

Pedi Press

A Department of Pediatrics Publication

August 2026



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Message from the desk of Dr. Lara Shekerdeman



Dear Team,

As we reach the middle of August and look towards the start of a new academic year, it is a lovely opportunity to pause and reflect on all that has made this summer so meaningful. Across our hospital, the past few months have been filled with opportunities to learn, grow, serve, and celebrate the many achievements of our colleagues.

From those who travelled across borders to share their time and expertise in caring for others, to the many milestones and accomplishments being recognised across our department, this summer has been a wonderful reminder of the difference we can make, both close to home and around the world. Each of these efforts reflects the compassion, curiosity, and commitment that are at the heart of our work.

As we look ahead to the new academic year, we have an opportunity to build on these experiences, strengthen our partnerships, and embrace new ideas and opportunities. I look forward to all that the year ahead will bring and to continuing our work together in support of the children and families we serve.

Thank you for the dedication, kindness, and heart you bring to our department each day. I am grateful to be part of such a remarkable community and look forward to celebrating the many successes still to come.

Happy reading and take care!
Lara

For more Department of Pediatrics updates:
Connect with [Dr. Shekerdeman on LinkedIn](#)



Lara Shekerdeman visit to the BCM Teams and Centers of Excellence in Eswatini this summer!

Celebrating the Renewal of our Partnership with Baylor College of Medicine

On August 5, 2026, Texas Children's Hospital and Baylor College of Medicine formally renewed their longstanding affiliation agreement, marking another milestone in a partnership that has helped shape pediatric and women's health care for more than 70 years.

Texas Children's President and CEO **Debra Sukin, Ph.D.**, and Baylor President, CEO and Executive Dean **Jakub Tolar, M.D., Ph.D.**, signed the agreement, reaffirming their shared commitment to the patients and families they serve.

To commemorate this milestone, **Dr. Tolar** and **Dr. Sukin** co-authored a message reflecting on the partnership, its enduring impact, and the people who made it possible. [Click here to learn more.](#)

Baylor
College of
Medicine




Texas Children's

Designing Safe Learning For Moments that Matter

Sept 18, 2026 | 8 AM - 3 PM

Introducing the 16th Annual BCM/TCH Colloquium for Educators!

In collaboration with the TCH Simulation Center for 2026 Healthcare Simulation Week

A hybrid conference with multiple on-site locations!

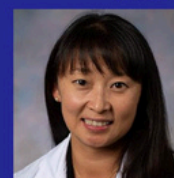
- TCH Medical Center
- TCH West Campus
- TCH Woodlands
- TCH Austin
- CHRISTUS Children's San Antonio
- BCM Temple



Scan or click the QR
code to Register!

8-9 AM - Martin Lorin Grand Rounds

"We Say They're Ready...But How Do We Know?" Simulation and the Future of Competency-Based Pediatric Fellowship"



Tensing Maa, MD
Nationwide Children's Hospital



Regine Fortunov, MD
Texas Children's Hospital

9:30 am - 11:30 am

Concurrent Sessions - Hybrid

"Win, Lose, or Debrief! Improvisation and Debriefing for Conflict"

Kasey I. Davis, MD
Cara B. Doughty, MD

"The Medical Educator's Dilemma: Cultivating Excellence, Meaning, and Purpose in a Changing Educational Culture"

Melissa M. Carbajal, MD
Fong Lam, MD
Sanghamitra M. Misra, MD, MEd

"Debriefing for Educators"

Teresa Strong, MD, MPH
Saamia Masoom, MD
Mona Karimullah, MD
Sara Detlefs, MD, MEd

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm Networking Lunch for Educators

1:30 pm - 3:00 pm Concurrent Sessions - Virtual

"Competency-Driven Faculty Development"

Teri L. Turner, MD, MPH, MEd
The Academy of Master
Clinical Teachers

"Norton Rose Fulbright Award Workshop"

Moushumi Sur, MBBS

1:00-4:00 pm

Texas Children's Simulation Center Open House

A come-and-go
hands-on experience!



supported by the Center for Research, Innovation and Scholarship in Health Professions Education

Publishing Support at the TMC Library: Institutions Eligible for Author Benefits!

The Texas Medical Center Library provides resources that allow faculty/staff who have a BCM email to access many publications and can even be exempted from the charges of an open access journal or many other specific journal publishers. Corresponding authors must use their institutional email address to have their articles approved for OA fee waivers and discounts.

To learn more, [click here!](#)



Connected Care: Multidisciplinary Case Discussions for Primary Care Providers

Expand your pediatric primary expertise at Connected Care: Multidisciplinary Case Discussions for Primary Care Providers,

From September 19, 2026 from 8 am – 3 pm
Located at the Texas Children’s Hospital – The Woodlands Campus.

This case-based conference will cover pediatric fever with rash, sports cardiology screening, lymphadenopathy, palpitations and strategies for navigating difficult clinical conversations. The program is designed for physicians, trainees, advanced practice providers, nurses and other healthcare professionals. Earn a maximum of 5.00 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit.

Learn more and register [here](#).



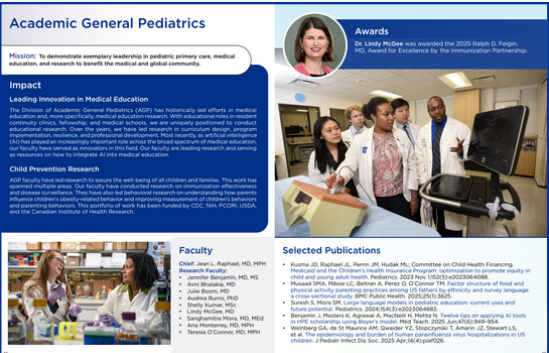
Research Recap

Advancing Discovery. Transforming Child Health.
The Baylor Pediatric Research Impact Report for 2023-2025!

Discover the impact of **570 faculty** across **23 divisions** as they advance scientific discovery, shape clinical care, and improve the lives of patients and communities.

Explore how research across Baylor College of Medicine Department of Pediatrics is driving innovation, fostering collaboration, and transforming the future of pediatric health.

Scan or press QR code to learn more!





About Us

The SOAR Office connects BCM medical students with research opportunities, mentors, and resources to enhance their research engagement and career development.

SOAR Database

User-Friendly: Our searchable database allows students to identify projects by departments, project type, and it keywords.

Quick and Easy: It takes only 5-min to submit a project or to list yourself as a potential mentor for medical students. BCM staff members can submit projects on behalf of the faculty.

Mentorship Enhancement: aligned with NIH's emphasis

Projects Include...

- ✓ Basic
- ✓ Medical Education
- ✓ Translational
- ✓ Quality Improvement
- ✓ Clinical
- ✓ Patient Safety
- ✓ Health Services
- ✓ Community Medicine

Key Services



Project Database

Centralized access to research projects and faculty mentors



Research Compliance

Guidance on the mentor's responsibilities and research attestation form.



Research Education

Student access to on-demand and in-person research skills sessions



Advising on Research Opportunities

Helping medical students make informed decisions



Catalog of Research Resources

Catalog of conferences suitable for medical student research presentations



SOAR Travel Award

Financial support for students presenting research findings

How you can Participate!

Submit your projects today or list yourself as a potential research mentor.

For more information's, scan or click the QR code below! For assistance, please contact **Dr. Mabel Perez-Oquendo**, SOAR Director at SOARoffice@bcm.edu



Introducing the Texas Children's Hospital first School Health Interest Group

Katie K. Tran, MD, MPH, in collaboration with **Jackee Ballesteros**, is excited to announce the formation of the Texas Children's Hospital School Health Interest Group, an innovative and centralized hub specifically designed for TCH and BCM employees.

Why Join Us?

- **Highlight your work:** Gain visibility for your school-related projects.
- **Discover TCH School-Related Initiatives:** Stay informed about exciting projects and developments.
- **Network and Collaborate:** Build relationships and explore opportunities for future collaborations.

Be part of a dynamic community that prioritizes growth and innovation. Don't miss this opportunity to connect and collaborate!

All TCH and BCM Employees Welcome!
1st Virtual Meeting is October 13, 2026 at 12:15PM-1PM



Sign up here! Press or scan the QR code

Questions? Email Katie at Katie.Tran@bcm.edu or Jackee at jxballe1@texaschildrens.org





Texas Children's Hospital, Baylor College of Medicine and Vidawasi: A Partnership to Decentralize Specialized Pediatric Care in Peru with Nino Rainusso, MD, FAAP

Children and families living in the Andean region of Peru must travel hundreds of miles to Lima to access specialized pediatric care. These journeys are lengthy, expensive, and emotionally taxing. Upon arrival, many families face inadequate accommodations, and for those who depend on farming or other daily labor for their livelihood, even a brief absence from home creates significant financial hardship.

Vidawasi, a nonprofit organization, was founded to bring specialized pediatric care closer to children living in southern Peru. The organization is building the country's first freestanding pediatric hospital outside Lima, along with family housing adjacent to the hospital to ensure that children and their caregivers have a safe and supportive place to stay during treatment.

In March 2024, a delegation from Texas Children's Hospital and Baylor College of Medicine visited Vidawasi to explore opportunities for collaboration. Findings from the trip and subsequent meetings revealed close alignment of the missions of both organizations: expanding access to high-quality pediatric care through multidisciplinary collaboration, education, and innovation. This shared vision led to the establishment of a formal partnership.

Over the past two years, Texas Children's Hospital has co-organized the annual Vidawasi International Congress of Specialized Pediatric Surgery and Pediatric Oncology, with **Dr. Nino Rainusso** serving as President of the Organizing Committee for both the 2025 and 2026 congresses. During the 2025 congress, Texas Children's physicians, led by **Dr. Larry Hollier** and representing multiple specialties - pediatric oncology, gastroenterology, neonatology, pediatric surgery, and interventional radiology - participated as invited faculty. Dr. Hollier's leadership, together with support from Texas Children's and Baylor College of Medicine Global Health and the International and Destination Medicine, have also helped strengthen the partnership between Texas Children's and Vidawasi. The meeting itself has become an important international educational forum, joining faculty from leading institutions across Latin America, the United States, and Peru. In addition to Texas Children's Hospital, collaborators have included St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, Children's Wisconsin, and numerous Peruvian academic and healthcare institutions.

A defining feature of the congress has been its emphasis on the multidisciplinary management of complex pediatric diseases. Sessions demonstrate how specialists from different disciplines work together to improve outcomes for children with complex medical and surgical conditions. Participants consistently identify this collaborative approach—as well as the openness of Texas Children's faculty to exchange ideas and learn alongside colleagues from Latin America—as one of the meeting's greatest strengths.

The partnership has also created opportunities beyond the annual congress. Physicians from the Division of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation have visited Vidawasi to help develop a comprehensive pediatric rehabilitation program. Looking ahead, clinical experiences at Vidawasi and regional hospitals in Cusco are expected to become part of the educational opportunities available to Texas Children's/Baylor College of Medicine pediatric residents and Global Health trainees, further strengthening international collaboration and expanding global health education.

The impact of this partnership extends beyond a single institution. Together, Texas Children's Hospital, Baylor College of Medicine and Vidawasi are helping to improve access to specialized pediatric care, promote medical education, and build sustainable healthcare capacity in Peru. These efforts are establishing a strong and lasting presence for Texas Children's in Peru and across Latin America while supporting Vidawasi's vision of ensuring that children can receive world-class care closer to home.

To learn more about Vidawasi and the V International Congress of Specialized Pediatric Surgery and Pediatric Oncology, which will be held this October, please press any of these button below to learn more!

[Vidawasi Main Website](#)

[Vidawasi International Medical Congress 2026](#)

Summer Safety Event

hosted by the Baylor Nurse Family Partnership Program



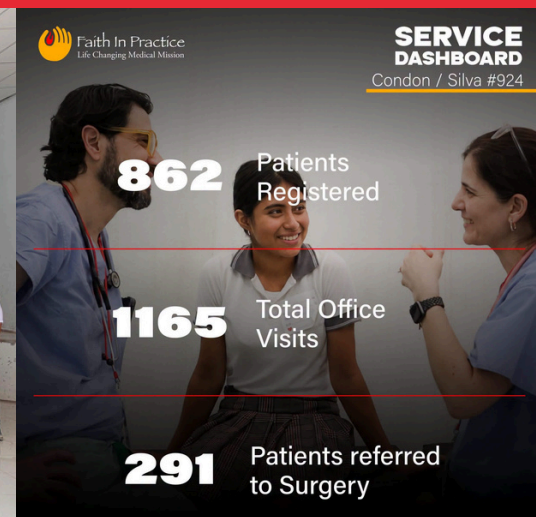
This summer, the **Baylor College of Medicine (BCM) Nurse Family Partnership** brought families together through Summer Safety education and splash pad events in June and July. Thirteen adults and nine children participated in activities designed to promote safety, connection, and healthy family fun.

Nurses shared practical tips on water safety, including safe swimming alternatives such as free community splash pads and the importance of having a designated “pool watcher.” Families also learned about the benefits of sunscreen and bug spray and received these items, along with swim diapers, to support a safe and enjoyable summer. The events also encouraged parent-child water play and provided opportunities for families to connect with others in their communities.

The programme is also entering an exciting new chapter. After joining the Division of Public Health Pediatrics’ upSTART Community Programs in July 2025, the BCM Nurse Family Partnership will merge with the **Texas Children’s Health Plan (TCHP) Nurse Family Partnership** on September 1, 2026. The two programmes will come together as the BCM/TCH Nurse Family Partnership, creating one integrated team dedicated to supporting families. **The Nurse Family Partnership** is an evidence-based nurse home-visiting programme serving low-income, first-time mothers from early pregnancy through their child’s second birthday. Since 2008, the programme has provided families with personalised education, health screenings, access to care, support for well-child visits, parenting resources, and guidance to promote economic self-sufficiency. The programme is funded to serve 207 families each year.

This new partnership represents an opportunity to build on years of shared experience and strengthen the programme’s reach and impact. With HEART at the centre of its work, the newly integrated team looks forward to continuing to support mothers, children, and families across the community—one family at a time.

♥ - Caring Beyond Borders: Living Our Heart Values Through Service



In June, **Dr. Manuel Silva Carmona** traveled to a remote region of Guatemala to participate in a medical mission, serving as both a general pediatrician and the medical team leader. Joining him on this meaningful endeavor were his wife, **Denise**, a TCP pediatrician, and their daughter, who worked alongside him throughout the week.

Together, **Dr. Silva Carmona and Denise** cared for nearly 200 pediatric patients over four days, providing essential medical care, medications, health education, and, in some cases, wheelchairs for children with mobility impairments despite limited resources. As part of a multidisciplinary healthcare team—including general medicine, pediatrics, gynecology, mobility, laboratory, and pharmacy services—the mission provided more than 1,000 patient encounters in just four days.

Reflecting on the experience, Dr. Silva Carmona shared that opportunities like this serve as a powerful reminder of the purpose behind medicine: to serve others, alleviate suffering, and make a meaningful difference in the lives of children and families. ♥



CHRISTUS Children's Physicians Share Life-Saving Case at STRAC Conference



Three remarkable physicians from **CHRISTUS Children's Physicians** recently captivated audiences at the **South Texas Regional Advisory Council (STRAC)** conference with an inspiring tale of collaboration, expertise, and hope.

During the session titled **"The Phone Call That Changes Lives,"** **Dr. Alexander Henri**, a specialist in Emergency Medicine, along with **Dr. Nga Tang** and **Dr. Arjun Chandran**, both experts in Critical Care Medicine, shared a compelling case study. They recounted the extraordinary journey of a young patient who experienced sudden cardiac arrest at school and the coordinated efforts that led to a triumphant outcome.

Despite the critical nature of the situation, the results were nothing short of miraculous. Through flawless coordination between EMS first responders and the multidisciplinary team at CHRISTUS Children's, the patient's care was executed with exceptional precision and purpose. From the initial emergency response to the advanced treatment in our hospital, each team member played a crucial role in realizing the ultimate goal: reuniting the child with their family.

The presentation underscored the essential collaboration between pre-hospital providers and hospital teams, highlighting the vital importance of working together to deliver life-saving care. It also recognized the indispensable role of EMS professionals, whose swift actions and clinical acumen often lay the groundwork for successful patient outcomes.

Having physicians from **CHRISTUS Children's**, representing Emergency and Critical Care Medicine, at a prestigious regional forum like STRAC showcases our ministry's unparalleled expertise, dedication, and teamwork. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to **Dr. Henri, Dr. Tang, Dr. Chandran, and every EMS and clinical team member** involved in this child's care. Your unwavering commitment continues to make a profound impact on the lives of the children and families we serve.

Furthermore, this case highlights the core values of CHRISTUS Children's, Baylor College of Medicine, and Texas Children's HEART Values—Humility, Excellence, Accountability, Respect, and Trust. Together, we strive to create a healthier future for children and women around the world by leading in patient care, education, and research. ❤️



International Partnership Awarded Granted!



Texas Children's Hospital and **Baylor College of Medicine** are pleased to share that their international partnership has been awarded a grant through **the International Society of Nephrology (ISN) Sister Renal Centers Program**. The collaboration brings together **Mulago National Referral Hospital** and **Makerere University** in Uganda with these two institutions in the United States. The partnership will receive \$12,000 annually for two years to support ongoing efforts to strengthen kidney care through education, training, mentorship, and capacity-building initiatives in Uganda. This award reflects their shared commitment to advancing pediatric and adult kidney health, fostering sustainable nephrology expertise, and reducing global disparities in kidney care.

Publication Highlights

★ BMI Normalization Is Associated With Lower Risk of Progression to Type 1 Diabetes, Primarily in Youth

By Maria J Redondo, David Cuthbertson, Raquel Gupta, Alejandro F Siller, Sridevi Devaraj, Kendra Vehik, Heba M Ismail, Ashok Balasubramanyam

Elevated BMI is associated with increased risk of progression to stage 3 type 1 diabetes (T1D). We tested whether normalization of BMI is associated with lower stage 3 risk among autoantibody-positive individuals with overweight or obesity.

To learn more, [press here](#).

★ Impact of Body Size on Preclinical Type 1 Diabetes Development and Progression

By Raquel M. Gupta, Heba M. Ismail, Alejandro F Siller, Jonah Pesikoff, Sridevi Devaraj, Ashok Balasubramanyam, Maria J Redondo

The review summarizes evidence that excess body weight may contribute to the development and progression of preclinical type 1 diabetes. In the original study, we found that among autoantibody-positive individuals with overweight or obesity, normalization of BMI was associated with an approximately 48% lower risk of progression to clinical type 1 diabetes, primarily in youth. Although the findings are observational and do not establish that weight reduction prevents type 1 diabetes, they identify body weight as a potentially modifiable factor that warrants evaluation in prospective intervention studies.

To learn more, [press here](#).

★ The Department of Pediatrics Annual Quality Day 2026 Abstract Book!

By Shelby Boone, Bryan Greenfield, Vibha Szafron, Serife Uysal, Kelly Hicks, Sasha Wee, Jennifer Bell, Marina Bishai, Deborah Callanan, Lisa Caplan, Bridget Cross, Lauren Culbreth, Keara Genova, Karina Hofstee, Brooke Hortness, Sabiha Hussain, Kathryn Jones, Brock Karolcik, Brady Kauppila, Abhay Kulkarni, Michelle Lucena, Vidya Menon, Blake Meyer, Elyse Portillo, Craig Pymonto, Kelly Rhodes, Meghna Singh, Kelsey Stayer, Susan Torrey, and Mili Vakharia.

This book showcases a compilation of abstracts submitted for Quality Day, held in April 2026. It features exceptional quality improvement initiatives from our department, underscoring the dedication, innovation, and teamwork of our staff to enhance patient care and outcomes.

Click here to [read more](#)!

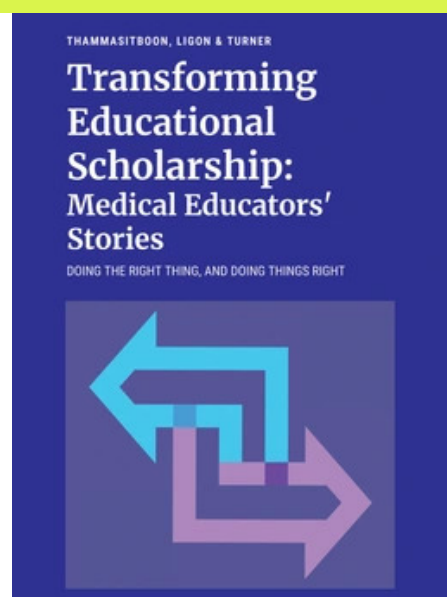


★ Transforming Educational Scholarship: Medical Educators' Stories

Thammasitboon, Ligon & Turner

A publication that highlights scholarly stories that analytically construct narratives illustrating how theoretical principles are enacted, negotiated, and adapted in real-world contexts, serving as exemplars that support the interpretation and transferability of knowledge.

Click here to [read more](#)!



★ Tropical Medicine Media/Publication Highlights

- 15-year research partnership between Houston Zoo and Baylor combats deadly elephant virus - **To learn more, [press here](#).**
- Human Exposure to Spirochete-Infected Ornithodoros turicata in a Residential Setting in the Austin, Texas Metropolitan Area - **To learn more, [press here](#).**

Vital Talk - Communication training focused on tough conversations with families facing serious illness with options like...



Delivering Serious News

Location: Virtual

Duration: 4 hours

When: September 24, 2026

Highlights:

- Delivering serious news
- Recognizing and responding to emotion

Mastering Tough Conversations

Location: In-person at TCH Medical Center

Duration: 8 hours

When: November 16, 2026

Highlights:

- Delivering serious news
- Recognizing and responding to emotion
- Eliciting goals of care
- Making values-centered medical recommendations



If interested, **click or scan QR code!** If you have any other questions, please contact **VitalTalk@texaschildrens.org**



Dr. Lisa Kahalley Advances Pediatric Neuro-Oncology Research on the International Stage

Dr. Lisa Kahalley was invited to speak at the **International Society of Pediatric Neuro-Oncology (ISPNO)** conference in Sydney, Australia, where she shared her expertise and research on improving outcomes for children with brain tumors. Her presentations, **“Neurocognitive Sparing with Proton Radiotherapy in Pediatric Brain Tumor Patients”** and **“Impact of Proton Radiotherapy on Pediatric Brain Tumor Survivorship: Neurocognitive Change, Functional Outcomes, and Symptom Burden,”** highlighted the importance of advancing treatments that support both survival and quality of life for pediatric patients.



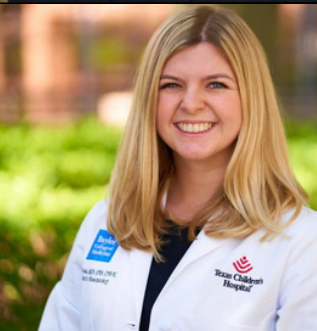
Woodland Campus Faculty and Families Volunteer at Montgomery Food Bank!

In celebration of Juneteenth, Woodlands Campus faculty and their families came together to volunteer at the Montgomery County Food Bank. It was a meaningful opportunity to give back, connect with one another, and make a positive impact in our local community.



Congratulations to Dr. Tiphanie Vogel!

Congratulations to **Dr. Tiphanie Vogel**, Assistant Professor in Rheumatology, who was recently awarded the PEAR (Professional Educator Appreciation and Recognition) award. Founded by BCM students, the award recognizes faculty who have made a meaningful impact on students through their teaching, mentorship, and inspiration.



Congratulations to Shelby Jones!

Congratulations to **Shelby Jones**, Nurse Practitioner, who was promoted in April from Instructor to Assistant Professor. Shelby has been immensely active on a national scale in advocating for pediatric rheumatology care and internally on the education of advanced practitioners.

Buzz around the block

from the heart of pediatrics



Congratulations to Olivia Ginnard!

Congratulations to **Olivia Ginnard**! She was presented the BCM Junior Faculty Seed Award!



Julani Seema's Inspiring Contributions at Tbilisi's ZEG Storytelling Festival

Julani Seema participated in Tbilisi's ZEG Storytelling Festival in June, where she captivated audiences on three panels. Her insights were highlighted in the UN Newsletter, and you can discover more about her inspiring contributions [here](#)!



Inaugural APP Postgraduate Course Launches at SLEEP 2026

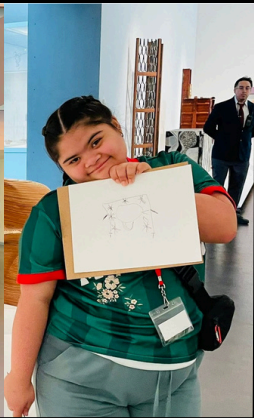
In June 2026, **Dr. Lacie Patitto** had the honor of chairing and developing the inaugural Advanced Practice Provider (APP) Postgraduate Course at the national SLEEP Annual Meeting. Hosted by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine, SLEEP is the premier international meeting in sleep medicine and has been held for more than 50 years. This was the first postgraduate course in the conference's history designed specifically for Advanced Practice Providers.

The four-hour course brought together four nationally recognized sleep APP experts to provide practical, evidence-based education for APPs entering or advancing in the field of sleep medicine. The curriculum included:

- Sleep Assessment: Tools of the Trade
- Becoming the PAP Expert on Your Team
- BBTI: Raising Insomnia Care to the Next Level
- RLS Guidelines: Flipping the Script After the 2025 Guidelines

Lacie Patitto was honored to serve as course chair and to present the lecture on the updated 2025 RLS/PLMD clinical practice guidelines. It was exciting for her to help launch this first-of-its-kind educational program for APPs at the national SLEEP meeting and to contribute to advancing education for sleep medicine providers across the country.

Buzz around the block cont.



A Day at the Museum: Sensory-Friendly Tour for Neurodivergent Teens and Young Adults

Members of the Meyer Center for Developmental Pediatrics and Autism’s faculty and staff organized a trip to the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston for a group of neurodivergent teens and young adults. Museum staff conducted sensory-friendly interactive tours of museum exhibits and provided opportunities for the participants to engage in creative activities. Following the museum visit, the group returned to the Meyer Center for socializing, games and ice cream sundaes!



Congratulations to Dr. Kim Raghubar!

Kim Raghubar has just been awarded an R34 grant from the National Cancer Institute (NCI) for the innovative REsolving Sleep Troubles in Childhood Leukemia (REST) study. This groundbreaking research is an intervention planning study that includes a clinical trial component aimed at developing and testing a tailored, telehealth-delivered cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) protocol to effectively treat pediatric insomnia. The REST protocol is designed to address the unique sleep challenges faced by children undergoing maintenance therapy, taking into account the diverse family environments that influence sleep health. In this endeavor, **Kim** will collaborate with **Dr. Candace Alfano** from Stony Brook University. This project holds significant promise for creating a clinically impactful intervention program that could greatly benefit this patient population.



Celebrating Dr. Vachani’s New Role at the AMEE 2026 Conference

Dr. Joyee G. Vachani, Professor of Pediatrics in the Division of Hospital Medicine, has been appointed AMEE Fringe Coordinator for the AMEE 2026 Conference, the world’s premier international conferences in health professions education. As a member of the AMEE Programme Committee, **Dr. Vachani** will lead the FRINGE program in Vienna, Austria, in August 2026. Recognized as “the antidote to PowerPoint,” AMEE FRINGE showcases innovative and creative approaches to teaching and learning through dynamic, non-traditional presentations. **Dr. Vachani’s** selection reflects her growing international reputation as a medical educator and her longstanding engagement with AMEE, where she has presented at multiple conferences, including FRINGE in 2025. Learn more by [clicking here](#).



Grant Award Supports Pediatric Education and Research Programs

Sterling-Turner has awarded Texas Children’s \$100,000 in support of the SPARK Program and Peds360 Program (\$50,000 for each initiative). The SPARK Program (Summer Pediatric Advancement in Research Knowledge) will provide an undergraduate summer research experience focused on pediatric research through a pediatric track within the Baylor College of Medicine SMART Program. The Peds360 Program is a one-week immersive learning experience designed to introduce undergraduate students to careers in pediatric healthcare through mentorship, observation, and simulation-based learning at Texas Children’s. This generous support will help expand opportunities for students to explore pediatric research and healthcare careers while strengthening the future pediatric workforce.



Congratulations to Eliabeth Greer!

Dr. Elizabeth Greer’s (Emergency Medicine) has been accepted to the TCH Health Professions Education Certificate Program



Congratulations to Peter Hotez!

Peter Hotez was awarded the Walter T. Hughes Distinguished Physician Award from PIDS at ID Week in October in Washington, DC!



Infectious Diseases Retrovirology Service team attending Camp HOPE!

Texas Children’s Infectious Diseases Retrovirology Service staff and patients attended Camp Hope at Camp For All in Burton, Texas, on July 12-17, 2026. This 30th anniversary camp and celebration had a total of 42 campers in attendance from Texas Children’s, Dallas Children’s, Cook Children’s, Arkansas and several other locations. **Gloria Sierra, MPH**, Retrovirology Case Manager received a Legacy award honoring her years of volunteering at Camp.



Buzz around the block cont.



Making a Difference at Camp Rainbow

The Texas Children's Hospital Endocrine Division partnered with the American Diabetes Association to host this year's Camp Rainbow, a day camp for children with Type 1 diabetes. Camp was held July 20th-23rd at Camp Lone Star in Tomball, TX. Camp staff included TCH dietitians, nurses, social workers, diabetes educators, APPs, residents, fellows, and endocrine faculty. Additionally, this year marked **Dr. Gunn's** 35th year as the medical director of Camp Rainbow!



Congratulations to Dr. Sanjiv Harpavat!

Dr. Sanjiv Harpavat was awarded the 2026 Gerald Odell Prize for Excellence in Liver Research for his abstract, "Low Burden of Outpatient Follow-Up Testing With Newborn Conjugated Bilirubin Screening for Biliary Atresia." He was recognized for this achievement at the NASPGHAN Annual Meeting, highlighting his outstanding contributions to pediatric liver research.



Celebrating New Beginnings: Joint Baby Shower for Meredith Rae, MD, and Maria Correa, MD!

Meredith Rae, MD, 2nd Year Rheumatology Fellow and **Maria Correa, MD**, 1st Year Rheumatology Fellow, joint baby shower from the Rheumatology Division (Photos attached: **Meredith** is in blue and is having a boy, and **Maria** is in beige and is having a girl).



Congratulations to our outstanding 2026 Allergy and Immunology Fellowship Graduates! (June 16th)

- **Drs. Ashna Mehra**, Clinician Innovation Scholar
- **Bijal Patel**, Clinician Leadership Scholar
- **Rui Yang**, Basic & Clinical Scientist Scholar (Who has accepted a faculty position!)
- **Serena Zadoo**, Clinician Educator Scholar



5th Annual Allergy, Immunology, Retrovirology and Rheumatology BBQ Wednesday, July 15th

Immunology, Allergy, Retrovirology, and Rheumatology recently came together for their 5th Annual BBQ Gathering, a favorite tradition that celebrates the strong partnership between the two divisions that share a suite. This year's event featured delicious catering from Houston favorite, The Pit Room, bringing colleagues together for great food, connection, and camaraderie.



Congratulations to Heather Haq on her wedding!

Heather Haq married her husband **Sid** in Glasgow, Scotland on July 10th, with several BCM Pediatric faculty members in attendance.



Buzz around the block cont.



Welcoming the Class of 2029 at CHIRSTUS Children's

A new class of **Baylor College of Medicine interns** arrived at **CHRISTUS Children's** for their first day of orientation, including N-95 mask fit testing, physician badges, white coat fittings, individual portraits, and our traditional group photos in front of the wall outside the Emergency Center. The CHRISTUS BCM residency program started in 2015 and has proudly trained more than 100 pediatricians since the program's inception. The program continues to attract top medical students from around the U.S. and the world!



New Fellow College Liaison for the 2026-2028 term!

Aimee Daccache was selected to serve as a Fellows College Liaison for the 2026-28 term. Fellows College Liaisons play an important role in representing fellows and serving as a voice to help strengthen engagement and connection across the Department of Pediatrics fellowship programs.



Congratulations to Diana on Her Scholarship!

Diana Cabrera Fernandez was selected to receive the 2026–2027 Department of Pediatrics Subspecialty Fellow Advanced Degree Scholarships. The scholarship will provide up to \$5,000 per year for tuition and fees associated with the completion of a Master's degree in Biomedical Informatics at UTHealth Houston.

Critical Care Fellow Presentation Highlights!

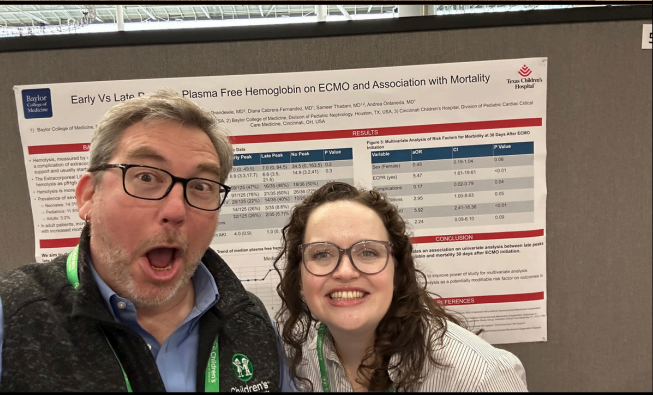


Texas Children's Research Symposium on May 15th

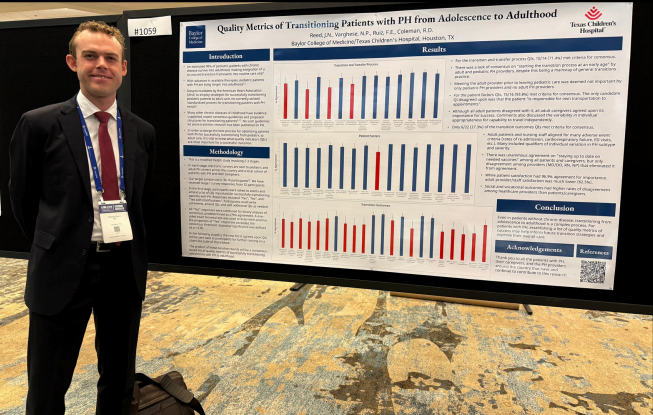
Several of our Critical Care Fellows presented at the Texas Children's Research Symposium!



Aline Andrucoli presented the case of a well-known TICU patient at the 2026 SAMD9 and SAMD9L Virtual Conference: Advancing Patient Care Through Collaboration!



Laura Stanfel (shown in the photo with our former faculty member Nick Ettinger MD) presented her primary fellowship scholarship project at the PAS 2026 Meeting in Boston, MA.



Nelson Reed presented his primary fellowship scholarship project at the Pulmonary Hypertension Association 2026 International PH Conference and Scientific Sessions in Dallas, TX!



FACT Accredited!

CHRISTUS Children's Blood and Marrow Transplant program has been selected to be officially certified by the Foundation for the Accreditation of Cellular Therapy (FACT). Congratulations to the BMT Team!

Buzz around the block cont.



CHRISTUS Children’s Critical Team has been recognized with the ELSO Award For Excellence in Life Support

CHRISTUS Children’s PICU, CVICU, and NICU have been recognized with the **ELSO Award for Excellence in Life Support - Gold Level**, a prestigious honor awarded by the **Extracorporeal Life Support Organization (ELSO)** to centers demonstrating exceptional commitment to quality, patient care, education, and outcomes in extracorporeal life support.

The award recognizes the outstanding work of the hospital’s critical care teams, whose expertise and dedication support some of the most complex and vulnerable pediatric patients. Earning ELSO Gold-Level designation reflects a sustained commitment to clinical excellence and best practices in life-saving extracorporeal life support (ECLS) services.



A Transformational New Chapter ★

We are delighted to share the bittersweet news that **Dr. Lineo Thahane**, Executive Director of Baylor College of Medicine Children’s Foundation - Lesotho, has been named Founding Dean of the Lesotho Medical School, effective September 1, 2026.

Since returning to Lesotho in 2018, **Dr. Thahane** has provided visionary leadership to Baylor Foundation Lesotho and strengthened its impact and partnerships nationally. **While we will miss Lineo’s leadership at BFL, Lesotho is gaining an exceptional leader in academic medicine.**

We are especially proud that our institution has contributed to the founding leadership of medical schools in two countries profoundly affected by HIV/AIDS, thanks to **Dr. Major Bradshaw** in Botswana and **Dr. Lineo Thahane** in Lesotho.

2026 Educational Scholarship Award Recipients

We are pleased to announce the recipients of the 2026 Educational Scholarship Award. These projects were selected for their strong potential to advance educational innovation, learner development, and scholarly impact across Texas Children’s Hospital and Baylor College of Medicine.



Huma Shaikh, MD

Collaborating team: Cara Doughty, MD, Med and Daniel Lemke, MD

Project: Just-in-Time Procedural Training Learning System to Improve Skill Confidence and Competency Among Advanced Practice Providers in Community Emergency Centers

This project will develop and evaluate a portable, just-in-time and just-in-place procedural training model using simulation, deliberate practice, video-based instruction, and AI-supported performance review to strengthen APP procedural readiness in community emergency settings.



Marie A. Clark, MD, MPH

Collaborator: Jennifer Cervantes, MSW, LCSW-S

Project: Opening the FAN: Adapting Facilitating Attuned Interactions Training to Meet Interdisciplinary Core Competencies

This project will adapt and evaluate Facilitating Attuned Interactions training for interdisciplinary trainees, with the goal of strengthening communication, empathy, reflection, and team-based practice.



Laurie Davis, MD, PhD

Collaborating team: Adam Wolfe, MD; Nadia Cheek, MD; Dimarys Sanchez, MD

Project: Development of a Mobile Microlearning Application for Pediatric Hematology, Oncology, and Stem Cell Transplant Education

This project will create a theory-informed mobile microlearning resource to provide residents, fellows, and bedside learners with just-in-time access to high-yield clinical content, formative assessment, and self-directed learning support during HOT rotations.



Jill E. Weatherhead, MD, PhD, CTropMed

Collaborators: Ryan Rochet, PhD; Cameron Brown, PhD; Meishon Gipson; Cristina Poveda, MD

Project: The Virtual Lab: Development of a Certification in Tropical Microbiology and Molecular Diagnostics

This project will transform existing tropical microbiology and molecular diagnostics content into an interactive, bilingual virtual learning platform with case-based modules, digital microscopy resources, and embedded learner assessments.

News from Hematology/Oncology



Congratulations to our 2026 Graduates!

We congratulate our 2026 Pediatric Hematology-Oncology fellows—**Marimar de la Cruz Bonilla, MD, PhD; Joshua R. Gorlick, MD; Alicia B. Herbison, MD; Swabna Shanmugavelayutham, MD; and Matthew Willis, MD**—on completing their training. We also congratulate our Advanced Training graduate, **Candelaria O’Farrell, MD**. We celebrate their achievements and wish them continued success in the next chapter of their careers!

Awards/Achievements

	Alaundra Y. Carmouche, DNP, APRN, FNP-C, CPON , received the Dr. Marilyn Hockenberry Advanced Practice Award for exceptional leadership and impact.		Omar Shakeel, MD was appointed to the Section on Heme-Onc Review Group for Supportive care, ASPHO and awarded the BCM Award Early Career Award for Excellence in Patient Care
	Kayla L. Foster, MD, MPH , was appointed Chair of the COG LTFU Guidelines Clinical Care Translation Task Force and was recognized with the BCM Award and the Norton Rose Fulbright Faculty Excellence Award for Educational Materials.		Sarah S. Kappa, MD , joined the FDA-ASPHO Pediatric Hematology-Oncology Educational Program
	Kemi Olaiya, DO, FAAP , was appointed Co-Chair, LAN Education and Advocacy Subcommittee, Foundation for Women & Girls with Blood Disorders, and was recognized with the BCM Award 2026 Faculty Award for Excellence in Patient Care		Alexander I. Ngwube, MD , was named Co-Chair, Scientific Executive Committee of the Sickle Cell Transplant Advocacy and Research Alliance (STAR).
	Zachary D. Prudowsky, MD, FAAP , joined the FDA-ASPHO Pediatric Hematology-Oncology Educational Program and became the Co-Chair of ASPHO’s Advocacy Committee.		Robin Parihar, MD, PhD , was invited to deliver a keynote presentation at the Science and Innovation Plenary Session at ISCT in Dublin
	In the Media! Watch our 2026 World Sickle Cell Day Video , which features heartfelt patient messages sharing their experiences and thanking those who have supported them along the way. Thank you		Sarah Scollon, MS, CGC , received the Outstanding Mentor Award at the BCM Genetic Counseling Training Program Graduation in recognition of her exceptional mentorship, as nominated by the graduating class.

			The 2026 Quality and Safety Award was presented to Xiaofan “Fan Fan” Shen, MD, Shelby R. Boone, MSN, APRN, CPNP-AC, CPN, and Jake Lott, RN for their leadership in advancing a collaborative culture of integrated quality improvement and safety. Their project, Children’s Hospital Early Warning Score (CHEWS) for Recognition of Deteriorating Patients made a significant contribution to our Center’s quality improvement objectives. Congratulations to Fan Fan, Shelby and Jake!
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		We are pleased to share that Janki H. Patel, MD, and Courtney Pette, MD , have been named 2026–2027 Co-Chief Fellows for the Pediatric Hematology-Oncology Fellowship Program at Texas Children’s Cancer & Hematology Center.
		As Chief Fellows, Drs. Patel and Pette will help foster a supportive learning environment and guide the next generation of specialists caring for children fighting cancer or serious blood disorders. They will advocate for their fellow trainees and contribute to the continued growth and success of the fellowship program.

News from Infectious Diseases

Honoring Our Graduating Fellows and Their Achievements



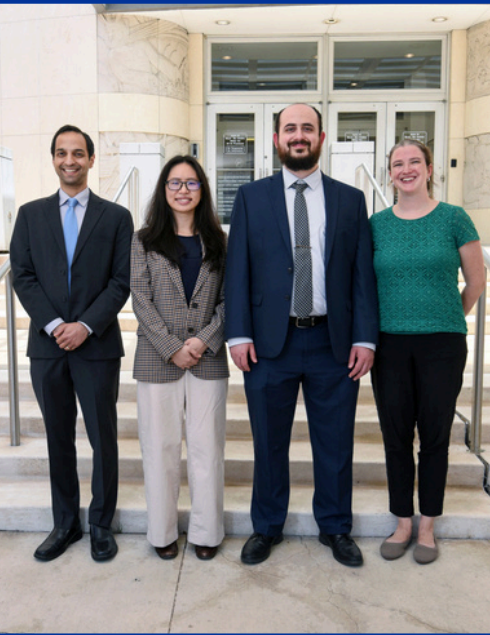
Our faculty and fellows recently gathered to celebrate the close of the academic year and honor our two graduating postdoctoral fellows, **Dr. Sabiha Hussain** and **Dr. Amna Al Saihati**. Over the past three years, both have demonstrated exceptional clinical and academic excellence. They have been invaluable assets to our division, and while they will be deeply missed, we look forward to watching their careers flourish.



The Pediatric Infectious Disease postdoctoral fellows and their families gathered for a wellness event to celebrate their accomplishments throughout the academic year.



Ali Goldensoph, PharmD, MPH completed her two pharmacy residency in infectious diseases at TCH and received her diploma at a graduation ceremony on June 24, 2026. She was the first resident to apply for and successfully complete the program. She will be staying at Texas Children's in the Department of Pulmonology as a Clinical Pharmacy Specialist.



In July, the Adult and Pediatric Infectious Diseases fellowship programs welcomed **Dr. Abdul Amounajed** to BCM. **Dr. Amounajed**, a first-year fellow, and **Dr. Angela Fu**, a second-year fellow, are completing a 4-year combined dual subspecialty training program in Pediatric Infectious Diseases and Adult Infectious Diseases.



Congratulations to **Dr. C. Mary Healy** on her promotion to Professor of Pediatrics. **Mary** is an invaluable member of our team - a master clinician with expertise in clinical research, service and education. She is an accomplished researcher with over 70 publications in respected, peer-reviewed journals.



Dr. Lucila (Lucy) Marquez received the Pediatric Infectious Diseases Division's 2026 ID Shining Star Award. This honor recognizes individuals who embody Baylor College of Medicine's core pillars of respect, integrity, innovation, teamwork, and excellence. **Dr. Marquez's** unwavering commitment to these values sets her apart as a leader and a role model within our community.



Several faculty members from the Division of Pediatric Infectious Diseases participated in the **European Society for Pediatric Infectious Diseases (ESPID)** meeting held in Bologna, Italy, in June 2026.



FIFA HIGHLIGHTS



Catch the FIFA fever with our summer highlights! Our Pedi-Team joined in the excitement, cheering on their favorite teams and capturing the moment with these vibrant photos!



"We had the opportunity to attend the Germany vs. Curaçao match at NRG Stadium on June 14. My son is an avid soccer fan, and the game was truly the highlight of his summer. Even my daughter got caught up in the FIFA excitement! It was a wonderful experience and a special family memory."

- Stella Kalu Egwim, MD, FAAP



"Being selected as a FIFA World Cup Volunteer and serving as a Host City Ambassador was one of the most amazing experiences I've had. It was an incredible opportunity to contribute to one of the world's largest sporting events and connecting with so many people from all over the globe."

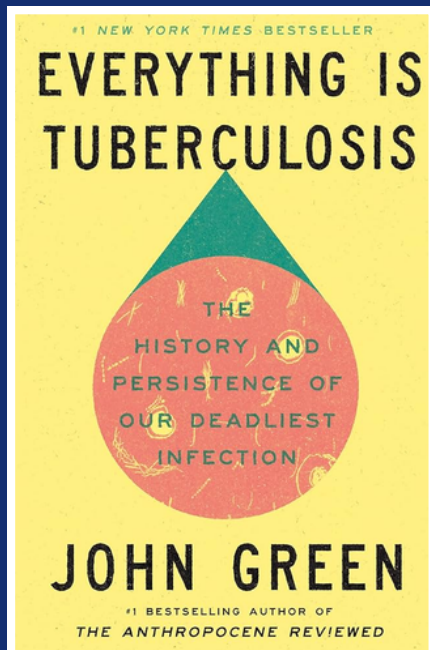
- Cara-Lee Fontaine, MHA, CCRC





NATIONAL BOOK LOVERS DAY!

August 9, 2026



Everything is Tuberculosis by John Green

Recommended by Anna Manalakas

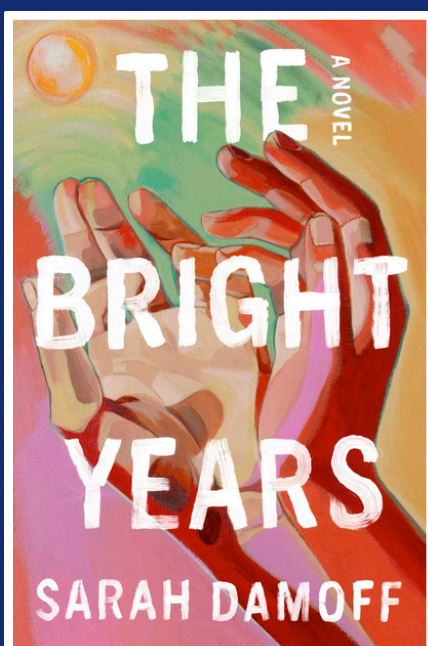
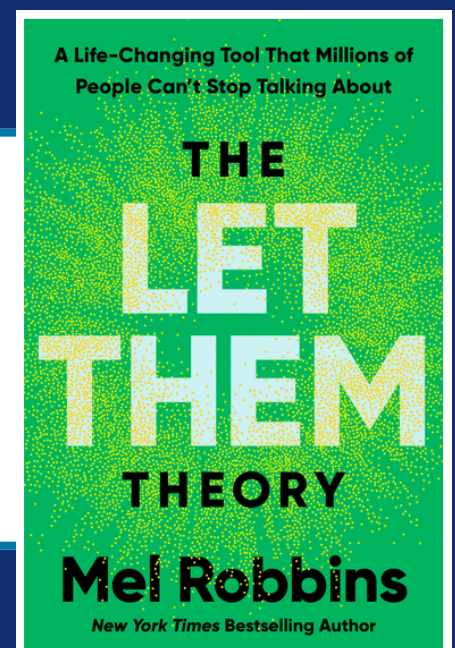
“a compelling, easy-to-follow narrative of the long history and ongoing impact of TB. Recommended for anyone interested in knowing more about one of the world’s oldest, most destructive, and inequitable diseases. John Green does an amazing job illustrating that TB is a social disease with medical implications. Our inability to eliminate TB is one of the most unforgivable health systems failures of our time.” **To learn more about this book, [click here!](#)**

The Let Them Theory by Mel Robbins

Currently reading by Samantha Johnson

“a bestselling self-development book that encourages readers to let go of trying to control others and instead focus on their own actions, mindset, and personal growth. The book offers practical strategies for reducing stress, building healthier relationships, and creating a more fulfilling life.”

To learn more about this book, [click here!](#)

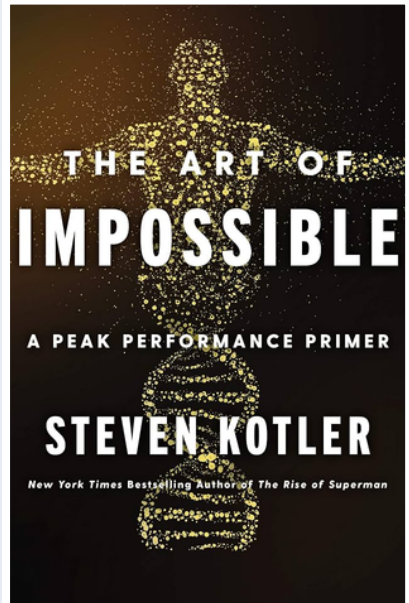


The Bright Years by Sarah Damoff

Currently reading by the AAP Book Club within Hematology/Oncology

The APP Book Club meets quarterly at Sixty Vines in Rice village, and are currently reading the Bright Years by Sarah Damoff - a book that talks about a tender, multigenerational family saga about love, secrets, addiction, and the possibility of healing. When newlyweds Ryan and Lillian Bright welcome their daughter Georgette, hidden truths—including Lillian’s secret son and Ryan’s struggle with alcoholism—begin to shape the family’s future. After tragedy tears them apart, Georgette spends years distancing herself from her past. But when her half-brother returns seeking his birth family, she is drawn back into the Bright family’s complicated history and forced to confront whether love, grace, and compassion can heal wounds carried across generations. **To learn more about this book, [click here!](#)**

NATIONAL BOOK LOVERS DAY! — Book clubs



Pediatric Tropical Medicine Faculty Book Club

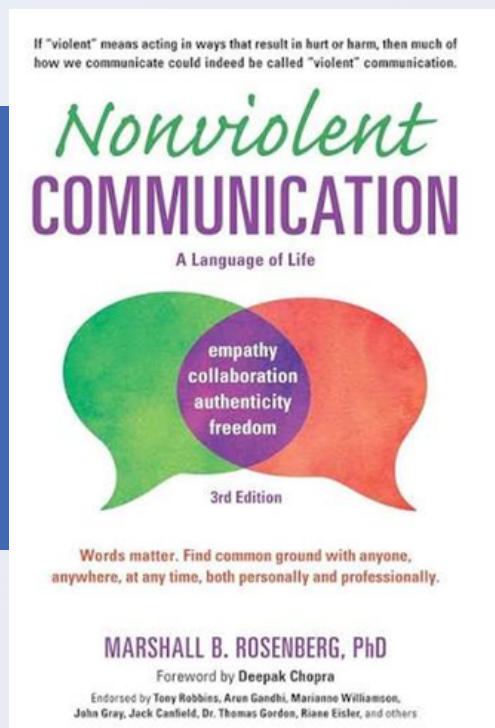
This year, the Pediatric Tropical Medicine faculty embarked on a shared journey through *The Art of the Impossible* by Steven Kotler. More than just a book club, it became an opportunity to reflect on the value framework that guides our work: **“Impact with COURAGE”** (Collaboration, Open Knowledge Transformation, Universal/Global Contribution, Resource Resilience, Audacious Leadership, Genuineness, Equity & Justice) to tackling some of the world’s most challenging health problems.

As faculty dedicated to addressing neglected and emerging infectious diseases, we found many parallels between the book’s message and our daily mission. Whether we are understanding the burden and distribution of vectors and diseases, training the next generation of global health leaders, advancing vaccine research, or working to improve access to healthcare in underserved communities, our work often requires pursuing goals that can seem daunting—or even impossible.

The discussions inspired us to think about how bold vision, teamwork, resilience, and purpose-driven leadership can help transform scientific discoveries into real-world impact. The conversations also reminded us that meaningful progress in global health is built not only through scientific excellence, but through collaboration, creativity, and a willingness to challenge conventional boundaries.

Perhaps most importantly, the book club provided a space for faculty to connect as colleagues and learners, strengthening our shared commitment to improving the lives of children and communities affected by infectious diseases around the world.

Book Club Selection: *The Art of the Impossible: A Peak Performance Primer* by Steven Kotler. To learn more about this book, [click here](#).



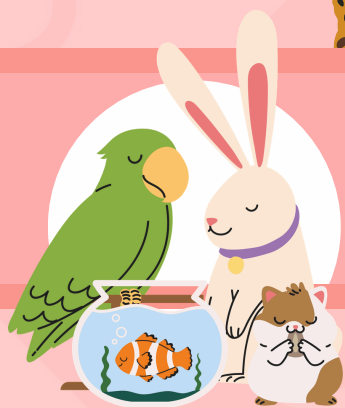
Allergy Leadership Book Club

Dr. Lisa Forbes Satter hosts a monthly Allergy Leadership Book Club designed to strengthen and equip leaders with the mindset and tools needed to lead effectively. Through thoughtful discussion and shared learning, participants explore leadership principles that foster stronger communication, collaboration, and team engagement.

The group is currently reading ***Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life*** by **Marshall B. Rosenberg**. This influential book introduces a practical framework for communicating with empathy, clarity, and compassion. Rosenberg’s approach emphasizes understanding underlying needs, expressing oneself honestly without blame or criticism, and building meaningful connections through active listening. The book provides valuable strategies for navigating difficult conversations, resolving conflict, and creating a culture of trust and mutual respect—essential skills for effective leadership.

To learn more about this book, [click here](#).





PEDI-PET SPOTLIGHT



Meet some of the beloved pets who bring joy, companionship, and plenty of personality to the lives of our faculty and staff! From playful pups and curious cats, this spotlight is a chance to celebrate the animals who make our homes—and our days—a little brighter!



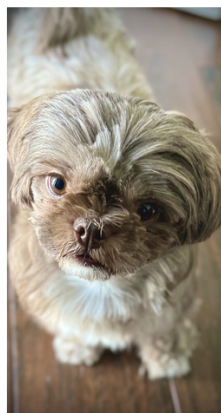
From Anna Manalakas

“Always by” my “side, supporting manuscript writing.”



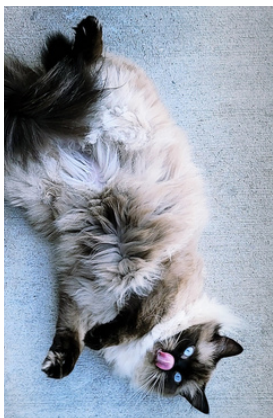
From Lacey Schdmit

“We just rescued Tao, the blind Shih Tzu, this June. We rescued the black and tuxedo cats, brothers Willie and Waylon during the pandemic, the orange tabby cat, Oberon in 2016, and our old lady dog, Nikita in 2015.”



From Nicole Leger

Photo of Nicole Leger pets from left to right: Chewie’ and Pepe Leger



From Anna Z. Grove

Photo of Anna Ragdoll Cat “Sushi”



From Marianna Sockrider

“This is Milo ‘super mutt’ and his favorite ball”



From Samantha Johnson

“Grace is a blonde, German Shepard Great Pyrenees mix. She was the smallest of her litter. Grace loves sunbathing and snuggles.”



From Nicole Triggs

Featuring Sunni the Cat



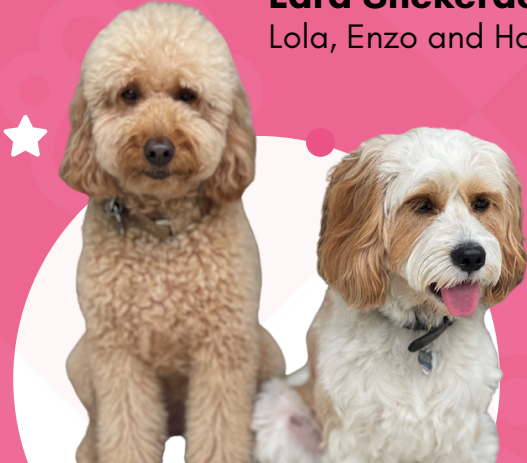
From Nidhi Singh

Lola and Kenny



From Fadel Ruiz

Zeke the Dog



Lara Shekerdemian pets

Lola, Enzo and Harry the bunny!



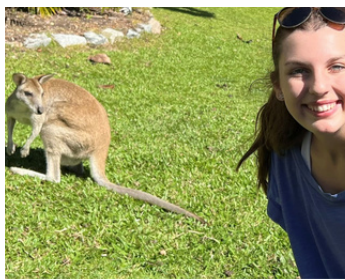
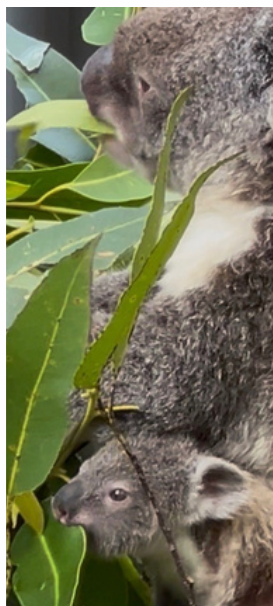
Summer Highlights!

Here's a glimpse into how our pediatric family celebrated their summer vacation this year!



From Janani Sundaresan, MD, MSc

"Pictures from Hiking this summer- went to Mt Rainier National Park/Seattle for July 4th!"



From Lisa S. Kahalley, PhD

"I was an invited speaker at the International Society of Pediatric Neuro-Oncology meeting in Sydney, Australia this summer, and we turned it into a fun family vacation with my husband and our 10- and 14-year-old daughters!"



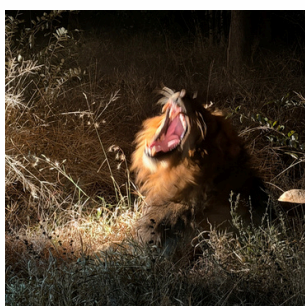
From Joyee Goswami Vachani, MD, M.Ed

"Our family had a great time exploring Italy this summer. We went to Venice, Pisa, Florence, and Rome. It was hot, beautiful, and filled with happy adventures!"



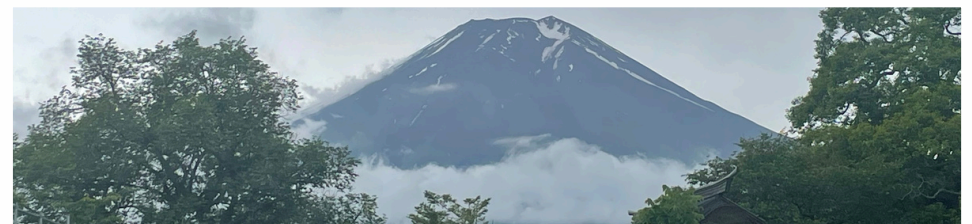
From Andrew Chu, MD

"My wife Christina and I got to enjoy sunny Los Angeles earlier this month visiting friends and local sights (picture from the lovely Huntington Gardens) while our daughter Abbie spent a week in the area at an engineering camp with the legendary Navy Seabees Construction Battalion!"



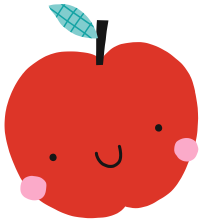
From Lara Shekerdemian, MD

"Travelling to Malawi and Eswatini to visit the BCM Teams and Centers of Excellence was a true privilege. It was wonderful to see the extraordinary work at the Centers of Excellence firsthand, and my family and I were welcomed with such warmth and hospitality. We also took the opportunity to explore the incredible beauty of Africa together, including an unforgettable family safari - memories we will treasure for years to come!"



From Tracy Patel, MD

"From an awesome trip to Japan this summer (highly recommend!)... the food, the sights, the culture!"



Let us know how we did!
**Scan or press this QR code to share
your thoughts!**



For **photo and content submissions**, email us at
DepartmentofPediatrics@texaschildrens.org
If you want to **request a page for content**, email
Lana Thai at Lxthai@texaschildrens.org



Thank you for Reading!
keep doing you and take care!

