 lbs. and 13 oz.

Naomi and Joshua Alade, children of Dr. Oladapo Alade and **Dr. Kiyetta Alade (PEM)**, competed at the US Open Taekwondo Championships in Reno, NV, during Presidents' Day weekend. Facing competitors from all over the world, they both won Gold in the junior division. Naomi also competed in the senior division. She defeated Olympic ranked athletes and faced off in the finals with the reigning World champion and Tokyo Olympic Silver medalist.





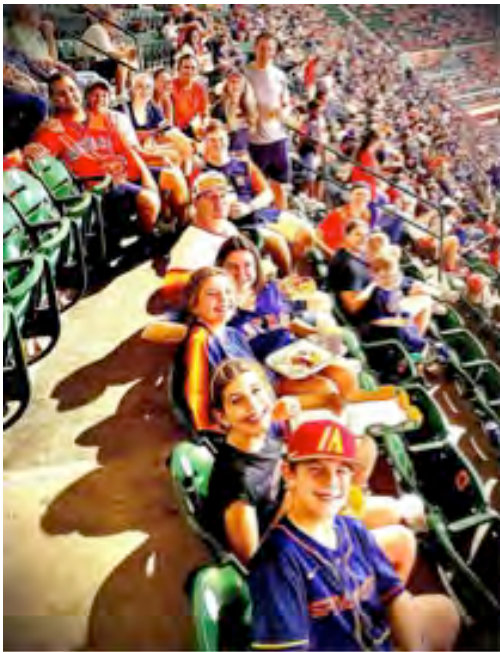
## Pediatric Emergency Medicine Encourages Wellness Initiatives

For the past two years, the Division of Pediatric Emergency Medicine has embarked on hosting several wellness events throughout the year, including family picnics at local parks, happy hours, volunteer day at Houston food bank, women's brunch, and other fun activities such as bowling, and attending an Astros game to engage staff and promote cohesiveness.



Houston Food Bank

Holiday Party



Astros Game



Women's Brunch





PEM Family Picnic



**National Pet Day** was on April 11. Featured are some of our fur friends belonging to members of the **Rheumatology Section**.

Our pets will also be featured on the **bcmpedsrheum** Instagram page!

Pictured are Remi, a blue heeler (Australian cattle dog), and Sully, a German shepherd, both owned by **Janice Hopkins**.

### *In Memoriam*

The Department of Pediatrics is grieving the loss of our coordinator Kiesha Sloan, who passed on May 31, 2024, peacefully in her sleep. Though she had some health issues, this was unexpected to all of us. She was with the Department of Pediatrics for 3½ years. She leaves to mourn, not only her Baylor Family, but her son Malcom, grandson Miles, daughter Cory, and best friend Pia Hughes.

We will miss her spunky personality. Kiesha will forever hold a special place in our hearts.

