

A Message From the Chair

On the Frontline: Raising Awareness About Mental Health

BCM held an off-campus lunch event in March titled, "[Groundbreaking Advances and Shifting Attitudes Around Mental Health](#)." It was organized by the Office of Institutional Advancement and represented the spring installment of a series of events called "On the Frontline." Paul Klotman, M.D., Baylor president, CEO and executive dean, hosted the event, which was moderated by Dana Tyson, from SUNNY 99.1's Morning Show. The panel included Eric Storch, Ph.D.; Amy McGuire, J.D., Ph.D., the director of the Center for Medical Ethics and Health Policy; and myself. About 177 friends of Baylor were in attendance.



Dr. Paul Klotman remarks how the success of telemedicine in serving mental health patients was a pleasant outcome from the pandemic -- and enabled Baylor to lead the way.

Impact of COVID-19

The dialogue began with a discussion of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on patients and the well-being of the Baylor community.

Dr. Klotman remarked that the success of telemedicine in serving mental health patients was one of the pandemic's pleasant surprises where Baylor was able to take a leadership role.

"It turns out that for people searching for mental health support, telemedicine works really, really well," Klotman said.

Using virtual conferencing technologies during the pandemic, our department quickly pivoted to provide Baylor employees, their family members, and the wider Houston community with needed mental health care. We continue to actively deploy telepsychiatry today.

Role of Genetics

The discussion turned to the role of genetics in the origins of mental health disorders. A limitation of most studies of psychiatric genetics is that the majority of subjects are white and of European descent. Dr. Storch has been addressing this drawback in his role as co-PI of an NIH-funded study of the genetics of OCD among Latin Americans.

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Rural Women Veterans Collaborative Updates

The **South Central Mental Illness Research, Education and Clinical Center** (MIRECC) Rural Women Veterans Collaborative is a group of VA researchers and clinicians serving VISN 16 who are dedicated to advancing research on the health and wellbeing of Rural Women Veterans. The Collaborative aims to improve Rural Women Veterans' mental health, wellness, and equitable healthcare delivery through scientific collaboration, Veteran engagement, and education.

Currently, Collaborative member **Dr. Mary Shapiro** is preparing an HSR&D CDA-2 resubmission aimed at developing and evaluating a pregnancy- and trauma-informed intervention for pregnant Veterans with a history of trauma exposure. **Dr. Alexandra Caloudas** is leading a SC MIRECC pilot study to adapt an intervention for low sexual desire in civilian women for use with Women Veterans.

SC MIRECC members **Drs. Deleene Menefee** (Site PI), **Ellen Teng** (Site Co-PI), and **Julianna Hogan**

(Site Co-PI) submitted a DOD grant to test the hypothesis that the effectiveness of EBPs for PTSD will be optimized by first treating emotion dysregulation prior to targeting PTSD symptoms in Women Veterans (PI: Maria Kajankova).

Finally, **Drs. Jan Lindsay, Alexandra Caloudas**, and **Julianna Hogan** published a paper on the use of video-to-home telehealth among Women Veterans, **Dr. Mary Shapiro** published a paper on pain and post-traumatic stress in Women Veterans with a history of MST, and **Drs. Alexandra Caloudas, Derrecka Boykin, Julianna Hogan**, and **Jan Lindsay** published a paper on the prevalence of low sexual desire among Women Veterans.

For more information or to connect with the Collaborative, please reach out to Alexandra. Caloudas@va.gov.

Message From the Chair

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Emerging Research

Dr. McGuire spoke about emerging research on the use of psychedelics like psilocybin for treating mental disorders. She emphasized the importance of making sure that these studies are rigorous and incorporate high ethical standards.

Cutting Edge Neurotechnologies

I had the opportunity to speak about cutting edge neurotechnologies such as deep brain stimulation and how we have married medical devices with AI to better understand and treat severe, treatment refractory psychiatric illnesses. It allowed me to underscore the importance of team science involving multiple departments and disciplines: psychiatrists,

psychologists, neurosurgeons, neurologists, ethicists, neuroscientists, and engineers.

This event showcased how Baylor is advancing mental health and exploring cutting-edge treatments using genetics, neurotechnologies, telemedicine,

psychedelics, and more. I am grateful to Dr. Klotman and his leadership team for choosing this topic and giving us an opportunity to highlight some of our research on advancing the understanding and treatment of mental health disorders.

--Wayne K. Goodman, M.D.



Dana Tyson, Dr. Wayne Goodman, Amy McGuire, J.D., Ph.D. and Dr. Eric Storch speak at On the Frontline.

Honors/Awards

2023 Honorees for Women in Excellence Award

Two physicians in Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences were recognized as 2023 honorees for Baylor's [Women in Excellence Award](#).



Dr. Kirti Saxena

Dr. Kirti Saxena, chief of psychiatry, TCH, received the faculty award, and **Dr. Dania Albaba**, PGY3, received the resident/fellow award.

The Women of Excellence Awards were established in 2018 to celebrate individuals who exemplify Baylor's values and who have

demonstrated exceptional dedication to issues that affect women at Baylor College of Medicine or in the larger community. The prestigious award recognizes demonstrated leadership in addressing diversity, equity and inclusion above and beyond the generally anticipated scope of responsibilities of their position.



Dr. Dania Albaba

Dr. Gordon Named One of Houston's Influential Women

Dr. Mollie Gordon has been named one of "[Houston's 50 Most Influential Women of 2022](#)" by Houston Woman Magazine.

Each of the honorees was nominated for inclusion on the "50 Women" list by a reader of Houston Woman Magazine and then selected by the staff of the publication. Those selected were chosen for their expertise in a particular field.



Dr. Shah: Distinguished Fellow

Dr. Asim Shah, executive vice chair in our department and chief of psychiatry at BTH/Harris Health, has been elected as a Distinguished Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association. The recognition represents an elite group of psychiatrists who make significant contributions to the field of psychiatry.



Dr. Asim Shah

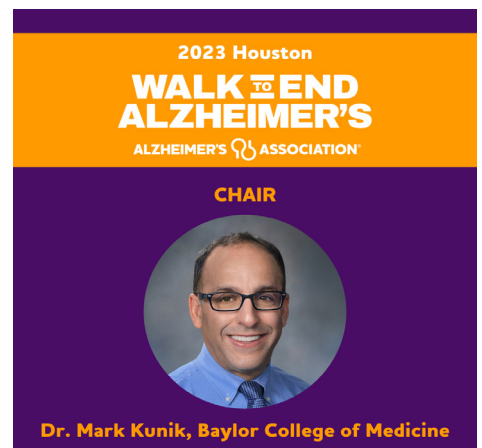
Shah will be recognized at the 2023 Convocation of Distinguished Fellows in May during the APA annual meeting in San Francisco.

Dr. Kunik Chairs 2023 Walk

Dr. Mark Kunik has stepped up to serve as Chair of the Houston Walk to End Alzheimer's in November 2023. Dr. Kunik and his team, the Baylor Memory Walkers, have been walking for more than 10 years and have grown the BCM presence in Houston to 25 walk teams consisting of nearly 300 walkers!

Kunik said he is looking forward to leading as the Houston Walk Chair and reaching lofty goals in raising awareness and fundraising.

"The Houston community will rally to have our best Walk yet," Kunik said. "Persons with dementia and their caregivers need our help more than ever."



Join the fun on walk day with Dr. Kunik and sign up to be on a Baylor team -- or support a team member financially! Register online for the [2023 Houston Walk to End Alzheimer's](#).

Honors/Awards

Dr. Czelusta Inducted to ACP



Dr. Kim-Lan Czelusta

Dr. Kim-Lan Czelusta, vice chair for education, was inducted to the [American College of Psychiatrists](#) at the annual meeting in March. Members are recommended by a current member and excel in teaching, research, clinical, and administration.

Honor Society Inductees

Drs. Nidal Moukaddam, Mollie Gordon, and Nancy Shenoi were inducted into Baylor's chapter of Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Society, a prestigious national medical honor society founded in 1902. The list included 10 faculty and 25 resident/fellows.



Dr. Nancy Shenoi, Dr. Molly Gordon, and Dr. Nidal Moukaddam

Honorees are recognized for academic, service, leadership, scholarship, and teaching accomplishments.

Dr. Oladunjoye: Fellowship Award

Dr. Funso Oladunjoye received the 2023 American Psychiatric Association Foundation (APAF) Public Psychiatry Fellowship Program. APAF Fellowships provide psychiatry residents experiential learning, training, and professional development to be leaders in the field.



Dr. Funso Oladunjoye

Oladunjoye will attend APA annual conference, have mentorship opportunities, and membership in an APA Council/Committee or APAF workgroup.

Dr. Cuellar: Advocacy Committee

Dr. Amy K. Cuellar, assistant professor at BCM and psychologist at MEDVAMC, will serve as Co-Chair of American Psychological Association (APA) Division 18, [Serious Mental Illness/Severe Emotional Disturbance \(SMI/SED\)](#) Section Advocacy Committee.



Dr. Amy Cuellar

Dr. Chaudhry: Resident Awards

Dr. Raheel Chaudhry, PGY5, earned two annual awards this quarter. First, he received the 2022-2023 AACAP Systems of Care Clinical Poster Award by American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. His poster was selected for oral presentation at AACAP's Systems of Care Special Event program.

Chaudhry also earned the AADPRT Fellowship Award, which promotes the professional growth of residents/fellows and facilitates their development as leaders in psychiatry.



Rucker Earns Research Award



John Rucker

Psychology Intern, **John Rucker**, was awarded the Menninger Research Education Trainee Travel Award and named Research Innovation Trainee Scholar for 2023. He will present his work on "The Rorschach Performance Assessment System and Personality: Associations with PID-5 and SCID-2" at two upcoming conferences: The North American Society of Personality Disorders Annual Conference in Boston and the Society for Personality Assessment Convention in Austin.

The Research Education Award Program provides funding so trainees at The Menninger Clinic can disseminate their research work at local, national, and international conferences.

New Residency/Fellow Chiefs

Welcome to the new chiefs for 2023-2024:

General Psychiatry chiefs:

Matthew Stephens, D.O. – wellness chief

Dania Albaba, M.D. – admin chief

Datonye Charles, M.D. – admin chief

Shelley Rote, M.D. – education chief

Child and Adolescent Psychiatry chief:

Kerala Saugh, M.D. – academic chief

Humanitarian Trip: Drs. Banu and Albaba Train in Aftermath of Turkey/Syria Earthquake

by Vicki Powers

It took “a village” for **Dr. Sophia Banu**, associate professor of psychiatry and director of the Clinic for International Trauma Survivors, and **Dr. Dania Albaba**, PGY-3 general psychiatry resident, to travel to Turkey/Syria on a humanitarian trip after an earthquake devastated the region. Banu contacted Albaba three days after the earthquake to see if NGOs were going to Turkey and Syria. She knew Albaba was Syrian-American and just completed her six month rotation with CITS working with refugees.

“The next few days were a blur, and before we knew it, we had a partner ([MedGlobal](#)) and confirmed flights to Istanbul,” Banu said. “We worked together with Dr. Shah, Dr. Moukaddam, Dr. Pershern, and Dr. Gordon to create a two-week elective so Dr. Albaba could go (as a resident), create an IRB, and get our clinics and coverage in order.”



On the trip, 13 physicians including orthopedic surgeons, a neurosurgeon, anesthesiologist, an ER doctor, internal medicine physicians, ICU doctors, and three psychiatrists flew from the U.S., Turkey, the Netherlands, and Egypt. Overall, MedGlobal has a permanent presence with 200 workers inside of Syria and an office in Turkey with full-time staff. Albaba said they were essential in ensuring a smooth trip.

Training the Trainers To Build Relationships

Banu and Albaba were some of the first to arrive in Syria and conduct mental health trainings. Their main focus was train the trainers, build capacity, and build relationships for future endeavors.

“Of all the work that we could do, this seems to be the most impactful,” Albaba said. “Training the



Dr. Banu and Dr. Albaba conduct Skills for Psychological Recovery training at Mercy Hospital in Darkush, Syria.

trainers has the potential to reach far more than simply treating patients. The people in the group will continue to work long after we have left, and now they have the tools.”

During their stay, the duo trained psychosocial support staff, social workers, psychologists, healthcare workers, and NGO staff in 1) human trafficking, 2) child development and trauma, 3) skills for psychological recovery, and 4) vicarious trauma, retraumatization and self-compassion. These curricula were developed at Baylor and used previously in other disaster areas, including Nepal.

Banu and Albaba worked together to make the trainings culturally appropriate and translated into Arabic. One new addition to the training was “Skills for Psychological Recovery,” which Albaba created and translated into Arabic.

Contrast to Other Humanitarian Efforts

Banu has completed other humanitarian trips as a physician but this one was a stark contrast to her last one in Uvalde, Texas. In Turkey and Syria, entire villages and



Collaboration

Humanitarian Trip (continued)

towns were completely destroyed, with no living soul around. At the time, there were more than 50,000 deaths, but still counting.

"It was too soon for memorials, with dangers of aftershocks and collapsing buildings," Banu said.

During Banu's trip to Uvalde where 19 children were shot during school last year, she said the town was quiet and grieving, with school as the focal point. Visits to memorials were filled with sadness but also a celebration of life lived by these young individuals.

In a similar way, however, Banu said religion played a large part in both of the communities focusing on the strength, helplessness, resilience, and acceptance of the will of God/Allah.

"I have been working with refugees close to 20 years, and this visit was the first time I encountered an internally displaced population," Banu said. "I was surprised they were living in tents for 12 years."

Dealing with Challenges

For Albaba, the greatest challenge was hearing the heartwrenching stories, particularly of children being orphaned. She said she and Dr. Banu had to exercise their own coping skills.

"It was important for me to stay mindful, meditate, and debrief daily with her," Albaba said. "I am intimately connected to these people, and their stories remind me of loved ones who fled Syria."

Albaba remarked people remain so full of hope for the future, despite 12 years of airstrikes, chemical weapons' attacks, Covid/Cholera outbreaks.



"They were grateful for the small amounts of help we were there to offer. As we left, they said:

'Just you being here, as an American, it gives us hope that people out there care about us – that we have not been forgotten.'"



“There is so much work to be done there. I know many might feel overwhelmed, but I felt recharged coming back to the states. BCM Psych supported me entirely in going on this trip, so I know I'm not alone in caring about this issue.”

Dr. Dania Albaba, third year resident



In this training exercise, participants are asked to say one good thing about themselves then throw the yarn to the next person. At the conclusion, everyone is holding a piece of yarn, connected in a complex web. Dr. Banu remarks that we all have something good about us, that when we feel helpless and wonder how one person can create a change or help, know that we are all connected in this web of goodness. "Each one of us brings this goodness to the people we are helping so you are not alone. It makes us all stronger knowing that when we work together, we can create a change. What unites us in this space is the goodness we have within us."

Education

We are pleased to welcome our new residents, fellows, and interns for academic year 2023-2024.

General Psychiatry Residents



Mary Angly, M.D.	Lauren Beal, M.D.	James Burden, M.D.	Andrew Canto, M.D.	Sarah Cheema, M.D.	Alyssa Cotton, M.D.
Baylor College of Medicine	McGovern Medical School at UTHealth	McGovern Medical School at UTHealth	Univ. of Alabama at Birmingham	Burnett School of Medicine at TCU	UT Health San Antonio



Samya Isa, M.D.	Nasim Khalfe, M.D.	Eric Nelson, D.O. Western Univ Health Sciences College of Osteopathy	Joaquim Operskalski, M.D., Ph.D. University of Illinois College of Medicine	Michelle Raji, M.D.	Rachel Sheno, M.D.
UT Southwestern	Baylor College of Medicine			Dell Medical School at UT Austin	Baylor College of Medicine



Shanice Walcott, D.O., MPH	James Zhang, M.D.
Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine	The University of Chicago Biological Sciences Division

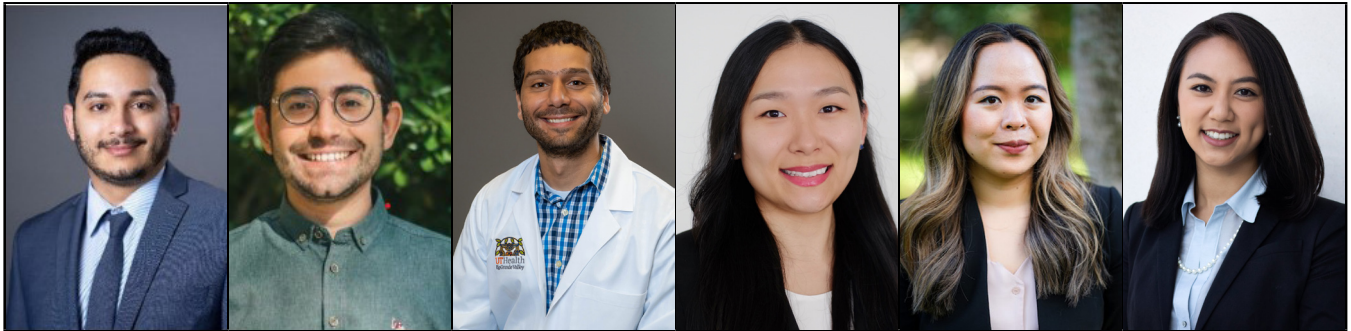
Addiction Fellows



Asjad Bashir, M.D.	Kristen Laster, M.D.	Andre Rosario, M.D.	Nancy Sheno, M.D.
American University of Antigua	Baylor College of Medicine	Howard University	Baylor College of Medicine

Education

Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Fellows



Firas Abdulla, M.D.	Bekir Artukoglu, M.D.	Makram Haidar, M.D.	Connie Hsiao, M.D.	Deborah Lin, M.D.	Alexandra Ngo, M.D.
UT Tyler School of Medicine	SUNY Downstate Medical Center	UTRGV School of Medicine	UT Health San Antonio	The Medical University of South Carolina	Baylor College of Medicine



Nusrat Uddin, D.O.	Grace Vallejo, M.D.
UT Tyler School of Medicine	Jamaica Hospital Medical Center

Psychology Interns



Miranda Higham OCD	Elizabeth Lanzillo OCD	Gwendolyn McInnes OCD	Erika Trent OCD
University of Florida	Catholic Univ of America	University of La Verne	University of Houston



Nathan Barclay Mood Disorders	Kren Kelley Harris Cty Sheriff's Off.	MacKenzie Conner Menninger Adult/Adol Rosemead School of Psychology/Biola U.	Ciara Crighton Menninger Adult George Washington University	Robiann Broomfield TIRR Memorial Hermann Wayne State Univ	Kevin Wagner Ben Taub Hospital The University of Texas at Austin
Mississippi State U.	Mississippi State U.				

BCM Leads Trainings to Reduce Suicidality in Youth Presenting to Primary Care Appointments: SAFETY-A

by Caitlin M. Pinciotti, Ph.D.

Suicide is a leading cause of death in youth in Texas and nationally. Rates of admission to emergency departments due to suicidal actions have increased drastically among youth since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic (Yard et al., 2021), however many youth do not receive follow-up care after they leave the emergency department or inpatient care. These transition phases between care are associated with increased risk for suicide. Pediatric providers are recognizing the need for improved risk identification, planning, and connection to care.



Approximately 77% of individuals who die by suicide had contact with a primary care physician (PCP) within 1 year prior, including 45% of victims who had contact with a PCP within just one month of suicide. Despite the existence of many evidence-based outpatient interventions for suicidal thoughts and actions, many suicidal youth who present to primary care appointments are not adequately connected to these services. Thus, **primary care appointments offer a unique opportunity to detect dangerous patterns and behaviors in youth** and help activate resources to strengthen safety and recovery from suicidal thoughts and actions.

SAFETY-A is an evidence-based intervention developed by researchers at [UCLA ASAP Center](#). The intervention has shown to be effective when implemented by medical professionals in emergency departments and has recently been adapted for use in primary care settings. The intervention involves assessing for risk, building hope, creating connections, developing a safety plan and encouraging self-care. When implementing

SAFETY-A, PCPs meet with youth for safety planning and then with family to educate families on proper strategies to ensure safe settings.

BCM Hosts Trainings Across the State

Baylor College of Medicine received ARPA funding from the state of Texas to host a series of trainings on SAFETY-A for 50 PCPs across the state. I lead this initiative as part of a collaboration across several sites -- UT-Houston, Dell Medical School at The University of Texas at Austin, Texas Tech University, University of Texas Medical Branch, Texas A&M University, and UT-Southwestern Medical Center. The initiative seeks to examine the feasibility and acceptability of SAFETY-A training and implementation in primary care settings.

BCM hosted three virtual master trainings conducted by Dr. Lucas Zullo, ASAP Center Training Director, in February, March, and April. Total attendance across the three trainings was 103, with 70 participating primary care providers, which surpasses the initial goal of 50.

In addition to attending an introductory master training, ongoing training of PCPs will involve monthly consultation calls with Dr. Zullo and a wrap-up training to bring all PCP cohorts together to share their experiences with SAFETY-A.

First Steps

This initiative represents an exciting first step in improving PCP's perceived competence and self-efficacy to assess for and address suicidal thoughts and actions with youth patients and their families.

It is our hope that this initial pilot project will inform the future dissemination of this training to a larger population of PCPs so that future deaths by suicide may be prevented.

The **ABCDEs** of Screening & Management of Suicide Risk

A	ASSESS <ul style="list-style-type: none">Screen for risk, including suicidal thoughts/behaviors and urgency and intent to act, self-harm urges, hopelessness
B	BUILD HOPE <ul style="list-style-type: none">Center the relationship through authentic listening, aiming to understand, showing you care about youth.Help youth recognize strengths and resilience for themselves and their network of loved ones (family).Use this information in D-Develop SAFETY plan.
C	CREATE CONNECTIONS <ul style="list-style-type: none">Connect by showing you want to understand.Help youth identify healthy connections in the family and in the community.Use this information in D-Develop SAFETY plan.
D	DEVELOP SAFETY PLAN <ul style="list-style-type: none">Warning signs, actions, thoughts, and people they trustHelp youth consider how this plan can be used in different settings. Build commitment.Consider steps to reduce acute risk.
E	ENCOURAGE SELF-CARE <ul style="list-style-type: none">Engage in practices that help you stay grounded.Take time to process and debrief after stressful encounters.Take care of yourself and each other.

Dr. Thomas Kosten Develops Anti-Fentanyl Vaccine

By Vicki Powers

Each year, more Americans die from drug overdoses than in traffic accidents. More than three out of five of these deaths are the result of opioid use.

Since 1999, the number of overdose deaths involving opioids -- including prescription opioid pain relievers, heroin, and fentanyl -- has nearly quadrupled. It is characterized through four overlapping waves, each resulting in an exponential increase in death rates:

1. Beginning 20 years ago, **Wave 1** emerged with the expanded use of prescription opiates (like oxycontin) to address chronic pain.

2. **Wave 2** began in 2010, growing through a switch from legally prescribed opiates to illegally distributed semi-synthetic opioids like heroin.

3. The defining feature initiating **Wave 3** was the illegal manufacture and distribution of synthetic fentanyl opioids, beginning in 2013. Fentanyl remains the driving force in the U.S. overdose epidemic and is 50 to 100 times more potent than morphine.

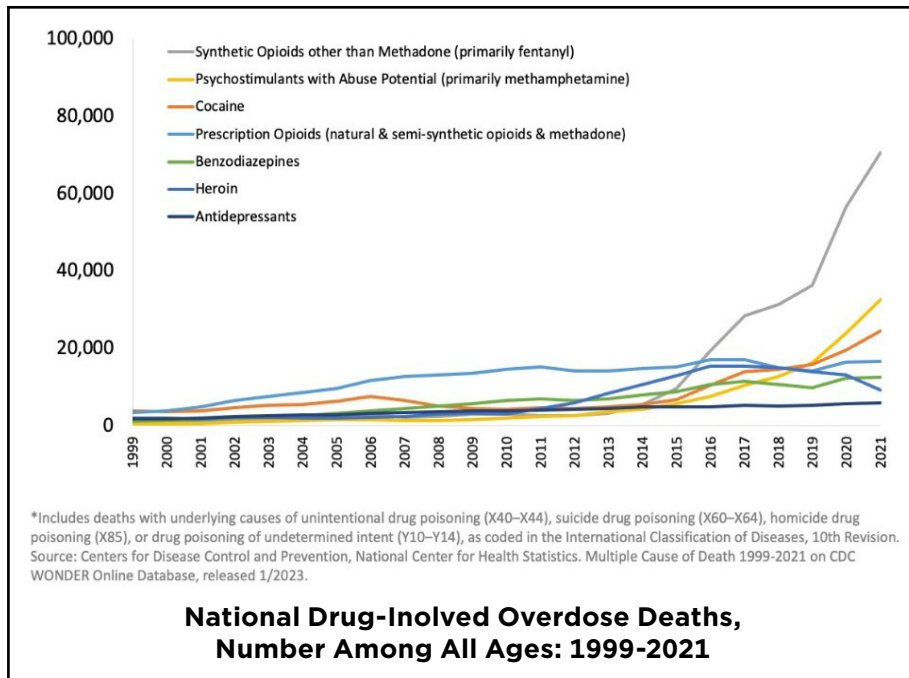
4. **Wave 4**, in 2015, marked an increase in psychostimulants (such as cocaine and methamphetamine) combined with fentanyl, which further exacerbated overdose deaths.

While the FDA has approved three treatments for opioid use disorder -- naltrexone, buprenorphine, and methadone -- all fail to prevent fentanyl overdoses.

Dr. Thomas Kosten, Waggoner Chair and Professor of Psychiatry, Pharmacology, Neuroscience, and Immunology, is pursuing a new approach for preventing abuse and overdoses from opiates, including fentanyl-laced opioids. Kosten and his

team have developed an anti-fentanyl vaccine based on more than 35 years of Kosten's innovative work in vaccine discovery and development.

Kosten's anti-cocaine vaccine was the first in the world to enter phase 3 human trials but lacked a sufficiently potent adjuvant to block cocaine antibodies. His preliminary work in development of an anti-methamphetamine vaccine was deferred due to the current need for an anti-opiate vaccine.



Currently in the final stages of preclinical development, the adjuvant selected for **the anti-fentanyl vaccine is successfully and consistently producing seven to 10 times more antibodies to prevent fentanyl from entering the brain**, thus blocking the brain's pleasure receptors from experiencing the highs associated with opioids.

"The level of antibodies produced is well beyond the level needed to successfully block the amount of fentanyl adulteration typically produced in the illicit drug market," said Kosten.

The Process

In a Grand Rounds presentation November 2022, Kosten shared two lessons from the cocaine vaccine clinical studies for getting greater anti-drug antibody levels:

1. **Change the protein carrier** from Cholera B toxoid to a better toxoid like diphtheria.
2. **Get a better adjuvant** than Alum, like a second bacterial protein.

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Anti-Fentanyl Vaccine

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This combination would produce more patients who attain anti-drug antibody levels above the estimated titer needed to bind 80% of the abused drug. The new bacterial protein adjuvant was remarkable.

“We expected the adjuvant might double or triple the antibody levels, but we had not expected the seven to 10 times elevation that was produced.”

Manufacturing efficiency enabled the process to finish in about a year at less than 1% of the roughly \$1B cost a company like Pfizer would incur for bringing a new vaccine to market.

Target market

This vaccine is designed for treatment centers, according to Kosten, and given to those who are at risk of abusing fentanyl. However, with opioids accounting for almost 75% of all drug overdose deaths in 2020 per the CDC, he said it shouldn't necessarily be confined to those already abusing fentanyl.

“We're enthusiastic about broad vaccination of abusers, because illicit fentanyl is being added to stimulants like Adderall and to counterfeit prescription opiates like oxycontin, and **we don't have anything else that blocks fentanyl**,” he said.

Including these additional abusers who can “accidentally” ingest a fatal fentanyl overdose raises the **potential vaccine candidate population to more than 6 million in the United States** alone. Yet, fentanyl is a world-wide problem.

“We're not vaccinating people forever,” Kosten said. “It's effective for about six months and then requires a booster of the vaccine for six more months of efficacy.”

Kosten explained they are not “marking” people forever as fentanyl abusers with this vaccine. Without the continued boosters, the vaccine will have no sustained effect on fentanyl use for other purposes, such as anesthesia or analgesia.

Impact on Society

Kosten believes this anti-fentanyl vaccine will restore a positive outlook regarding the value of vaccines because it possesses virtually no side effects and fairly directly prevents immediate death.

He also notes that Peter Hotez and others have done a persuasive job illuminating the value of vaccines for diseases like measles, mumps, rubella, and chickenpox, for example -- if you don't get vaccinated, you get the disease.

Kosten also said this vaccine opens up many opportunities for biological and immunotherapies, which are the future for therapeutics.

Dr. Truong: New Study Focuses on Alcohol Use Disorder and Insomnia

Dr. Kelly Truong, staff psychiatrist at The Menninger Clinic and assistant professor at Baylor College of Medicine, recently launched a study testing two medications for the treatment of alcohol use disorder and insomnia in adults.



Dr. Kelly Truong

The study participants will be qualifying inpatients. Using a virtual reality device, the participants will be exposed to alcohol cues to determine if the medications reduce their cravings. Their sleep will be monitored via an actigraph.

Dr. Oh: Opioid Use Disorder and rTMS Study

Dr. Hyuntaek Oh, research scientist at The Menninger Clinic and assistant professor at Baylor College of Medicine, is principal investigator of a study to measure the efficacy of rTMS in treatment of opioid use disorder. The study, Functional connectivity



Dr. Hyuntaek Oh

alterations among opioid users in treatment, examines brain function changes before and after non-invasive brain stimulation for adults with opioid use disorder.

This study is funded by a grant from the National Institutes on Drug Abuse.

Alumni Spotlight

John Battaglia, M.D.

Baylor College of Medicine, Psychiatry resident: 1984-1988

How did your Baylor residency prepare you for your career?



I felt it was a very well-rounded and supportive residency. I didn't just like my residency, I loved it!

I felt lucky that I found Baylor. Being a well-rounded psychiatrist was really stressed. We learned cultural issues, social issues, biology, pharmacology, and psychoanalytics foundations.

What is one of your favorite memories during your time at Baylor?

It's not a specific memory but a feeling. When I was looking for residencies, I was looking at Harvard, Yale, and Stanford. Baylor wasn't even on my radar. Someone in California told me about the Baylor program. So I came to visit, and it was remarkable. I left my visit thinking, "Oh my gosh, I love this place." The people impressed me so much at Baylor.

When I think of Dr. Lomax, I get warm and fuzzy feelings. He was the most wonderful, supportive leader -- strong, yet supportive.

What do you want to pass along to residents you work with at UW at Madison?

Ever since I graduated from Baylor, I have taught supportive psychotherapy. It all started with me taking a course on psychotherapy at Baylor taught by Dr. Bill Cantrell. It was a new kind of psychotherapy at the time. I finally wrote my own book a couple years ago that I use when I teach.

I really want to turn residents on to therapy. I like playing that role of turning them on, even if they weren't aware of how exciting and important it is for a psychiatrist to be able to do therapy.

What is one of your proudest career achievements to date?

One of my proudest career moments was working in Alaska as one of just a few non-native healers

What is Dr. Battaglia Doing?

Clinical Adjunct Professor of Psychiatry, University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health, 2020-present

Medical Director, Program of Assertive Community Treatment, Madison, Wisconsin, 2005-present

included in a movement called the Alaska Native Reawakening project. The Alaska Natives held a number of interventions in villages with the aim to heal cultural angst. They have undergone a lot of tragedy with high rates of suicide, depression, alcohol-use disorder, and the culture has been decimated. To be included was a great honor. I felt they trusted me.

The other -- getting an award as an exemplary psychiatrist from the people who are suffering means a lot to me. Twice I've received an Exemplary Psychiatrist Award by NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) by states of Alaska and Wisconsin.

Those are very near and dear to me, because I have two sisters who have schizophrenia, and that's what got me in this business in the first place.

How has psychiatry changed or stayed the same since you completed your residency?

I don't see a whole lot the same, but I will say a lot of interesting and unique people are attracted to psychiatry. I teach and train residents, and I think how lucky I am to still be exposed to people who are attracted to psychiatry -- people who want to be healers in a very comprehensive sense of the word.

Share about your experiences working in Alaska.

I literally have been on dogsleds to get from one place to another, planes landing on ice fields, and everything in between. I worked in Barrow, Alaska, where it's dark 24/7 in the winter and 24/7 daylight in the summer. That is wild! I learned a lot on my feet, working in this capacity.

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DEI Spotlight

Interfaith Community Event

Menninger Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences hosted an **Interfaith Mental Health Event and Iftar** March 30 at Cullen Auditorium.

The event featured a panel discussion and Iftar. Panelists included Virgil Fry, DMin, Institute for Spirituality and Health; Gittel Francis, LMSW, Joan and Stanford Alexander Jewish Family Service; and Abdul Ahad, Islamic Society Greater Houston Sabireen Masjid.

Facilitators included Dr. Nidal Moukaddam, Dr. John Saunders, and Dr. Asim Shah.



Upcoming Events Sponsored by DEI

April 28: **Arab American Heritage Month Event** with Dr. Kristine Ajrouch, professor of sociology, Eastern Michigan University, on **"A Social Lens on Arab Health in the U.S."** This is in collaboration with National Arab American Medical Association, Houston Chapter. McNair Auditorium, 5:00pm-7:30pm. [RSVP online](#).

May 10: **Asian American Pacific Islander Mental Health Community Panel on AAPI-Hate, Trauma and Resilience**, Asia Society Texas, 7pm-8:30pm. The panel features Baylor College of Medicine's Dr. Sophia Banu, Dr. Phuong Nguyen, Dr. Peggy Yang, Dr. Rose Yang, and Delphine Lee with facilitator Dr. John Saunders.



Have You Completed the DEI Survey?

Dr. John Saunders, vice chair of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), wants your opinion! Please take a few moments to complete our department's [DEI survey](#), if you haven't already. This feedback is important as we move forward with new DEI initiatives and trainings. For those who have completed the survey, thank you.

Alumni Spotlight (continued from p. 12)

Memories as a Doctor in Rural Alaska by Dr. Battaglia:

I saw an ad for a job in Alaska, and I showed it to my wife from Texas, as a joke. It didn't sound like a job. It sounded weird: **"psychiatrist needed as consultant for Alaskan Bush. Travel required to remote, rural areas working with Native peoples."**

I spent six years in Alaska, literally traveling the state, going to native communities being part of talking circles and native movements. There was



nothing in my training – other than being a good, solid psychiatrist – that prepared me.

I would go to a native village and spend several days being a part of talking circles, where they had had several suicides in one community.

They had four suicides in a community of 300. That's like 10,000 suicides in a month in Houston. Everyone knew each other, and everyone was affected. There was a lot of cultural elements, from one generation to the next.

In Memory

Christopher D. Martin Resident Graduate Endowed Award

In Memorium: Christopher D. Martin

1995-2020

Dr. Christopher D. Martin attended Baylor College of Medicine for his M.D. in 2001 and completed his residency in the Department of Psychiatry in 2005, serving as Chief Resident in his PGY4 year. He joined Baylor faculty after residency, first working on the Compass Young Adult Program at the Menninger Clinic and later on the inpatient unit at the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center. Dr. Martin was a cherished mentor, physician, and leader at Baylor, and he leaves an immeasurable legacy to the field of psychiatry and resident education within our department and beyond.



Dr. Christopher D. Martin

The Schorp and Martin Families have contributed a generous gift to the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences in his memory. Their gift will establish the Christopher D. Martin Resident of Impact Award, which will provide an annual stipend to residents in the department who demonstrate Dr. Martin's exemplary character and devotion to teaching,

education, and caring for others. Their gift will also be used to support priority residency education initiatives within the department to honor Dr. Martin's legacy for years to come.

"I had the privilege of working closely with Dr. Martin during his residency training and again when he was VA site director for the general psychiatry residency program when I was residency director," said Dr. Kim-Lan Czelusta, vice chair of education. "He was the colleague that I would consult about challenging situations and the psychiatrist to whom I would refer my family and loved ones. Dr. Martin was clinically astute, empathic, and always made things better. He is deeply missed by all of us who knew him."

We are incredibly grateful to the Schorp and Martin Families for this meaningful contribution recognizing one of our most devoted faculty members and alumni.

Dr. Christopher D. Martin was a cherished mentor, physician, and leader at Baylor. He leaves an immeasurable legacy to the field of psychiatry and resident education within our department and beyond.

New Faces in Psychiatry

Busola Ariyo, N.P.

Instructor

Texas Children's Hospital

Matthew Ayers, D.O.

Assistant Professor

MEDVAMC

LaVonya Bennett, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

MEDVAMC

Alexandra Caoudas, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

MEDVAMC

Mallorie Carroll, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

MEDVAMC

Dozie Dike, Pharm.D.

Assistant Professor

MEDVAMC

Lauren Douglas, M.D.

Assistant Professor

Texas Children's Hospital

Linda Ezennia, N.P.

Instructor

Texas Children's Hospital

Jai Gahdni, M.D.

Assistant Professor

MEDVAMC

India Gray-Schmiedlin, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

MEDVAMC

Paul Hicks, M.D., Ph.D.

Professor/Senior Faculty

Baylor Temple

Olakanmi Igbekele, M.D.

Clinical Instructor

Houston Methodist

Myrtle Jeroudi, M.D.

Assistant Professor

The Menninger Clinic

Esther Kelley-Cook, M.D.

Clinical Assistant Professor

Baylor Psychiatry Clinic

Ife Lhaza, N.P.

Assistant Professor

Texas Children's Hospital

Rachele Lipsky, Ph.D.

Instructor

MEDVAMC

New Faces in Psychiatry



Claire Morice, M.D.
Assistant Professor
MEDVAMC



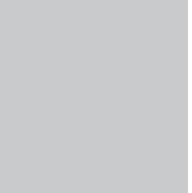
Aurora Shekarisaz, N.P.
Instructor
Texas Children's Hospital



Lydia Nassab, PA-C
Instructor
Texas Children's Hospital



Sameera Siddiqi, M.D.
Assistant Professor
Texas Children's Hospital



Mary Nikityn, Psy.D.
Assistant Professor
MEDVAMC



Shannon Sisco, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
MEDVAMC



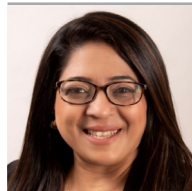
Patrick O'Malley, M.D.
Assistant Professor
Texas Children's Hospital



Leslie Taylor, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
MEDVAMC



Caitlin Pinciotti, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Baylor Psychiatry Clinic



Sunanda Muralee, M.D.
Assistant Professor
The Menninger Clinic



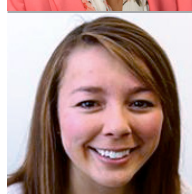
Derek Ream, Psy.D.
Assistant Professor
MEDVAMC



Micaela Wexler, D.O.
Assistant Professor
Texas Children's Hospital



Samantha Roseberry, Pharm.D
Assistant Professor
MEDVAMC



Cindy Woolverton, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
MEDVAMC



Alan Sheinfil, Ph.D.
Instructor
MEDVAMC



Suzy Gulliver, Ph.D.
Professor
Baylor Temple

Happenings

Residents Attend Advocacy Day

Baylor Psychiatry residents joined other members of the Federation of Texas Psychiatry (including Texas Society of Psychiatric Physicians, TSCAP, and TAP) March 7 at Capitol Day in Austin. For many in our department, it was their first time doing this type of advocacy work, and they found it fulfilling.

The group met with members of the House of Representatives and state senators on issues relating to mental health including scope of practice, emergency detention, workforce, and removing barriers to care.

Thank you to the residents who attended: Drs. Vinh-Son Nguyen, Funso Oladunjoye, Nancy Sheno, Shankar Nandakumar, Laura Kenyon, and Ishu

Pathak plus BCM medical student, Isabel Draper.

This was the largest turnout of residents, fellows, and attending physicians in recent times.



CAP Fellows: Spring Retreat

The Child and Adolescent Psychiatry fellows gathered in March for their annual spring retreat. This gathering provides an opportunity to review the program to help make improvements, as well as foster bonds with the fellowship group. After the feedback portion in the morning, they enjoyed Mediterranean cuisine for lunch.

“The retreat gave us the opportunity to spend quality time together,” said Dr. Kerala Saugh, chief fellow. “We left with a deeper understanding of each other, and thus strengthened our bond.”



Rodeo Acts of Kindness Day

Members of our department (Katy Gathron and Vicki Powers) enjoyed volunteering at BCM's Rodeo Acts of Kindness Day at the 2023 Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo -- opening doors, taking photos for families at rodeo backdrops and more! More than 200 Baylor employees gathered to give back.



Presentations

Dr. Daryl Shorter --

- **Boston Medical Center.** Grayken Center for Addiction Conference. Expert panelist.
- **48th Annual Psychotherapy Associates Winter Symposium on Addiction and Mental Health.** "Conflicting Ideologies: Is a Unified Model of Addiction Possible?"
- **Menninger's Black History Month series.** "The War on Drugs: How Racialization of Substance Use Created Health Disparities in Addictions Treatment."
- **NAADAC 3rd Annual Engagement in the Black Community Virtual Summit.** "Black & LGBTQ+: Understanding Intersectional Treatment Conversations."
- **Houston Psychiatry Society.** "The Future is Now? Therapeutic Use of Psychedelic Medications in Mental Health Treatment."

Dr. Edward Poa --

- **Houston Bar Association Probate: Trusts and Estates Section.** "Common Civil Capacities: Guardianships, Wills, Trusts, and Powers of Attorney, February 28, 2023, Houston, Texas.
- **One Brooklyn Health/Brookdale University Hospital and Medical Center Department of Psychiatry Grand Rounds.** "Beyond the Capacity to Make Medical Decisions: Testamentary Capacity and Other Civil Capacities." January 11, 2023. New York, NY. (Zoom)

Dr. Nidal Moukaddam --

- **Long COVID Syndrome Forum.** "Neuropsychiatric Impacts of Long COVID." December 2022, BCM, Houston, Texas.
- **Association of Pakistani-Descent Physicians of North America--South Texas Chapter.** "Pain Management: From Basics to Multi-Modal Approaches." December 2022.
- **The Women Empowerment Network (WEN)--Harris Health System.** "Is Wellness the Anti-Burnout? Mapping the Course for Women." January 13, 2023.
- **University of Miami PM&R Resident & Fellow Wellness Retreat.** "Facilitator & Presenter. February 16, 2023
- **The Women Empowerment Network (WEN)--Harris Health System.** "Is Ikigai the Path to Wellness." Women's History Month Guest Presentation, March 24, 2023.

Dr. Jeffrey Khan --

- **Pri-Med Southwest Conference.** "Treating OCD & Anxiety: Pharmacologic and Interventional Options." March 2023, Houston, Texas.
- **American Association of Directors of Psychiatric Residency Training. (AADPRT).** "So What's It Really Like at Your Program? Tip for Program Directors Recruiting in Charged Environments." March 2023. Part of a panel.

Dr. Andrew Wiese --

- **Pri-Med Southwest Conference.** "Clinical Pearls for the Diagnosis and Treatment of Anxiety and OCD: What to Know as a PCP." March 2023, Houston, Texas.

Dr. Kerry Horrell --

- **Continuing Education Webinar.** "Self-Compassion in the Recovery Process."

Dr. Patricia Daza and Dr. Julie Ridgeway-Diaz, moderated by Dr. Rose Yang --

- **Menninger's International Women's Day: Embrace Equity.** March 8, 2023.

Dr. Nidal Moukaddam and Dr. Asim Shah --

- **Interfaith Mental Health Event and Iftar, Co-Facilitator.** Baylor College of Medicine, March 30, 2023.

Dr. Mike McClam --

- **Menninger's Black History Month series.** "Race and Culture in Psychiatry: A Brief Overview."

Dr. Dorina Papageorgiou --

- **American Academy of Neurology, International Conference, ~46,000 attendees.** "Individualized Real-Time fMRI Neuromodulation for the Alleviation of Cranial Nerve IX and XII Neuropathy." April 2023, Boston.
- **International Cognition and Cancer Task Force, ~5,000 attendees.** "Precision Medicine Brain MRI Closed Loop Neuro-Intervention can Strengthen Attention-Memory and Sensorimotor Networks and its Applications to Cancer-Treatment-Induced Neurotoxicities."
- **Center for Translational Research on Inflammatory Diseases.** VA Houston, "Precision Medicine Brain MRI Closed Loop Neuro-Intervention: Methods, Mechanisms, and Clinical Applications."
- **Vision Research Injury Forum by DOD,** Congressionally Directed Medical Research. "Individualized real-time fMRI closed loop neuromodulation enhances visual perception targeted towards the rehabilitation of cortical blindness following traumatic brain injury."

Presentations

Dr. Sindhu Idicula --

American Association of Directors of Psychiatric Residency Training Annual Meeting, March 2023.

- “Let’s Talk: Design and Implementation of a Novel Educational Tool to Help Individuals Navigate Difficult Conversations.”
- “Moving Forward Beyond PowerPoint: Faculty Development for Curriculum and Didactics.”

Dr. Jeffrey Khan, Sindhu Idicula, and Jennifer McDonald (resident PGY2) --

- **American Association of Directors of Psychiatric Residency Training. (AADPRT).** “What Do We Do After Dobbs? Psychiatry Residency Education in a Changing Political Landscape.” March 2023.



Dr. Sindhu Idicula, Dr. Jenn McDonald (PGY2), and Dr. Jeffrey Khan with panelists from UTSouthwestern.

Dr. Lindsay Pershern --

American Association of Directors of Psychiatric Residency Training Annual Meeting, March 2023.

- “We’re All in This Together: How to Engage, Motivate, and Connect Faculty” workshop.
- Co-chaired the New Training Director Symposium
- Appointed as chair of the Membership Committee and member of the Executive Council.

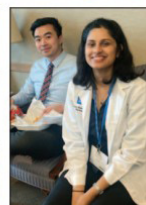
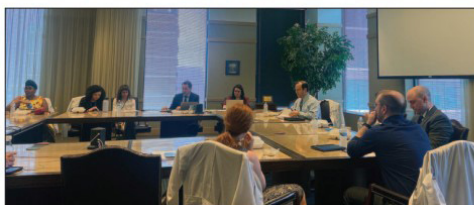
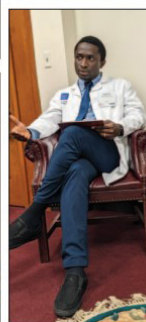
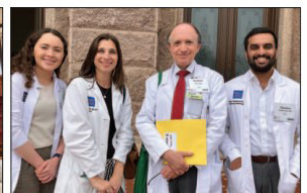


Education program directors: Dr. Lindsay Pershern, Dr. Laurel Williams, Dr. Shetal Amin, Dr. Sindhu Idicula, and Dr. Jeffrey Khan in San Diego for AADPRT annual meeting.

Texas Psychiatrist

We love seeing our residents profiled front and center in the Federation of Texas Psychiatry newsletter, Texas Psychiatrist!

Way to go for representing us well at Advocacy Day in Austin.



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In the News

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[NFL quarterback Ryan Leaf shares his addiction and recovery story as ambassador for Houston's Menninger Clinic](#). Houston Chronicle, 3/22/23. Dr. Daryl Shorter quoted.

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[Dr. Banu and Dr. Albaba: Humanitarian Trip to Turkey/Syria](#). KPRC Ch.2, 3/4/23.

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Radio and Podcast

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[Justice-Based Treatment: Reinforcing Hope Instead of Stigma in the Theories and Treatment of OCD in the LGBTQIA+ Community](#), 2/10/23. OCD Family Podcast with Dr. Caitlin Pinciotti.

[Mind Dive podcast](#), w/ Dr. Robert Boland, Dr. Kerry Horrell:

- [OCD From the Front Lines](#): Dr. Wayne Goodman, Dr. Eric Storch, 12/19/22.
- [Preventing Shame and Loneliness in Childhood Trauma](#): Dr. Melissa Goldberg Mintz, 1/9/23.
- [Brainwashing and Master Persuasion](#): Dr. Joel Dimsdale, 1/23/23.
- [Racial Bias vs. Informed Patient Care](#): Dr. Carmen Black, 2/6/23.
- [Questions from the Mailbag](#): Dr. Bob Boland, Dr. Kerry Horrell, 2/20/23.
- [Bridging Faith and Mental Health Care](#): Dr. Marcy Verduin, 3/6/23.

BCM Press Releases

[When Gambling Becomes an Addiction](#), Dr. Asim Shah, 3/22/23

Blogs

[How to Handle Failing Friendships](#), Dr. Laurel Williams, 2/27/23

[Friendship February: How to Make Friends](#), Dr. Karen Lawson, 2/9/23

[Journaling for Mental Health](#), Dr. Eric Storch, 1/25/23

[Set Realistic Resolutions this Year](#), Dr. Asim Shah, 1/19/23

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