

Message

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to Volume 1, Issue 9 of our Department of Internal Medicine Research Newsletter!
Some highlights: On Nov. 3, , Dr. Botros led a well-attended Journal Club on randomized controlled trial study design. On Nov. 17, Dr. Roger-Johnson presented a workshop on “Survey-based Research.”
Upcoming events include: Journal Club on Survey Development and Validation, Dec. 8 from 5-6PM.

Scholarship



#IMResearchEVMS

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS:

By Community Faculty

- **McCune TR**, Bray RA, Baran DA, et al. Development of donor specific antibodies after SARS-CoV-2 vaccination in kidney and heart transplant recipients. *Transpl Immunol.* 2022;75:101722.
- **Johnson, D.** Esophageal Disease and the Role of the Microbiome. *Elsevier.* Nov. 23, 2022 [Book]
- Kawakita T, Seagraves E, Baraki D., Donaldson T., Barake C., **Brush J.**, Abuhamad A. The role of the electrocardiogram in pregnant individuals with chronic hypertension [published online ahead of print, 2022 Nov 8]. *Am J Perinatol.* 2022;10.1055/a-1974-5147. doi:10.1055/a-1974-5147
- Morgan CN, Bonner KF, **Griffin JW.** Augmentation of Arthroscopic Rotator Cuff Repair: Biologics and Grafts. *Clin Sports Med.* 2023;42(1):95-107. doi:10.1016/j.csm.2022.08.010

ABSTRACTS, PRESENTATIONS, & AWARDS:

- **Dr. Carolina Casselini** received grant funding from the American Diabetes Association for her study “Impact of a culturally tailored, personalized, mobile health-based lifestyle intervention in improving metabolic outcomes of overweight and obese African Americans with prediabetes in underserved communities of Southeastern Virginia”
- **Ashley Peterson** (MD Class of 2023 and Glennan Scholarship Recipient) presented “HBCU internship program of the Alzheimer’s Association and Thurgood Marshall College Fund” at the Society for Neuroscience [poster]
- **Dr. David Johnson** provided commentary for Practice Update on the “Effect of Colonoscopy Screening on Colorectal Gastroenterology Risks”
- **Dr. Mian Munir** (Palliative Care Fellow) presented “Seizures and Palliative Medicine” at the VCU Palliative Medicine ECHO session.
- *ACP-Virginia Chapter Award Winners:*
 1. **Dr. Sami Tahhan** (Laureate Award)
 2. **Dr. Joshua Sill** (Inpatient Subspecialist Teaching Award)
 3. **Dr. Hamid Okhravi** (Outpatient Subspecialist Teaching Award)
 4. **Dr. Benjamin Goodman** (Mentorship Award)
 5. **Dr. David Johnson** (Community Teaching Award)
 6. **Dr. Catherine Derber** (Paul Florentino Volunteerism Award)
- *EVMS Faculty Service & Recognition Winners:*
 1. **Dr. Elias Siraj** (Outstanding Achievement Award)
 2. **Dr. Catherine Derber** (Excellence Award)
 3. **Dr. Hamid Okhravi** (Excellence Award)
 4. **Dr. Mitchell Goodman** (Mentoring Award)
 5. **Dr. Marissa Galicia-Castillo** (Community Service Award)



DEADLINES:

**Click links to learn more!*

[American College of Chest Physicians](#)

(December 5)

[ENDO 2023](#)

(December 19)

[Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America](#) (January 11)

[American Society of Clinical Oncology](#)

(February 14)

Funding

Email Cindy Avila at AvilaCJ@evms.edu to request application materials / for assistance.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES:

EVMS Medical Student Mentor Supplemental Funds: Available to assist faculty with cost of supplies, travel, posters, or other research necessities related to mentoring students. Maximum \$400/mentor.

Dr. L.D. Britt Grant for Health Equity & Diversity: Provides up to \$10,000 seed funding for faculty. Funded projects will address: (1) disparities in patient care through education/training; (2) disparities in patient access, outreach, and continuity of care; (3) disparities by advancing therapeutic discovery; (4) community engagement; (5) the lack of diversity in health professions. Deadline: January 3, 2023.

Jeffress Trust Award in Research Advancing Health Equity: Multiple awards available for research addressing health equity in Virginia. Partnership/Collaborative Establishment Award (two-year \$150,000 award) or Research Award (Three-year, \$600,000 award). Applications due late February 2023.

Announcements

Hofheimer Hall, 5th floor
Large Conference Room

In-person or virtual
option available

Researcher Spotlight



Dr. Sill is Chief of EVMS Pulmonary Medicine, Medical Director of the Sentara Norfolk General PFT lab, Fellowship Director, and Associate Director of the Cystic Fibrosis Center at Children's Hospital of The King's Daughter

Please send research updates to [Cindy Avila AvilaCJ@evms.edu](mailto:Cindy.Avila@evms.edu) for consideration in our upcoming newsletters



RESEARCH WORKSHOPS & JOURNAL CLUBS:

December 8, 2022 (5-6 PM) Mark your calendar for fun at the **Research Journal Club**. We will discuss a [peer-reviewed paper](#) that used survey development and validation: Sinclair S, Hack TF, MacInnis CC, et al. Development and validation of a patient-reported measure of compassion in healthcare: the Sinclair Compassion Questionnaire (SCQ). *BMJ Open*. 2021;11(6):e045988. Published 2021 Jun 16. Previously, we have covered cross-sectional study design, retrospective cohort and prospective cohort study design. All welcome – no research experience necessary!

GRAND ROUNDS:

December 7, 2022 (noon – 1PM in Waitzer Hall, Suite 300).

“Appropriately Identifying and Managing Patients with Advanced Heart Failure?”

Amin Yehya, MD is an advanced heart failure and heart transplant cardiologist and Associate Professor of Medicine at EVMS. He is Medical Director of the mechanical circulator support program at Sentara Heart Hospital. Objectives: 1) identify patients with advanced heart failure; 2) assess surgical and medical options for patients with end stage heart failure. In-person attendees will receive box-lunched. Registration not required. This event is approved for 1.0 *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*.

JOSHUA SILL, MD

Please tell us about yourself: My first foray into research was as an undergraduate at Grove City College in Grove City, PA. I worked with a professor investigating the feasibility of cardiopulmonary exercise adapted to an aquatic environment to assess swimmer fitness. In medical school at the University of Texas Medical Branch, I worked with a colleague who studied tendon flexibility and stride length in runners. As a Fellow, I studied the utility of cardiopulmonary exercise testing in an active duty military cohort. Later, as an Air Force physician, I completed training in aerospace medicine, where I studied lung function in aircrew and the impact of high-G environments on lung function and human performance. In 2013, I left active duty service and joined EVMS to help launch the pulmonary and critical care fellowship program in 2014. Since then, I have continued to advance the research mission of our division and fellowship program.

Describes the studies you are currently working on: For the past two years, my research has centered around COVID. EVMS and HADSI have been helping to lead a statewide coalition of investigators in a project called COVIDsmart. The goal is to compile a statewide registry investigating the impact of COVID, particularly with respect to mental health. I have worked with our colleagues at Sentara to develop a scoring system that uses bio markers to detect the likelihood of COVID positivity. I am also involved in a pilot study investigating speech therapy techniques to treat neurocognitive effects of COVID. Finally, we are a site for numerous clinical trials investigating novel medications/therapies.

How have you managed your research? I think early in their careers, people get involved in whatever happens to come their way, often jumping on projects their mentors or peers are working on. As you gain experience and independence, it is easier to be more selective and to initiate projects in your area of interest. There are many opportunities out there, it is simply a matter of finding where your passions lie. Having a mentor who shares your interest can also be extremely helpful.

What are “hot topics” in your field? We have come a long way in the treatment of cystic fibrosis. However, many patients cannot use modulator therapies. Studies in gene editing technology have been promising and could have widespread applicability in countless genetic conditions. Similarly, effective prevention and treatment of COVID remains an area of active research as the virus continues to mutate and adapt. This is an especially important area for our high risk patients. Finally, sepsis remains one of the leading causes of death in the ICU. Moderating the cytokine storm and altering the immune response to sepsis may be ways to improve high morbidity and mortality associated with this condition.

Any lessons learned from being involved in research?

- 1) Set aside some time, away from other distractions.
- 2) Find a mentor who wants to help you succeed and meet with them on a regular basis.
- 3) Network and collaborate with those who have similar interest, both within and outside the institution.
- 4) Take advantage of the research support and staff available— there are a lot of on-campus resources.
- 5) Set up meetings with your research team to keep the project on track
- 6) Get involve with your local and national level organizations. Present at meetings, join committees, and volunteer to do things like grade abstracts or run scientific sessions. These things open a lot of doors.