

WHMC NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER
2025

About Us!

The Women's Health Multidisciplinary Consortium is a student led organization here at UNC.

Our mission is to create a trainee-focused, unified community of faculty, clinicians, and researchers with a vested interest in women's health research and sex-specific pathologies.

December Upcoming Events

1
Dec

Annual Wendy Brewster Memorial Seminar 9 - 10 am

6
Dec

NC Diaper Bank Volunteering 9:30 - 11:30 am

15
Dec

WHMC Core Committee Application Closes Due 11:59pm

see flyers for more info!

Hot Off the Press!

A new Danish cohort study published in JAMA Psychiatry investigated the link between a history of sexual assault and the development of Functional Somatic Disorder over the following five years. FSD refers to persistent, distressing physical symptoms that cannot be fully explained by physical findings. In this study of more than 4,200 adults, a history of sexual assault was linked to a 1.7-fold higher risk of any FSD even after adjusting for emotional distress and other psychosocial factors. The findings highlight that sexual assault can have broad and long-lasting impacts on physical health, underscoring the importance of trauma-informed care that integrates both mental-health and somatic symptom management.



Read more [here!](#)

Check out WHMC's own **Ella Brose** featured in UNC Gilling's Global Health Newsletter!

Read more [here!](#)





Ben Albright, MD, MS

Assistant Professor, Gynecology Oncology
Associate Member, UNC Lineberger Comprehensive
Cancer Center, Cancer Prevention and Control
Program



Jordyn Brown, MPH

Cancer Epidemiology Doctoral Candidate,
UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health

A Seminar in Honor of Wendy Brewster

Presented by the
Women's Health
Multidisciplinary Consortium

“Gynecological Cancers and Social Determinants of Health”

Monday, December 1st, 2025
9:00-10:00 AM in Bondurant G100

Hybrid Seminar: Join us on Zoom
Meeting ID: 922 7244 6244
Passcode: 088147



Supported by



SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

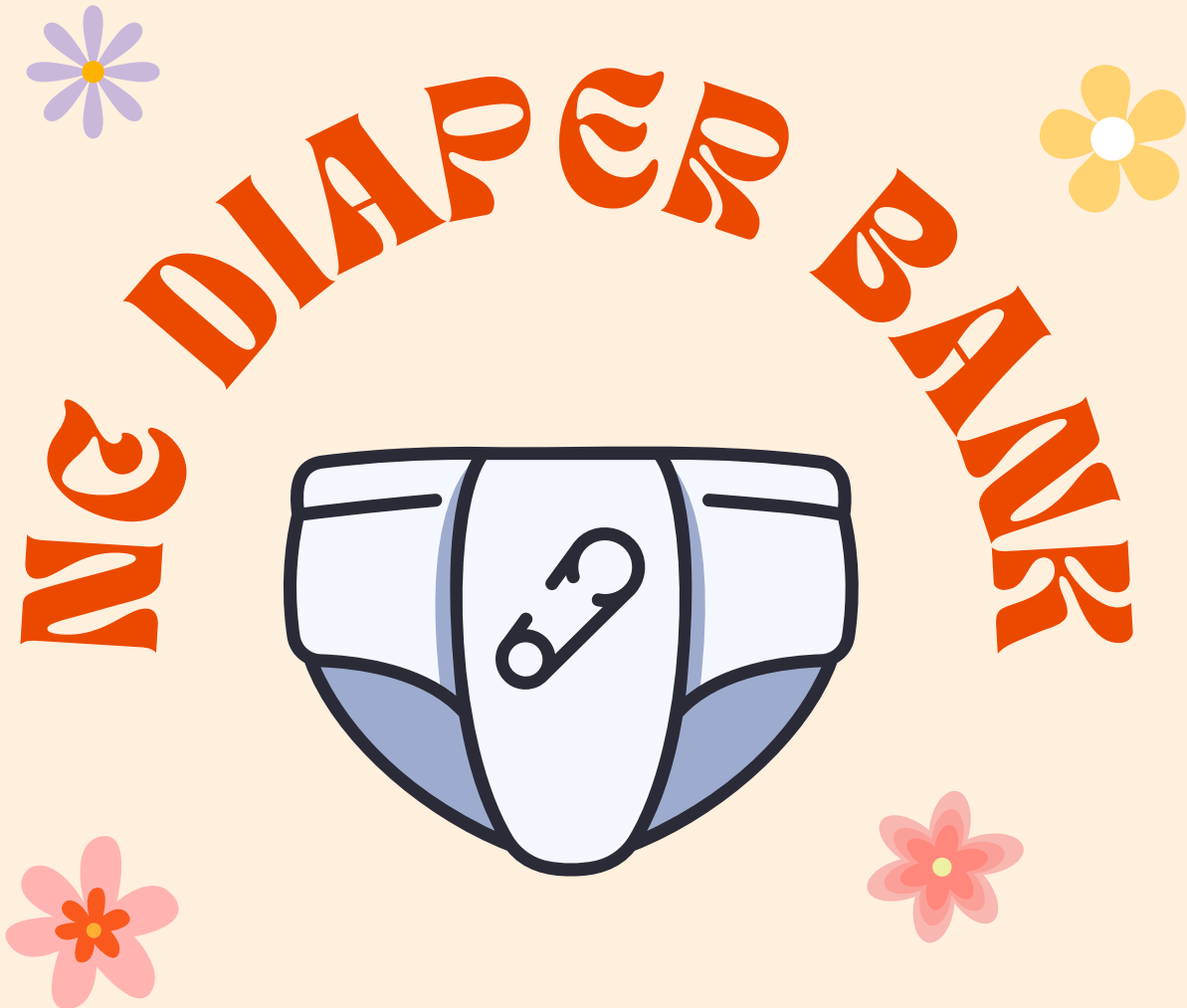
Center for Women's Health Research



SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Pathology and Laboratory Medicine

HOSTED BY WHMC AND FAMILY MEDICINE INTEREST
GROUP



[HTTPS://GO.UNC.EDU/B4DBE](https://go.unc.edu/B4DBE)
437 Dimmocks Mill Rd

JOIN US

SEPT 6TH, 9:30 - 11:30AM

OCT 18TH, 9:30 - 11:30AM

NOV 8TH, 9:30 - 11:30AM

DEC 6TH, 9:30 - 11:30AM

Want to join the **WHMC?**

We are now accepting applications for
our 2026 core committee!



Our branches:
Community Engagement
Hot Topics Seminar
Journal Club



Scholarly Concentration Program
Graduate Training Program
Fundraising

Scan the QR
code for more
info and to
apply today!



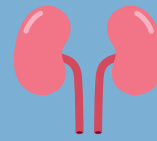
Apply by
December
15th

Open to **all** UNC students (undergrad, grad, med)
passionate about women's health

AFFILIATED FACULTY INTERVIEW:

DR. MONICA REYNOLDS, M.D.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE
DEPARTMENT OF NEPHROLOGY AND HYPERTENSION



Could you tell us briefly about your background and how it shaped your academic interests?

While in medical school, I quickly found that I enjoyed the continuity of care and high complexity of patients within internal medicine. With my background in chemistry, I was drawn towards the pathophysiology of nephrology as well as the patient population who are often vulnerable yet resilient.

As a nephrology fellow, and a new mom, I became interested in women's health and began to clinically care for pregnant women with kidney disease. I attended a transformative symposium on women's health and kidney disease organized by the American Society of Nephrology (ASN) in 2016 that shed light on the lack of knowledge and critical research gaps in this domain. I was captivated by the pioneering leaders in the field and their insights motivated me to embark on a path in academic medicine to improve maternal kidney care. I am incredibly fortunate to have had support from the UNC Kidney Center and UNC Maternal Fetal Medicine (MFM) along the way to make this a reality.

What research or other work in women's health are you involved in currently?

Along with Dr. Lauren Kucirka (UNC MFM) and others, we assessed long-term outcomes in women who delivered an infant while receiving dialysis in a national cohort. We found that individuals who experienced severe maternal morbidity in pregnancy were unfortunately less likely to receive a kidney transplant and experienced higher 10-year mortality than those who did not. This manuscript will soon appear in the Journal of the ASN.

Recently, I was awarded a small research grant to assess glomerular disease progression and the impact of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and rural/urban dwelling among women enrolled in an international longitudinal study called "CureGN".

I am also a new member of the International Society of Nephrology's "Train the Trainer Program for Pregnancy and Kidney Disease" – an international group of nephrologists passionate about women's health and kidney disease and improving the education of providers caring for these women throughout the world.

(<https://www.theisn.org/initiatives/toolkits/pregnancy-and-kidney-disease/>)

Who inspires you academically or otherwise?

Many individuals in both UNC nephrology and maternal-fetal medicine inspired me to pursue this career path and continue to inspire me to provide excellent care to our patients while seeking answers to patient-centered questions through research.

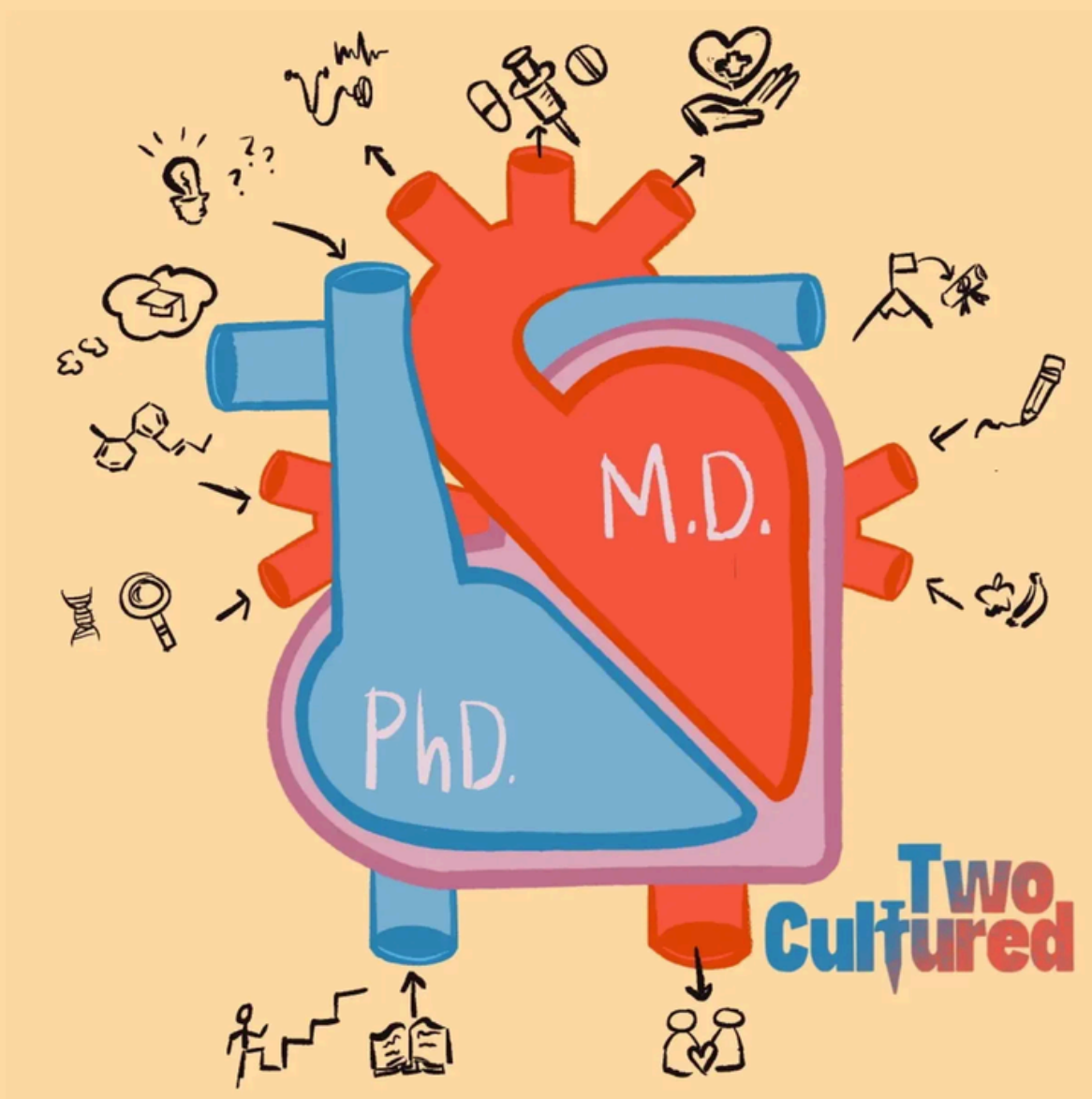
Dr. Michelle Hladunewich, a nephrologist in Toronto Canada, was an especially inspiring mentor early on as she gave me the opportunity for a brief apprenticeship in her obstetric nephrology clinic and introduced me to clinical researchers and collaborators.

My patients also inspire me – through their strength and bravery during some of the most heartbreaking and also rewarding life events.

Sharing this journey with them is both a privilege and honor.



check out this podcast featuring a WHMC member



Two Cultured is a science podcast created by a group of graduate students from UNC Chapel Hill, created with one mission: to make science more accessible and approachable for everyone. Each episode features conversations with scientists about their research—what they study, why it matters, and how it shapes the world around us—while also highlighting the human stories behind the science. With curiosity, warmth, and a sense of fun, our hosts Kavya and Akshi aim to break down barriers between the lab and the public, showing that science isn't just for scientists—it's for anyone who's curious about how the world works.

Listen on [SPOTIFY](#)

Into the Unknown: Autistic Females' Mental Health Experiences During Perimenopause



As part of the Autism, Mental Health and Perimenopause (AMP) study, the Harrop Lab has openings for student researchers interested in women's health and neurodiversity.

The AMP study uses a three-pronged, mixed-methods approach (online surveys, interviews, daily diaries) to characterize mental health challenges and health care experiences during perimenopause in autistic women.

More information regarding the study can be found [here](#).
If interested, please email Dr. Harrop at clare_harrop@med.unc.edu



Are you interested in extra pain medication during your IUD insertion?

2/3rd of volunteers in this research study will receive extra pain
medication for their IUD insertion

Who can participate?

- Women ages 18+
- Planning an IUD insertion
- Able to spend 3 hours for their appointment at UNC Hospitals-
Hillsborough campus

If chosen for the study, you will receive a giftcard for participating.

Contact our study coordinator to schedule your screening and IUD appointment!

(910) 683-0178



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: MAAME INC.'S FIRST FOODS COMMUNITY PANTRY

WE NEED HELP WITH

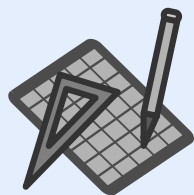
- Helping organize and pack fresh produce boxes
- Distributing boxes to families in need
- Providing support during pantry events

INTERESTED IN JOINING US?

<https://maameinc.org/volunteer/>



Mentor enrollment is **NOW OPEN** and we need your help in engaging the thinkers, makers, and doers of the next generation! The NCSSM Mentorship Program has partnered with Duke, NC State, UNC and many other organizations to serve over 3,600 high school seniors since 1980. Please join us in 2026-2027 as together we continue to impact NCSSM students from around the state!



NCSSM

The North Carolina School of Science and Math (NCSSM) is a two-year public high school that serves both online and residential students from North Carolina. It is one of the 17 constituent institutions of the UNC System.



THE NCSSM MENTORSHIP PROGRAM IS SEEKING MENTORS FOR 2026-2027!

Mentors partner with the NCSSM Mentorship Program to offer an experience for our rising seniors **to actively engage in a research project and present the project through program deliverables**. Options for program timelines include:

Summer: 8:30AM-4:00PM Mon.-Fri., from Jun. 9-Jul. 16 (with one week break over June 29-July 3rd)

Academic Year: 1:00PM-4:00PM Tues. & Thurs., from Aug.-Mar. (with break in Dec./Jan.)

Extended: Includes both summer and academic year



3600

NCSSM graduates have participated in Mentorship since 1980

70%

of Mentorship students have their **first research experience** in Mentorship

200+

mentors participate per year, including research team members such as **grad students/postdocs/research associates**

Mentor enrollment is open now, learn more!

To be successful in the program and the course assignments, students will need an active role in a research project.

Interested?

Learn more at the **NCSSM Mentorship Website!**

If you have questions or would like to schedule a time to meet with the Mentorship and Research Director, Sarah Shoemaker, don't hesitate to reach out (shoemaker@ncssm.edu).





MONTHLY CALENDAR



UNC
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

DECEMBER 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 Wendy Brewster Memorial Seminar	2	3 UNC undergrad LDOC	4	5	6 NC Diaper Bank Volunteering
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 Happy Hanukkah	15 WHMC application closes!	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24 	25 MERRY CHRISTMAS	26 JOYOUS KWANZAA	27 
28	29	30	31 	1 		

good luck with
FINALS!

COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD



NC DIAPER BANK



**LANZA'S VISION BOARD
NIGHT**



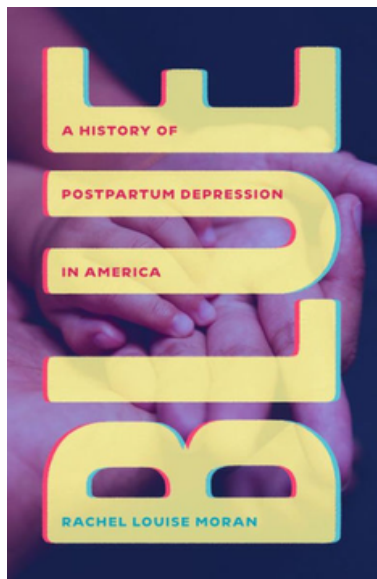
**SWING INTO FALL
DANCE LESSONS**

We had a TON of events last month, and wanted to thank everyone who came out and supported us, as well as the awesome teams who set these events up!

WHMC BOOK RECOMMENDATION OF THE MONTH

Blue: A History of Postpartum Depression in America

by Rachel Louise Moran

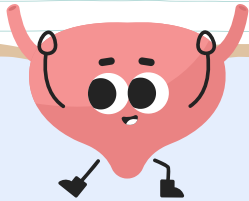


Available through UNC library.

For centuries, postpartum depression has affected mothers from all backgrounds. Birthing parents were brushed off and told their “baby blues” were a typical, benign part of parenthood. Much of the burden of raising children often falls on mothers, hindering their physical recovery and exacerbating any mental health struggles. Moran details the decades-long fight by mothers, activists, and health care professionals for recognition and support. While public awareness and therapeutic approaches have begun to improve, postpartum depression still does not have a stand-alone diagnosis in the DSM-5, reflecting how struggling birthing parents continue to be overlooked.

Fact
or
Fiction
?

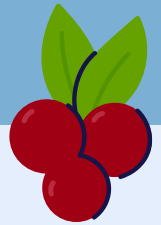
**CRANBERRY JUICE CAN
CURE UTIS**



While cranberry juice has **not** been shown to be effective in curing urinary tract infections, it has been shown to have some preventative effects. Cranberries contain proanthocyanidins (PAC), which is an antioxidant and anti-inflammatory that can make it more difficult for bacteria to adhere to the lining of your bladder.

While the preventative effects of cranberry juice continue to be studied, some studies have found that a minimum of 36mg of PACs daily is required to show any effect.

Read more [here](#)!



GET INVOLVED WITH THE WHMC!



Visit our website!

Submit your work, recent publications, upcoming events, and more **here** to be featured in our monthly newsletter!



Share the WHMC listserv with others!

It's your WHMC communication engagement team here!

We're looking for your submissions! This is a space for a community bulletin – a place to look for research or work positions, fill professional needs, submit shoutouts, and submit photos to be used in future newsletters!

Kate Aberman



Sarah Rebbeor



Kylie Hutchison



Mehnaz Shafquat



Emily Perou

