

# General Medicine Newsletter

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## Division Garner \$1.8-Plus Million In Grants For Research Projects

Three grants totaling more than \$1.8 million recently have been awarded to faculty investigators within the Division of General Internal Medicine. All of the grants involve the development of and harnessing of electronic data to improve patient care and outcomes.

Creating a communication channel between Parkland Hospital and the myriad social service agencies that serve the Dallas area is the main goal of a \$980,000 grant recently awarded to Parkland Hospital. GIM's **Dr. Ruben Amarasingham** is the principal investigator on the W.W. Caruth Jr. research grant.

The grant will fund a one-year

study of the potential impact and feasibility of an information-based network connecting medical providers and social service agencies for the benefit of the most at-risk members of Dallas County.

Dr. Amarasingham, who serves as the Director of the Center for Clinical Innovation and Associate Chief of medicine services at Parkland, said that developing a strong alignment between PHHS and social agencies allows the hospital the opportunity to greatly improve clinical outcomes.

By developing an electronic network that will enable the se-

cure sharing of information between social service agencies such as the Salvation Army, local shelters and food banks and the hospital, doctors and social workers will be better able to coordinate care for their mutual patients and clients.

**Dr. Ethan Halm, GIM Division Chief**, is the PI on an almost half-million dollar grant aimed at optimizing the Epic electronic health record (EHR) to improve quality and outcomes.

Modifications to UT's EHR developed through this research "will create the IT and analytics infrastructure and protocols to generate more accurate, real- (See Research Projects, Pg. 2)



Ruben Amarasingham, M.D.

## Dr. Khawaja Wins "Golden Pager" Award

### 5 More Hospitalists Nominated

Hospitalist Dr. Imran Khawaja was recently honored as the 2010 recipient of the "Golden Pager" Award.

The award recipient is elected by the nursing staff at the University hospitals to honor "one physician who demonstrates empathy for patients, collaboration with nurses, and an overall dedication to the medical profession."

Also nominated for the award were Dr. Emilia Thomas, Dr. Ali Zamanian, Dr. Bielose Konwe, Dr. Ketul Patel and Dr. Amit Kothari, all of the Section of Hospital Medicine.

## Monal Shah, M.D., Named Chief of Growing Section of Hospital Medicine

Since its inception in 2006, the Section of Hospital Medicine within the Division of General Internal Medicine has continually expanded and evolved. The latest evolution is the appointment of **Dr. Monal Shah** as the new Section Chief. In this capacity, Dr. Shah will be in charge of managing the hospital medicine programs at all three hospitals served by the hospitalist section: St. Paul, Parkland, and Zale-Lipshy.

Dr. Shah takes the helm with 42 hospitalists now a part of this dynamic section, a 100-plus percent increase over the past three years. "As with any rap-

idly expanding group, there have been some accompanying growing pains. Our hospitalist groups have risen to the occasion time and again and continually provide excellent patient care in the three hospitals we service," said Dr. Shah.



Monal Shah, MD, is the new Section Chief of Hospital Medicine.

"The quality and size of our group insures that we will be able to continue to provide excellent care to our hospital patients at every venue."

Statistics agree with Dr. Shah's optimistic assessment of the qual-

ity and productivity of the section of hospital medicine. The inpatient services provided by the hospitalist group grew by more than 20 percent in the 2009-2010 fiscal year.

The hospitalist section also is assuming a larger role in the University's education arena. Two of the Parkland teaching Wards now are staffed exclusively by hospitalist faculty. "Education of the next generation of physicians is at the core of everything we do at the University, so it's essential that the hospitalist group assumes a leadership role in this area, as well," said Dr. Shah.

# Geriatrics Education Product Takes Top Honors at Annual Reynolds Foundation Meeting

The Geriatrics Section of Medicine was recently awarded the "Educational Product of the Year" Award at the annual Donald W. Reynolds Foundation meeting in St. Louis, MO.

The product was authored by Geriatric Scholar Judy Head, Ph.D. under the guidance of Geriatrician **Dr. Amit Shah**, UT Southwestern Aging and Geriatrics Education (SAGE) grant medical illustrator **Lindsay Oksenberg** created the illustrations for the product. UT histology technician Brie Thaden Pirkle worked with the GIM geriatrics team.



Judy Head, Ph.D.



Amit Shah, M.D.

The work, titled "SAGE Intrinsic Aging: A Histological Perspective: Skin Module" is an interactive web module which offers instruction to first and second year medical students on normal skin changes with aging and the clinical implications of these age-related changes.



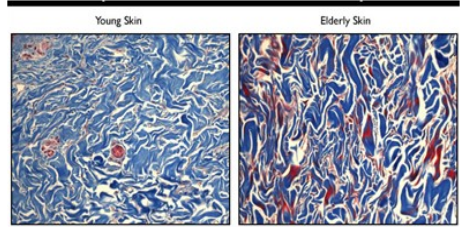
Lindsay Oksenberg  
Medical Illustrator

The UT Southwestern Medical Center product was chosen from among 40 competing medical schools represented at the annual meeting. Takrishia Graham, SAGE Program Coordinator, said the product was very well received. "We had people lined up at our table to get a look. It was really a great presentation and obviously well received by

all those who attended," said Graham.

The award is given annually at the Reynolds meeting and is chosen by votes cast by the peer medical schools in attendance. The product can be viewed at the link below.

[http://imweb.swmed.edu/sage/cell\\_biology\\_modules/skin\\_module/index.htm](http://imweb.swmed.edu/sage/cell_biology_modules/skin_module/index.htm)



A sample illustration from the skin module developed by the GIM geriatrics section that won Educational Product of the Year at the Annual Reynolds Foundation Meeting.

## Roopali Gupta, M.D. Receives Geriatric Academic Career Award

Roopali Gupta, M.D., former UTSW geriatrics fellow and current faculty in the geriatrics section of GIM, recently was named the recipient of a federal grant, (Geriatric Academic Career Award, GACA), from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The purpose of the five-year federal grant is to promote the development of junior faculty in their careers as academic geriatricians. "These are very difficult to obtain, national awards which are essentially K-awards for clinician educators in geriatrics," said Dr. Ethan Halm, chief of the division of general internal medicine.



Roopali Gupta, MD

Dr. Gupta's grant, titled "Teaching inter-professional learners an individualized approach for geriatric preventive medicine" proposes the development and implementation of novel inter-professional curriculum to address the complexities of providing preventive medicine to older adults.

## Strategic Planning, Goal Setting at Heart of Geriatric Section Retreat

Creative problem-solving and casting a vision for the future of geriatrics at UT Southwestern were main components of a recent two-day retreat attended by geriatrics faculty, clinic staff, and administrative staff.

Dr. Craig Rubin, head of the Section of Geriatrics, said that one of the outcomes of the retreat was the creation of a vision statement for the section:

*"We are dedicated to providing exceptional patient-centered care to older adults across the care continuum. We seek to advance geriatric medicine through inter-professional education, leadership, and scientific discovery."*

The retreat, which was held off-campus, was divided into large and small group discussion sessions, as well as small work groups. As part of the agenda, the groups utilized the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time Bound) Goals model for analyzing challenges and refining methods for attaining results.

## Research Projects (continued from Page 1)

time information that will ultimately, systematically drive quality improvement for our 28,000 unique patients," said Dr. Halm. The study will focus on developing a comprehensive set of evidence-based, adult medicine chronic disease management and preventive services quality measures, he said.

The one-year grant is funded by UT System Chancellor's Health Fellow for Health Information Technology Grant Program.

A Commonwealth Foundation grant titled "Developing a Clinical Decision Support Tool to Identify Patients Prospec-

tively at High Risk for Hospital Readmissions," will provide \$396,037 over a two-year period. Dr. Amarasingham is also the PI on this grant. Dr. Halm is the PI on the UTSW subcontract.

The grant extends work already being done to harness electronic medical record data to predict readmissions for congestive heart failure at Parkland Hospital to a broader goal of developing electronic tools to predict hospital readmissions for all medical conditions for Parkland, the University hospitals, and Texas Health Resources hospitals.

# GIM Faculty Lauded for Outstanding Teaching

Five GIM Division faculty members were honored in four categories of awards presented at the 2010 Excellence in Education Award Ceremony this fall, including one of the highest teaching honors bestowed by the University.

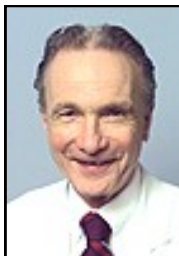
GIM's **Lynne Kirk, M.D.**, won the Distinguished Clinical Science Educator Teaching Award, one of the top honors given to the physician educators at the annual event.

Also receiving teaching awards were **Jim Wagner, M.D.**, Clinical Medicine Educator for second-year medical students, **Rody Cox, M.D.**, Core Clerkship Teacher in Internal Medicine for third-year medical students, **Marius Commodore, M.D.**, Core Clerkship Teacher in psychiatry for third-year medical students, and **Kathryn Eubank, M.D.**, Core Clerkship Teacher in Sub-Internship for fourth-year medical students.

The Excellence in Education awards are presented annually to recognize those physician educators whose dedication to teaching medical students distinguishes them from among their peers. The award winners are selected by a committee of faculty members based on input and nominations by medical students.



Lynne Kirk, M.D.  
2010 Distinguished  
Clinical Science  
Educator Teaching  
Award



Rody Cox, M.D.  
2010 Core Clerk-  
ship Teacher in  
Internal Medicine/  
MS3



Marius Commo-  
dore, M.D., 2010  
Core Clerkship in  
Psychiatry/MS3



Kathryn Eubank,  
M.D. 2010 Core  
Clerkship Teacher  
in Sub-Internship/  
MS4



Jim Wagner, M.D.  
2010 Clinical  
Medicine Educa-  
tor/MS2

## *Retreat Helps PCIM Personnel Focus on Important Issues*

# Team Building Helps Define Roles of Support Staff

Improving patient care, gaining efficiency, and improving quality were three of the tough topics tackled by the Parkland Clinic of Internal Medicine (PCIM) staff, pharmacists, nurses and physicians at a recent all-day retreat. **Dr. Robert Goldsteen**, PCIM Medical Director, said the event was well-attended and focused on team building.

"The team building session helped better define the roles of support staff in a post EMR environment," said Dr. Goldsteen.

The on-campus event consisted of morning team building activities, a late morning session of smaller work groups assigned to tackle predetermined issues, and a PowerPoint presentation by each group summarizing the findings/work of the small

**"The team building session helped better define the roles of support staff in a post-EMR environment"**  
**Dr. Robert Goldsteen**  
**PCIM Director**



group.

Some of the subjects addressed during the day-long retreat were nursing verbal orders, refills, resident drug education, protocols to enhance resident responsiveness to patient care issues, improved provider ownership of patients, EMR education, protocols for large volume of forms, appropriate staffing, improvement in discharge after visit summary, productivity metrics, restart interim BP checks with midlevels and pharmacists, improvements for medication reconciliation, and organization of ideas for viewing outcomes moving forward.

Dr. Goldsteen and Mike LaPorte of the Department of Management Development co-facilitated the retreat.

# 2010 GIM Holiday Project Brightens Season for Elderly

For the second year, the GIM Go-Givers participated in the "Angel Tree" project of Dickinson Place, a not-for-profit housing project for low-income residents 62 and older. This year the faculty and staff were able to provide gifts for 25 of the residents.

"We are very excited that ya'll wanted to sponsor us again for our Holiday Project. It was such a thrill for our residents," said Lisa

Hounsel, assistant administrator.

Each Dickinson Place resident requests three gifts each year. This year GIM faculty and staff provided items such as toasters, sweaters, bed sheets, after shave, coats, socks and gift cards.

More information on Dickinson Place is available at [www.dickinsonplace.org](http://www.dickinsonplace.org).



# Gary Reed, M.D. Appointed Chief of QI/ Safety Office

GIM's **Dr. Gary Reed** recently was appointed Chief Quality Officer of UT Southwestern's hospitals and clinics. In his new role, Dr. Reed will lead the new Office of Quality Improvement and Safety.

The Office of Quality Improvement and Safety serves to advance the University's commitment to quality patient care as well as develop educational programs that teach the science of continuous quality improvement to faculty, staff and trainees. As part of his new leadership role, Dr. Reed and other UT faculty have recently implemented a Clinical Safety and Effectiveness course that has already trained 20-plus faculty and staff.



Gary Reed, M.D., was recently appointed the chief quality officer for UT's clinics and hospitals.

"Our faculty includes some of the best and brightest physicians in the world, and I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this important aspect of the institution," said Dr. Reed.

Prior to his recent appointment, Dr. Reed had served in the role on an interim basis since January 1.

Information from the *Center Times* was used in this report.

## Division Special Deliveries

- Kiera Linn McCord was born May 21 at 8:38 a.m. She weighed 6 lbs. 8 oz. and was 19.5" long. Kiera Linn is the daughter of ambulatory physician Dr. Mary McCord.
- Dilan Kumar Desai was born Dec. 15 at 12:28 p.m. He weighed 6 lbs. 12 oz. Dilan Kumar is the son of hospitalist Dr. Christina Desai.
- Emma Mae Stevens was born Dec. 22 at 11:13 a.m. She weighed 5 pounds, 13 ounces and was 18.75 inches long. Emma is the daughter of Dr. Colleen Sam.

## GIM 2010 Staff Holiday Party

