

# medicine minute

Tuesday, October 1, 2024

## kudos

### RECOGNITION

#### Dracca Receives Outstanding Achievement in Leadership Award



**Joscelyn Dracca, M.S.N., APRN, GNP-BC., ACHPN**, an Advanced Practice Provider (APP) in the William T. and Gay F. Solomon Division of General Internal Medicine, received UT Southwestern's Outstanding APP in Leadership award at the conclusion of APP Celebration Week.

Ms. Dracca, a founding member of the Palliative Care program at UT Southwestern, was honored for promoting excellence in patient care, providing effective team communication, and being a strong advocate for patients as they are nearing the end of life.

In 2023, she was among 12 nurses who received D Magazine's Excellence in Nursing Award.

## research roundup

### FUNDING

#### Patel Receives NIH Grants Totaling \$3.1M to Support Metabolism Research



**Suraj J. Patel, M.D., Ph.D.**, an Assistant Professor in the Division of Digestive and Liver Diseases and the Center for Human Nutrition, has been awarded two research grants from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to support his investigations in the immunoregulation of metabolism. The first is a five-year R01 grant to understand the metabolic consequences of liver inflammation on alcohol-associated liver disease progression, with the aim of developing novel treatment strategies. The second is a two-year R03 grant to study a critical inflammatory pathway in the liver that regulates organismal energy balance, systemic metabolism, and ultimately weight gain through post-translational processes.

Dr. Patel's research focuses on hepatic metabolism and its regulation by the immune system. He utilizes genetic, epigenetic and proteomic approaches, combined with detailed physiological studies, to understand the complex mechanisms that causally link inflammation to metabolic dysfunction in obesity and fatty liver disease.

Dr. Patel holds a bachelor's degree in aeronautical engineering from Cornell University. He earned his master's and doctoral degrees in bioengineering and immunology from the Massachusetts Institute of

Technology and Harvard Medical School, before pursuing his medical degree at Rutgers University. Dr. Patel then completed internal medicine residency training at UT Southwestern as part of the Physician Scientist Training Program (PSTP), before receiving advanced training through a fellowship program in gastroenterology at Massachusetts General Hospital.

Dr. Patel joined the UT Southwestern faculty in 2021.

#### PUBLICATIONS

### Liao Calls for Characterizing the Ambulatory ‘Safety-Net’ System



**Joshua Liao, M.D., M.Sc.**, a Professor of Internal Medicine and Chief of the William T. and Gay F. Solomon Division of General Internal Medicine, joined several colleagues in calling for clearer understanding of what is meant by the ambulatory safety net so that policymakers will be better positioned to support it.

“Safety-net hospitals are well recognized and receive additional disproportionate share payments,” the authors say. “In contrast, the ambulatory safety net is poorly characterized, inhibiting progress engaging, and targeting resources to, safety-net organizations.”

The uneven distribution of care has developed partly because historically marginalized populations in outpatient settings lack the protections found in acute care settings, according to the authors. Additionally, low-income patients face greater challenges in accessing outpatient care and are more likely to rely on emergency departments, which reduces continuity and stable connections to care sources.

“Holistic understanding of the ambulatory safety net could enable reforms that more comprehensively engage clinicians and organizations; target care delivery opportunities by geography, populations, or services; and address health-related social needs,” the authors say.

To read the article in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*, click [here](#).

Dr. Liao holds the Walter Family Distinguished Chair in Internal Medicine in Honor of Albert D. Roberts, M.D.

#### GRANTS

### Lieber, Uzendu Named Cary Council ‘DocStars’



**Sarah Lieber, M.D., M.S.C.R.**, an Assistant Professor in the Division of Digestive and Liver Diseases, and **Anezi Uzendu, M.D.**, an Assistant Professor in the Division of Cardiology, will each receive a \$50,000 Early-Stage Research Grant from [The Cary Council](#), which provides funding to advance the research of early-career investigators.

Dr. Lieber studies liver transplant outcomes to understand why some patients thrive while others struggle. She aims to develop interventions to help all patients succeed post-transplant.

She earned her medical degree at the University of Michigan Medical School and completed internal medicine residency training at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. She then received advanced training in gastroenterology and transplant hepatology through fellowships at the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Chapel Hill. She also holds a master’s degree in clinical research from UNC’s Gillings School of Global Public Health.

Dr. Lieber joined the UT Southwestern faculty in 2020.

Dr. Uzendu specializes in interventional cardiology and cardiac arrest care. He intends to leverage his expertise in a partnership with the Dallas Independent School District to empower local students to save lives by transforming CPR education.

Dr. Uzendu earned his medical degree at the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Medicine and completed internal medicine residency training at the University of Alabama at Birmingham Hospital. He then gained advanced training through fellowships in cardiovascular medicine at the Ohio State University Medical Center and interventional cardiology at Massachusetts General Hospital's Corrigan Minehan Heart Center. He also completed a research fellowship in cardiovascular outcomes at Saint Luke's Mid-America Heart Institute.

Dr. Uzendu joined the UT Southwestern faculty in 2023.

To view a video acknowledgement by Dr. Lieber on YouTube, click [here](#).

To view a video acknowledgement by Dr. Uzendu on YouTube, click [here](#).

## education and training

### RESIDENCY TRAINING

## Increased Opportunities to Signal Interest in a Residency Program



The post-pandemic continuation of virtual interviews has made it possible for medical students to apply and interview at multiple residency training programs.

“The result is both programs and applicants began feeling the strain of an expanded interview season,” says **Salahuddin “Dino” Kazi, M.D.**, a Professor in the Division of Rheumatic Diseases, Vice Chair of Education, and Director of Residency Training. “It was never certain if an applicant was ‘window shopping’ or seriously considering a residency program.”

Last year, the American Association of Medical Colleges (AAMC) developed a preference system known as signaling, he explains, and the internal medicine community experimented with providing applicants seven “signals” augmented by geographic preferences.

“In this system, each applicant could still apply to multiple programs, but they were limited to signaling seven programs,” Dr. Kazi says. “Examining our data from last year, approximately 20 percent of our applicants had sent us a signal. From this group, we interviewed approximately 50 percent and, interestingly, among those who matched with us, 70 percent had signaled us. Accordingly, there appears to be a good relationship between signaling, interviewing and matching.”

This year, the number of signals has increased to 15 and they have been further categorized as three gold and 12 silver signals. The application season opened on Sept. 25, with our residency seeing a 10 percent decrease in the number of applications, but an expected increase in signaling to approximately 40 percent.

“Signaling will help programs prioritize applicants and focus on those who have a genuine interest in the program,” Dr. Kazi says. “From the applicant perspective, this may result in applicants feeling less pressure to apply to multiple programs. Data on the signal-to-interview conversion ratio (based on seven signals last year) indicates that signaling a program results in an interview at least half of the time. With the increase in the number of signals, it would be interesting to see how this signal-to-interview ratio changes. I believe that there will be a much tighter relationship between signaling and matching to a program.”



## in case you missed it

LOCAL MEDIA

### D Magazine Highlights Food as Medicine Program



Most medical students receive only 11 hours of nutrition training, which is less than half of the 25 hours recommended by the National Academy of Sciences. In 2017, **Jaclyn Albin, M.D.**, and **Milette Siler, M.B.A.-HC, RD, LD, CCMS**, launched the Health Meets Food curriculum, where medical students and residents would receive instruction about how food impacts disease. The curriculum is now being used at 60 medical centers and training programs nationwide.

Since its founding, 390 students and trainees have participated in the program.

Although educating physicians and students is essential to scale the impact of the culinary medicine movement, Dr. Albin, an Associate Professor of Medicine and Pediatrics, and Ms. Siler also wanted to reach patients directly. To achieve this, they opened a clinic where patients can gain practical experience in preparing meals that are healthy, accessible, affordable, and culturally sensitive.

To read the article, click [here](#).

### Articles and Videos Featuring Internal Medicine Colleagues

- [How Bone Optimization, Novel Procedure Help Heal Pelvic Insufficiency Fractures](#) (via *MedBlog*, with **Ananya Jhaveri, M.D.**)

## this week

INTERNAL MEDICINE GRAND ROUNDS

### Khera to Lecture about Cardiovascular Disease Prevention on Oct. 4



**Amit Khera, M.D., M.Sc.**, a Professor in the Division of Cardiology, Director of Preventive Cardiology, and Associate Chief of Cardiology for Faculty Development, will present the [Internal Medicine Grand Rounds](#) lecture on **Friday, Oct. 4, at 8 a.m. in D1.502**. His topic: "Preventing Cardiovascular Disease Today: Putting 20 Years of Progress into Practice."

Originally from Akron, Ohio, Dr. Khera holds a bachelor's degree in American history from the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. He earned his medical degree at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston and completed a residency in internal medicine at Harvard Medical School and Brigham and

Women's Hospital in Boston. He then received advanced training through a cardiology fellowship at UT Southwestern. Dr. Khera also holds a master's degree in epidemiology from Harvard University.

As a clinician, he specializes in cardiac risk assessment and risk factor modifications. His research focuses on cardiac disease prevention.



Dr. Khera joined the UT Southwestern faculty in 2004.

*Dr. Khera holds the Dallas Heart Ball Chair in Hypertension and Heart Disease.*

### Noteworthy Lectures & Conferences

- **Wednesday, Oct. 2, 8 a.m.:** [Geriatrics Grand Rounds](#) with **Dr. Megan Sorich** (Orthopaedic Surgery) – “The Snap, Crackle and Pop of our Golden Years: The Latest in Arthritis”
- **Thursday, Oct. 3, 8 a.m.:** [Infectious Diseases Grand Rounds](#) with **Dr. Reuben Arasaratnam** – “Rising to the Challenge: Broadening Access to Penicillin Allergy Evaluation”
- **Thursday, Oct. 3, Noon:** [Moss Heart Center Semnar Series](#) with **Dr. Philipp Scherer** (Touchstone Diabetes Center) – “Fibrosis: A Common Pathway for the Cardiorenal Metabolic Syndrome”
- **Thursday, Oct. 3, Noon:** [Renal Grand Rounds](#) with **Dr. Jiten Patel** (Nephrology) – “GN Case Conference”
- **Friday, Oct. 4, 1 p.m.:** [Endocrine Grand Rounds](#) with **Dr. Philipp Scherer** (Touchstone Diabetes Center) – “The Expected, the Unexpected, and the Downright Amazing Impact of the Adipocyte on Systemic Metabolism”



### Internal Medicine Events Calendar

[Click to view additional events](#)

## reminders

LEADERSHIP LECTURE SERIES

### Smith to Speak About Emotional Intelligence on Oct. 7

The Leadership Lecture Series resumes on **Monday, Oct. 7, at noon** with a presentation by **Lauren Smith, B.B.A.**, Senior Organizational Development Consultant. Her topic: “Emotional Intelligence.”

To attend the virtual event, click [here](#). Meeting ID: 921 7162 3737

Look for the next *Medicine Minute* on **Tuesday, Oct. 8, 2024.**

Share feedback and news items with us at [IMNews@UTSouthwestern.edu](mailto:IMNews@UTSouthwestern.edu)

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