

Inside IM

News from the Department of Internal Medicine



From the Chair

We welcome autumn and its more moderate temperatures, traditional activities like visiting pumpkin patches and picking apples, and Husker volleyball and football. Importantly for the department, many are busy teaching medical students and I encourage you to read the update from Dr. David O'Dell regarding the new and continuing roles for various faculty through the three phases of med student education.

It has been wonderful welcoming new residents to our residency program. You can read about the interns' annual retreat and find out more about wellness resources for our trainees.

[Read more](#)

Dr. Rochling named acting chief of gastroenterology and hepatology

Fedja Rochling, M.D., associate professor division of gastroenterology and hepatology, has been named acting chief of the division, effective Sept. 1. Dr. Rochling replaces Mark Mailliard, M.D., who recently stepped down. Dr. Mailliard served as chief since 2004 and will continue as an active member of the section.

"I am grateful that Dr. Rochling is willing to take on the role of acting chief," said Debra Romberger, M.D., chair of the Department of

Internal Medicine. "He has already had leadership experience at the Omaha VA Medical Center as chief of the GI section."

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Nebraska Medicine redesigns provider and patient experience

The Nebraska Medicine Patient Experience department is evolving to address the changing needs of patients and the entire care team.

Sarah Richards, M.D., has been promoted to medical director of provider and patient experience. She and Executive Director Chaise Camp will co-lead these efforts. Both have been closely involved with patient experience work at all levels of the organization for more than two years.



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Hospitalist group reports success with Process Improvement Project

Rachel Thompson, M.D., professor division of general medicine and chief of the section of hospital medicine, reported that her team has seen success with a Process Improvement Project that began just last year. Chaired by Christopher Smith, M.D., and Vasthala Juuvigunta, M.B.B.S., both assistant professors in the division of general medicine, the team took on readmissions for patients with alcohol use disorders given this subset's high readmission baseline rate.



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UNMC continues to "accelerate change in medical education"

The American Medical Association announced that it has accepted UNMC College of Medicine's application to continue its membership in the AMA Accelerating Change in Medical Education Consortium. UNMC's project has focused on transitioning interprofessional education into interprofessional practice with the goal of advancing teamwork and communication among health professionals. Kelly Caverzagie, M.D., associate professor division of general medicine, is principal investigator for UNMC in the consortium.



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Undergraduate Education Update

UNMC's medical school curriculum prepares students to meet the health care needs of patients through clinical practice, biomedical science and research, problem-solving and compassion. While those core tenets remain in place, David O'Dell, M.D., director of undergraduate education for the Department of Internal Medicine, said the curriculum is always changing.



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Honoring Dr. Jarrod Dye and resident well-being initiatives

The Department of Internal Medicine remains committed to honoring Dr. Jarrod Dye, a third year Internal Medicine resident who died of suicide February 28.

A hand-crafted bench was built by some of the Internal Medicine residents in memory of Dr. Dye. Inscribed with the Prayer of Maimonides, it was built primarily by Jakeb Riggle, M.D., an Internal Medicine resident. The bench, as well as a memorial tree and plaque gifted by the UNMC Department of Surgery, are located by the Durham Research Center.

The department also raised money for the Jarrod Dye Memorial Resident Well-Being Fund.



[Read more](#)

Dr. Klassen receives Honorary Alumnus Award

Lynell Klassen, M.D., professor division of rheumatology and immunology, received the Honorary Alumnus Award at the Alumni Celebration and Awards Banquet Sept. 22. The banquet is the culmination of the UNMC Alumni Reunion Weekend where more than 250 alumni and guests returned to Omaha and the UNMC campus.

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Drs. Bhatt and England named Great Plains IDeA-CTR Scholar Awardees

The Great Plains IDeA-Clinical Translational Research (CTR) Network at UNMC has announced five awardees for its 2018 Scholars Program grants. Vijaya Bhatt, M.D., assistant professor division of oncology and hematology, and Bryant England, M.D., assistant professor, division of rheumatology, were among the five awardees. The goal of the program, administered through a National Institutes of Health/National Institute of General Medical Sciences grant, is to develop early career researchers into independent scientists and increase the infrastructure and other resources needed to support clinical/translational research (CTR) around the region.

[Read more](#)

Dr. Mikuls receives Academic Contributions of Excellence award

Ted Mikuls, M.D., MSPH, professor division of rheumatology and immunology, received the award for Academic Contributions of Excellence (ACE) in Faculty Development by the UNMC Office of Faculty Development. He was praised for selfless mentorship, offering guidance, stressing the importance of collaboration and producing high-quality work while advancing current practices.

[Read more](#)



Dr. Florescu wins Dance for Chance competition

Diana Florescu, M.D., associate professor division of infectious disease, represented UNMC in the 2018 Youth Emergency Services (YES) Dance for a Chance competition, held August 3 at the Omaha Design Center. Dr. Florescu won the dance competition and raised more than \$5,000 for YES. Dr. Florescu and her dancing partner, Derek Pasqualetto, instructor and owner of Vintage Ballroom, competed against representatives from other local companies to raise awareness and money for YES, which provides much-needed services to hundreds of homeless youth in Omaha. Teams were awarded for the most votes (money raised) and the best dance.



Dr. Mailliard elected to ACG Board of Governors

Mark Mailliard, M.D., professor division of gastroenterology and hepatology, has been elected to the American College of Gastroenterology Board of Governors. The ACG Board of Governors, comprised of 77 Governors, is an important aspect of the College. It provides a dual-conduit to both the ACC leadership, including the Officers and the Board of Trustees, as well as to the grassroots ACG membership.

[Read more](#)



Dr. Ashraf elected to fellow in IDSA

Muhammad Ashraf, M.B.B.S., associate professor division of infectious diseases, has been elected a fellow in the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA), the nation's leading infectious diseases professional society. Fellowship in IDSA honors those who have achieved professional excellence and provided significant service to the profession. Applicants for the fellowship must be nominated by their peers and meet specified criteria that may include continuing identification with the field of infectious diseases, national or regional recognition, and publication of their



scholarly work.

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Dr. Bares now in Interprofessional Academy of Educators

Sara Bares, M.D., assistant professor division of infectious diseases, was recently inducted into the UNMC Interprofessional Academy of Educators (IAE). The IAE is a community of educators from across UNMC's campuses, representing every college and connecting educators regardless of their college or campus.

[Read more](#)



Drs. Sorrell, Mailliard co-authored chapter in latest edition of Harrison's

Mike Sorrell, M.D., and Mark Mailliard, M.D., both professors in the division of gastroenterology and hepatology are co-authors of a chapter in the recently published 20th edition of "Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine." The two-volume guide is considered the leading authority on applied pathophysiology and clinical medicine by healthcare professionals worldwide.

SURP and SUARP ended with poster presentation on August 9

On Thursday, Aug. 9, about 80 undergraduate students presented scientific posters on what they learned in the Summer Undergraduate Research Program (SURP) and Summer Undergraduate Alcohol Research Program (SUARP). The campus-wide program began June 4 and culminated with the poster presentation.

[Read more](#)



Internal Medicine In the News

A paper authored by faculty in the division of general medicine was recently published in Journal of Hospital Medicine and generated buzz in the perioperative community. The article, "[Prospective Randomized Evaluation of Preoperative Angiotensin-Converting Enzyme Inhibition \(PREOP-ACEI\)](#)" by Jason Shiffermiller, M.D., et al, explores how intraoperative hypotension is associated with an increased risk of end organ damage

and death and compares the effect of two protocols for preoperative angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitor (ACEI) management on the risk of intraoperative hypotension among patients undergoing noncardiac, nonvascular surgeries.

Laura Graeff-Armas, M.D., associate professor division of diabetes, endocrine and metabolism, was quoted in Norfolk Daily News in an article urging people to get regular checks for osteoporosis. Dr. Armas and orthopaedic surgeons at Nebraska Medicine collaborate to encourage more patients to get an osteoporosis evaluation with the goal of preventing broken bones in the future. [Read more](#)

The success of the glycemic control program was recently featured in The Hospitalist. *Andjela Drincic, M.D.*, professor division of diabetes, endocrinology and metabolism, credits “a kind of diabetic epidemiology team to focus on the data.” Dr. Drincic, medical director for diabetes stewardship and epidemiologic lead, said the team has worked systematically to improve inpatient glycemic control since 2012. In the article, Dr. Drincic said that engagement with hospitalists is also key to the glucose management project’s success. *Rachel Thompson, M.D.*, associate professor division of general medicine, participates in the glucose management project and says that glycemic control is a very important frontline quality issue. “Poor glucose control is associated with poor outcomes for our patients,” Dr. Thompson was quoted as saying in the article.

Nebraska Medicine has also received a certificate of distinction for inpatient diabetes care from the Joint Commission, and Dr. Drincic is active in Planning Research in Inpatient Diabetes (PRIDE), a national consortium of leading investigators in inpatient diabetes care formed to promote collaborative research. [Read more](#)

Introducing New Faculty

[Jennifer Medlin, M.D.](#), assistant professor division of rheumatology; [Jeremy Stone, M.D.](#), assistant professor division of cardiovascular medicine; Loretta Jophlin, M.D., assistant professor division of gastroenterology and hepatology; and [Erica Stohs, M.D.](#), assistant professor division of infectious diseases, are new faculty in the Department of Internal Medicine.

Faculty and Staff Announcements

Erin Maxwell-Snow, C-TAGME, educational programs administrator, and *Catherine Hughes-Rose*, C-TAGME, nephrology fellowship program coordinator, were both nominated as Catalysts for Education by the Interprofessional Academy of Educators. The Catalyst for Education Award recognizes the integral role of those who serve in an educational support role and values the impact made to furthering the educational mission at UNMC, promoting a premier environment, and ensuring the success of all trainees. Catherine was recognized for being the dedicated cornerstone of the UNMC Nephrology Fellowship. Erin was praised for exemplifying the highest qualities of professionalism, collaboration and inclusivity.

Allison Blatchford, C-TAGME, pediatrics residency program coordinator and rheumatology fellowship program coordinator, has been elected president of AMPPA (Association of Med-Peds Program Administrators).

Jane DeVasure, a research technologist in the division of pulmonary, critical care, sleep and allergy, is the recipient of the Gold U. DeVasure, who first started in UNMC in 1978 at the Eppley Institute, has worked at several positions at UNMC before taking on her current role. She said she has always loved working in the field of science, and UNMC is a great place to do this type of work. [Read more](#)

The following medical staff members were elected by the medical staff to serve on the

Medical Executive Committee (MEC):

Mark Rupp, M.D. - President

Lindsay Gage, M.D. – Vice President

Micah Beachy, D.O. – Secretary/Treasurer

At-Large members: *Scott Diesing, M.D.*; *Amy Jespersen, M.D.*; *Cathleen Peterson-Layne, M.D., Ph.D.*; and *Chad Vokoun, M.D.*

In order to have an orderly transition, the new members will be invited to attend MEC meetings and participate in MEC activities starting in October and will formally start in January 2019.

Internal Medicine faculty on COM 2018-19 standing committees

Internal Medicine faculty are well represented on College of Medicine standing committees for 2018-19.

[Read more](#)

Resident and Fellow Updates

Internal Medicine residents and faculty are participating in a 6-week golf league. Teams are a mixture of residents and faculty. The teams play nine holes, best ball at Elmwood Golf Course on Thursday evenings. Faculty on the losing team pay the dinner tab. All levels of golfers are welcome to participate. Contact [Cory Rohlfson, M.D.](#), chief resident, for more information.

[R. Gregory Bociek, M.D.](#), associate professor and fellowship program director division of oncology and hematology, and [Trevor Van Schooneveld, M.D.](#), associate professor and fellowship program director division of infectious diseases, were both named program director of the month.

Recent Grant Funding Announcements

Bin Duan, Ph.D., assistant professor division of cardiovascular medicine, received funding for a new R01 from the National Institutes of Health. The project, titled “3D Bioprinting of Biomimetic Constructs for Rotator Cuff Augmentation” seeks to develop living, engineered rotator cuff grafts with zonal structures and multi-scale biomechanics to promote tendon-to-bone regeneration. The team will combine biotextile and 3D bioprinting techniques to generate rotator cuff constructs with zonal cellular phenotypes and vascular patterns to promote infraspinatus rotator cuff healing in the rabbit model.

Murali Ganesan, Ph.D., instructor division of gastroenterology and hepatology, received a K01 grant from the National Institutes of Health. His project, titled “Ethanol suppresses HBV peptide-MHC Class I presentation on hepatocytes,” focuses on understanding the effects of ethanol metabolism on the expression of the HBV peptide-MHC class I complex on HBV-infected hepatocytes.

Research Updates

View the latest Internal Medicine faculty publications (in descending order by publication year and title) on [Research Nebraska](#).

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