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FALL NEWSLETTER DATES:
August, September and October of 2020

UNC DEPARTMENT OF SURGERY

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Abdominal Transplant Surgery
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Burn Surgery
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On the cover: Dr. Lynn Damitz.
Photo by Brian Strickland.
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Dr. Raff performing ECMO on a COVID-19 patient.
DEPARTMENT OF SURGERY

by the numbers

*Research + Publication data from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020

78
FACULTY

55
ADVANCED PRACTICE PROVIDERS

84
TRAINEES

231
PUBLICATIONS

75
STAFF

$801,924
CLINICAL TRIAL DOLLARS

$3,190,697
FEDERAL GRANT DOLLARS

50
RESEARCHERS

74
GRANT SUBMISSIONS

$4,265,148
TOTAL RESEARCH GRANT DOLLARS
MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

On October 7, 2020, I delivered our annual State of the Department Address. Even though I presented virtually, the impact of all that we have accomplished still resonates. I continue to feel humbled by the opportunity to work with such skilled professionals and so it gives me great joy to share with you some highlights of our past academic year achievements in research, education and clinical care.

The Department of Surgery received new research funding totaling $6,279,939 in FY20. Currently, the department receives $3.1 million in direct funding annually from federal research grants, and has a total annual research budget of $4.3 million—a 7-fold increase over the past five years. Our clinical trial dollars also contributed just over $800K to innovative patient care. Surgery faculty continue to increase the number of their grant submissions, activity that ultimately translates into increased awards. As a result, we have moved up in the Blue Ridge rankings for NIH funding to Departments of Surgery from #44 in 2018 to #32 in 2019. In addition, our faculty collectively contributed to universal medical knowledge by publishing over 230 articles in national and international journals. Perhaps the greatest encouragement to me is that every year more residents are inspired to pursue research fellowships. This year, residents Xavier Baldwin, Joshua Herb, Joseph Kearney, and Brittney Williams received national funding, and Ian Kratzke received an award for Excellence in Research from the American College of Surgeons. It is gratifying that we are training future surgeon-scientists to discover innovative treatments and cures for surgical disease to help patients worldwide.

Similarly, our educational endeavors have been focused and intentional. I am happy to report that in the past two years, we have more than doubled the number of medical students who apply to surgery residency programs, a trend we expect to continue. We proudly can attribute this impressive growth to our award-winning faculty and resident teachers. In addition to our departmental awards, Drs. Stephanie Downs-Canner, Jason Long, David Overby, and Luigi Pascarella all received institutional honors for exceptional teaching. Residents Stephanie Gray and Audrey Khoury received this year’s Kaiser Permanente Excellence in Teaching award, and Hadley Wilson received the UNC Learning Environment award. Additionally, Surgery celebrates its fourth year as Best Application Phase Course for Hospital, Interventional and Surgical Care. Most notably this year we established the Erle E. Peacock, Jr., MD Fund for Excellence in Surgical Education & Career Development which was awarded to Ian Kratzke, MD. We are grateful to have this generous support from the Peacock family in honor of their father’s legacy (see article on page 9).

Clinically, the Department of Surgery continues to do well despite the ongoing challenges of the pandemic. We are delivering substantially more clinical care compared to the same time period of the prior year. In FY20, Drs. Mahesh Sharma and Andrea Hayes-Jordan received the Triangle Business Journal’s Health Care Hero Award, and Dr. Trista Reid received the UNC Carolina Care Multi-Level Rounding Award. Though these are just a few examples of recognition, all of our providers deserve the highest praise for their hard work and commitment to exceptional patient care. With all that we do in the clinics and operating rooms, it is important to take a moment to remember the good that comes from our acts of service, such as working with burn-injured children at Camp Celebrate 2020 (see page 15) or implementing comprehensive and lifelong patient therapies, such as Ben Haithcock’s training program for service dogs (see page 15). There is no doubt that we remain dedicated to improving the lives, health and wellbeing of the citizens of North Carolina.

Nationally, our faculty continue to have an impact with several rising to leadership positions in prominent surgical societies: Dr. Don Nakayama assumed the position as Treasurer and Dr. Anthony Charles assumed the position as Governor of the American College of Surgeons. Dr. Andrea Hayes-Jordan is the new President of the Society of Black Academic Surgeons. Dr. Bill Marston became President-Elect of the Southern Association for Vascular Surgery and Vice President of the American Venous Forum. Others gained significant board memberships: Dr. Chirag Desai to the National Liver Review Board and Dr. Andrea Hayes-Jordan to the National Cancer Advisory Board and American Pediatric Surgery Association Board. It was also a productive year for academic promotions: Drs. Kristalyn Gallagher, Jason Long and Jeyhan Wood promoted to associate professors, and Drs. Chirag Desai and Ben Haithcock to the rank of professor. Specifically, we recognize Dr. Lynn Damitz, professor and chief of the Division of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, who received the Ethel F. and James A. Valone Distinguished Professorship (see page 6). Though appointed during the last academic year, we kept waiting for the best time to host her investiture ceremony; the pandemic had other plans and so we now proudly celebrate her accomplishment with a featured article.

We are also delighted to welcome two new faculty members to our department: Dr. Jacob Wood, assistant professor of Vascular Surgery and Dr. Matthew Eckert, assistant professor for General and Acute Care Surgery. Dr. Wood has a particular interest in human anatomy and physiology and his publication credits include anatomical illustrations for three textbooks. Dr. Eckert joins us as former Trauma Medical Director and Chief of General Surgery Clinics at Madigan Army Medical Center. Eckert’s inclusion as a faculty member is an important part of a new collaboration between the UNC Medical Center and the Womack Army Medical Center (see page 10) led by Dr. Daryhl Johnson.

Finally, and with great enthusiasm, I announce that our Surgery Education Center will be open in December (see page 12)! I am excited to see how this new space will enhance our research, education and clinical care activities throughout the years to come.

Sincerely,

Melina R. Kibbe, MD, FACS, FAHA
Colin G. Thomas Jr. Distinguished Professor and Chair
Department of Surgery
Professor, Department of Biomedical Engineering
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Lynn Damitz, MD,
Honored as the Ethel F. and James A. Valone, MD, Distinguished Professor of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery

“Dedicated...skillful...compassionate...leader.” These are the words repeatedly used to describe Dr. Lynn Damitz by her colleagues, mentors, and family members. While we had hoped to hold an investiture ceremony to remember Dr. and Mrs. Valone, recognize the accomplishments of Dr. Damitz, and endow her with the Ethel F. and James A. Valone, MD, Distinguished Professor of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, due to the COVID-19 pandemic we were not able to do so. Thus, we reached out to her family, friends, and colleagues to celebrate her accomplished career—which now includes this prestigious endowed professorship.

Distinguished professorships symbolize the value placed on the recipient's research and scholarship, teaching and service. The Valone professorship was established in 1994 by Ethel F. and James A. Valone, MD. Distinguished Professor of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, due to the COVID-19 pandemic we were not able to do so. Thus, we reached out to her family, friends, and colleagues to celebrate her accomplished career—which now includes this prestigious endowed professorship.

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Distinguished professorships symbolize the value placed on the recipient's research and scholarship, teaching and service. The Valone professorship was established in 1994 by Ethel F. and James A. Valone, MD. Dr. Valone (1913-2012) was a New York state native who trained at the University of Buffalo and the University of Michigan. In 1951, while he had a general surgery practice in Lexington, NC, he decided to pursue a residency in plastic surgery. At that time, there were almost no places to train as a plastic surgeon in the South, so he went to Washington University in St. Louis. After completing his plastic surgery training in 1953, Dr. Valone was the first plastic surgeon to open a practice in Raleigh. After an illustrious career, he retired in 1996. Ethel Fielder Valone (1922-2016) was born in Macon, GA and met her future husband at a military ball in Atlanta during World War II. Together, the Valones maintained many friendships in the UNC School of Medicine over the years. Mrs. Valone derived her greatest satisfaction from her family and by helping her husband, for decades, serve the needs of his many patients.

“I knew I wanted to be a physician since sixth grade.” Dr. Damitz started out just wanting to do research for a cousin who had cystic fibrosis. That turned into a lifelong dream of helping others. Lynn’s parents, Corinne and Joseph Damitz, confirm that this dream began at an early age, due in large part to her capacity for problem-solving, excellent listening skills, sense of responsibility, and generosity. They’re justifiably proud, saying, “Lynn is a blessing to our family, the community, and inspiring to many.”

Dr. Damitz obtained her Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Notre Dame, where she currently holds an adjunct faculty appointment in the Pre-Professional Studies Program and provides advisory support to the Hillebrand Center for Compassionate Care in Medicine. After graduating from college, she matriculated to Hahnemann University School of Medicine in Philadelphia to obtain her medical training. She then came to UNC and completed a general surgery followed by plastic surgery residency. Current faculty member Dr. Mark Koruda commented, “It has been an absolute joy to see her growth and maturation as a surgeon over all these years as a resident, fellow, junior faculty member and now Division Chief. She is a skilled...
Dr. Michel Zenn was a UNC Assistant Professor during Dr. Damitz’ residency, and recalls “Lynn was one of my first residents as new faculty at UNC and it has been so amazing watching her develop in her career, not only as an accomplished academician but a national leader in plastic surgery. As a mentor, having one of your own succeed at this level is truly gratifying and Lynn is well deserving of the accolade.”

Following her residency training in Chapel Hill, she completed additional advanced plastic surgery fellowships focused on breast and aesthetics, in both Charlotte, NC and Nashville, TN. While in Charlotte, she was mentored by Dr. William Mullis. He remembers Dr. Damitz as “…one of the best fellows that rotated on our program. She was smart, diligent, personable, and determined—all the qualities to make a leader. She has grown and matured in her position at UNC, contributed to our national society, and has become a respected, skillful and responsible academic plastic surgeon.”

Another mentor, Dr. Jack Fisher, sent his congratulations: “Dr. Damitz demonstrates a compassion for patients, a passion for teaching as well as being a highly skilled surgeon.”

-Jack Fisher, MD

“I do my work because I love it and want to do what’s best for people. It’s that simple.” As a plastic surgeon, Dr. Damitz is actively involved in all facets of her field including various oncologic reconstructions from head to toe, hand and facial trauma reconstruction, treatment and reconstruction of wounds related to malignancies, as well as complex skin conditions. As Director of the UNC Aesthetic, Laser, and Burn Center (ALBC), Dr. Damitz has been instrumental in fostering the unique experience of state-of-the-art cosmetic surgery, reconstructive surgery, non-surgical rejuvenation, and laser treatment. She has received numerous awards over the years for her clinical work, such as American Registry Patient’s Choice Award as one of NC’s favorite physicians, Patient’s Choice Most Compassionate Doctor Certificate of Appreciation, and Carolina Care Excellence, to name a few. It is obvious that the ongoing recognition for her service and the acknowledgement of her technical skills in such a complex subspecialty highlights her innovative and thoughtful approach for exceptional patient care.

“Our is a nurturing, supportive environment
“Dr. Damitz is an excellent clinician and researcher, but also a dedicated leader. She goes above and beyond for her team and ensures that our interests, and those of our patients, are protected. She is an involved leader who leads by example and creates opportunities for junior faculty.”

Gene Deune, Professor

“Dr. Damitz has been an excellent leader for UNC Plastic Surgery. She is very thorough and attentive to details and values the opinions of others. She has the confidence and respect of her peers at UNC and the residents.”

Nishant Bhatt, Assistant Professor

“Lynn is a tireless and devoted surgeon who embodies the spirit of patient ownership and conscientiousness. While undertaking a daunting clinical practice, she has heralded our division through unprecedented circumstances during the pandemic. Today, with the slew of new faculty hires, our division is stronger than ever. And this occurred under Lynn’s watch.”

Jennifer Carr, Assistant Professor

“I have worked with Dr. Damitz for several years now and it is clear there is no one more committed to UNC and this division than her. She is very proud of the care we deliver and has worked hard to recruit well-rounded surgeons with varying specialties who are dedicated to the betterment of our division and our residency program. She is a great leader who truly cares about us professionally and personally.”

Jeyhan Wood, Associate Professor

“It has been a great pleasure for me to work side-by-side with Dr. Damitz in building a nationally recognized Division of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. Her commitment to the patients, trainees, faculty and staff is heartfelt and sincere. The division has seen tremendous success under her leadership and I can’t wait to see what is to come. Dr. Lynn Damitz, it is with great pleasure and honor that I now endow you as the Ethel F. and James A. Valone, MD, Distinguished Professor of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. I am confident that Dr. and Mrs. Valone would be extremely proud of you carrying on their great legacy.” - Dr. Melina Kibbe, Chair, Department of Surgery.

“Dr. Damitz is an excellent clinician and researcher, but also a dedicated leader. She goes above and beyond for her team and ensures that our interests, and those of our patients, are protected. She is an involved leader who leads by example and creates opportunities for junior faculty.”

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Dr. Erle E. Peacock, Jr. was a surgeon, lawyer, educator and lifelong learner whose legacy will live on for years to come, helping to educate surgeons and care for people.

Foundation of a Division
The story of the Division of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery at UNC starts with Dr. Erle Peacock, Jr., a native to Chapel Hill. Dr. Peacock was recruited to UNC Hospital by Dr. Nathan Womack, the first Chairman of the Department of Surgery at UNC. Dr. Peacock completed the two-year medical school curriculum at UNC and finished medical school at Harvard. After training in general surgery in New York City, Chapel Hill, and later in St. Louis with an emphasis on wound healing, Dr. Peacock returned to UNC and slowly developed the Division of Plastic Surgery.

From his previous experience with military service at Valley Forge General Hospital, Dr. Peacock developed innovative operative techniques in hand surgery, which he later applied to reconstructive surgery, and became the foundation of the Division’s strengths in wound healing and hand surgery. Dr. Peacock recognized the need for an academic training program in the early days of the Division, and developed a laboratory concentrating on wound-healing research, which quickly became recognized nationally and internationally for its endeavors.

Dr. Peacock was with the UNC Department of Surgery from 1956 until 1969 when he accepted a position as Chairman of the Department of Surgery at the University of Arizona. He returned to Chapel Hill and UNC later in his life when he retired from Surgery to complete his law degree and worked with faculty and residents at UNC School of Medicine in a legal capacity.

Continuing a Legacy
The children of the late Erle E. Peacock, Jr., MD, are working with Erin Kinney, Director of Development with the UNC Health Foundation, on a variety of projects to continue their father’s legacy. They have provided funds for the Malawi Pediatric Initiative to support the improvement of pediatric care and reduction of childhood mortality rates at Kamuzu Central Hospital in Lilongwe, Malawi. They also contributed to the Malawi Surgical Initiative, a program that trains surgeons to provide much needed care to people in sub-Saharan Africa.

Within the UNC Department of Surgery the family has established a Distinguished Lectureship because they felt one of their father’s biggest gifts was his influence as a teacher. The lectureship will allow for visiting surgeons to speak at the Department’s Grand Round events and should hopefully go into effect next year when visiting professors will be welcomed back on campus safely.

Most recently they established an Erle E. Peacock, Jr., MD Scholar Award, a fund for surgical education and career development. The inaugural recipient of the award is Ian Kratzke, MD, a general surgery resident. Dr. Kratzke will use his award to complete a Master of Health Professions Education (MHPE) Program at the University of Illinois.

“"I am deeply honored to have received the Erle E. Peacock, Jr., MD Scholar Award. Dr. Peacock’s devotion to teaching represents a level of commitment to the field of surgery that I aspire to accomplish,” says Dr. Kratzke. “The inauguration of this ongoing award at UNC demonstrates the Department of Surgery’s mission to foster not only excellent surgeons, but also surgical educators. This award will greatly assist in my efforts to pursue a Masters degree. It is my hope that the experiences afforded to me by this award will help to guide other residents and faculty at UNC to follow their interests in surgical education and learn from Dr. Peacock. Thank you to the Peacock family for their generosity, kindness and incredible support.”

Dr. Kratzke will complete this Master’s degree during his two years of dedicated professional development time focusing on surgical education, resident well-being, surgical communication, and empathy. He ultimately plans to pursue a career as a trauma/critical care surgeon with an academic focus on surgical education.

“We wanted to do something to honor our dad’s contribution to both patient care and his dreams for novel ideas for surgical education, which he never saw fulfilled,” says Susan Peacock, daughter. “When we were thinking of a way to honor him, UNC was foremost in our mind because of the impact the leadership and program had on him throughout his life.”

“When we decided to put his estate to work in a philanthropic way, it was almost automatic to look towards UNC Surgery as an outlet,” explains James Peacock, MD, son and Professor of Surgery at the University of Rochester. “We feel like the success of UNC and particular the medical school and surgery department was something very near and dear to our dad. Of all the many things that he did, overall his biggest impact was his influence on people, most particularly students and fellows. He influenced and inspired them to be the best they can be. That is why we put our greatest emphasis on the education scholarship.”

For questions about philanthropy please contact Erin Kinney at (585) 622-7425.
UNC Health, U.S. Army Establish Trauma Training Partnership

Collaboration will help military medical providers prepare to save lives

UNC Health announced in a special ceremony on Veterans Day a new partnership with the U.S. Army that will allow military medical personnel to receive trauma training at UNC Medical Center. The goal is to help military surgeons and other care providers better prepare to treat traumatic injuries, such as gunshot wounds, burns and more, and ultimately save lives.

UNC Medical Center and the UNC School of Medicine providers will train the U.S. Army’s Forward Resuscitation Surgical Teams (FRSTs) and other medical personnel from U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) assigned to the 44th Medical Brigade, Fort Bragg, N.C. As a busy, nationally recognized Level I Trauma Center and Burn Center, UNC Medical Center will help military personnel learn from real-world experience, with trauma surgeons and other providers helping educate them on best practices, the importance of clear communications and fast decision making, and more. They will get experience in UNC Medical Center’s emergency department, operating rooms and ICUs.

This novel military-civilian partnership will focus on training multidisciplinary medical personnel: physicians, nurses, emergency medical technicians and others. Military and civilian health providers will work together to enhance patient care through mutual training, sharing best practices and innovation between two renowned military and civilian healthcare entities.

“This type of life-saving preparation is critically important, and we are honored to help support the men and women of our military,” said Dr. Wesley Burks, CEO of UNC Health. “As these providers move forward to conduct America’s missions I am confident the training they will receive here at UNC Health and UNC School of Medicine will enable them to provide outstanding care to fellow soldiers. This designation reflects the dedication and talent of our physicians and our co-workers, and reinforces the important role we play in helping train our state’s and nation’s future providers.”

The Army Medical Department (AMEDD) Medical Skills Sustainment Program (AMSSP) provides opportunities for Army medical personnel to work in busy Level 1 trauma centers alongside their civilian counterparts to care for patients who have suffered severe trauma or are critically ill.

“The military generally cares for a young healthy population, so we don’t see a lot of trauma in our Army hospitals,” said Maj. Gen. Telita Crosland, Deputy Surgeon General. “The opportunity to maintain a high degree of skills proficiency in trauma and critical care is essential.”
Military-civilian partnerships are a critical part of ensuring the readiness of the nation’s military medical force to save lives on the battlefield in times of war. The agreement between UNC Health and Army Medicine has the potential to impact far beyond improved battlefield trauma care. By working and training together there will be a sharing of expertise and experience that will improve trauma care for both military service members and civilians. It also provides the opportunity to strengthen and improve both health systems. The collaboration is a foundation of preparedness for response to national disasters and crises such as the ongoing COVID pandemic.

The first formal partnership for this program has begun with Dr. Matthew Eckert, Assistant Professor of Surgery and Lieutenant Colonel (P) US Army Medical Corps. Dr. Eckert has been provided a appointment within the Department acting as an embedded physician in the program, a first for the Army. Other trauma surgeons will also be training with UNC Surgery in a rotational capacity. The Department has also created a Critical Care fellowship spot dedicated to the Army training program. Currently the spot is filled by Ronald Hardin, MD, Colonel (P) US Army Medical Corps. There is a team of two medics, two nurses, and two OR techs doing rotation through UNC Medical Center before they deploy.

“I am one of the guinea pigs to get these programs started,” said Dr. Eckert. The intent of beginning these programs was to find folks who have an academic surgical background, who can blend easily into a university setting, where all these programs are. UNC has welcomed me with open arms. That’s the start of relationships that are key to getting the first few people in these military-civilian collaboration programs settled and working efficiently. Establishing these relationships allows us to then, in turn, provide meaningful educational experiences for people who rotate through after us.”

The partnership developed in large part due to the efforts of Dr. Daryhl Johnson, medical director of the UNC Medical Center Trauma Program. He will help lead the military-civilian partnership at UNC Health. Two years ago the trauma center at Fort Bragg was looking for support to help turn their trauma center into a level 3 unit. They called the UNC Surgery team and Dr. Johnson collaborated with them as a consultant. That opened the door to conversations that eventually led to the official current partnership.

This will be the seventh military-civilian training partnership established in the United States to date. “This is the most extensive training partnership the Army has established so far,” explains Dr. Johnson. “What we are building here will not only be a model for the Army but for other branches of the military as well. With the help of Al Bonafacio, the Trauma Program Manager, we have established a great culture within our Trauma Program that works seamlessly with this training program we have established.”

Eventually, there are plans to establish the UNC Trauma Military Education Immersion Center, or MEDIC, at UNC Medical Center. “We expect our partnership will be a model for similar initiatives across the country,” Dr. Johnson said. “We are proud to provide a place to train our military medical providers, while learning from them, and helping build a solid future for our nation’s military readiness.”
We are pleased to report the completion of a multi-year construction project that will move UNC Surgery to the forefront of surgical innovation and clinical care excellence. This Surgery Education Center includes state-of-the-art conference rooms, a large educational theater, a new lobby, and additional office and hoteling spaces. “Not only did we strive to create a feature-rich space with all the amenities of a great conference room, but we truly wanted to create an environment that focused on education,” said Dr. Kibbe. “This project helps to advance our goal of enriching the overall academic environment and trainee experience.”

Connecting our surgeons to their peers for collaboration was a priority, but we also wanted a way to incorporate live camera feeds, telemetry data, imaging, and seamless 2-way communication between the operating rooms and our Surgery Education Center. With the design and construction of UNC’s new Surgical Tower slated to open in early 2024, we will have full AV connectivity with all the tower’s operating rooms. This ability will create tremendous teaching opportunities for trainees, faculty, and community surgeons.

“We prioritized intuitive design so that our surgeons can easily engage with the interactive technology,” said Christopher Ferrer, AV Engineer with the UNC School of Medicine. Technical features of the upgraded space include a dramatic 24’ direct-view LED videowall, a custom-designed interactive intelligent lectern, a full-featured control room, an acoustic wave ceiling, glass whiteboards, digital signage and full AVoIP connectivity. AV over IP (AVoIP) is a newer technology that allows video presentations to easily be routed and shared to surrounding department conference spaces and offices over our enterprise data network.

“Partnering with the Department of Surgery in the design and construction of this exceptional academic learning environment was exciting for School of Medicine IT,” said Uduak Ndoh, Associate Dean for IT and CIO. “My hope is that this space will provide our faculty and learners a unique and effective way to collaborate.”
Instagram is a free photo and video sharing social media application. UNC Surgery started an Instagram account @uncsurgery on September 3rd. The account was created as the next step in our social media strategy to connect to more individuals including potential patients, residents, and potential residents and fellows.

The Department was inspired to start our account because of the amazing work of our residents. Our residency programs including General Surgery, Cardiothoracic Surgery, Plastic Surgery, and Vascular Surgery have been doing a fantastic job of posting great content about their faculty, residents and the amazing dedicated work they do every day in the operating room. Thank you to all the residents who have participated and shared content on the accounts.

Cardiothoracic Surgery residency started their account @unc_ct_surgery in November of 2019. However, this past September is when they really started to ramp up their postings thanks to the effort of Catharine McDermott, PGY5 CT resident.

The General Surgery residency program @uncgensurgeryresidency has Mary Kate Bryant, PGY4 resident, to thank for the wonderful stream of content being shared on their account. They started their account in July and already have close to 1000 followers.

The Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Residency program @uncplasticsurgery Instagram account was created in May by Karishma Reddy, PGY 6 Plastics resident. She has been sharing impactful content ever since its inception.

The Vascular Surgery Residency program @uncvascular surgery recently started their account in October. The account is managed by Colby Ruiz, PGY2 Vascular resident.

What makes these accounts so unique is that we get to learn more about our people, not just their skills and expertise but who they are on a personal level; their hobbies, fun facts, favorite foods and more. We’ve even gotten to see photos of recent weddings, births, adventures in the NC area. That is so very special to us and we appreciate everyone’s efforts to showcase UNC Surgery and what we offer.
Camp Celebrate 2020 is usually a weekend camp for children ages 7 - 15 who have survived burn injuries. In its 39th year, Camp Celebrate is the country’s oldest camp for pediatric burn survivors. This year, however, looked very different than in years past. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic organizers had to make some tough decisions about Camp to keep the tradition alive for its campers.

Unlike past years, Camp consisted of a one day event that included 45 campers, 12 counselors and 4 staff. Check-in happened at Camp Kanata in place of the usual, very large, firetruck parade. Parents drove their kids into camp under a huge American flag displayed by a couple of firetrucks and remained in the cars as Kanata staff performed screenings (questions and temps taken). Masks were worn by everyone throughout the day.

Activities included kayaking, canoeing, rock throwing, archery, lake time/swimming with a huge water slide and bouncy blob, climbing wall, putt-putt golf, etc. Organizers did have a performer (Flow Circus) come out to entertain the campers and teach them juggling tricks with flop balls, which every camper and counselor received.

“The wanted to do something to give back to the community and embrace our passion of four legged dogs,” says Dr. Haithcock, which is why he and his wife contacted Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind and connected with Christina Musser, a Triangle Area Coordinator. “Those interested in being trainers fill out an online application,” explains Christina. “The Foundation vets the applicants and then sends potential trainers to me.”

From there she walks them through the process and does a home visit to help with puppy proofing. Once the animal is placed they do monthly training sessions to help the trainers best work with the dogs.

In April of 2020 Dr. Benjamin Haithcock, Professor and Surgical Director for UNC Lung Transplant Program, took on a new responsibility. This one didn’t involve the medical field but instead, he and his wife became service dog trainers, welcoming Sansa, a three-month-old black lab puppy, into their home.

The Haithcocks are not newbies when it comes to taking care of dogs, having two greyhounds in their home already. However, this was the first time they decided to take on the challenge of housing and training a service guide dog.

“We wanted to do something to give back to the community and embrace our passion of four legged dogs,” says Dr. Haithcock, which is why he and his wife contacted Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind and connected with Christina Musser, a Triangle Area Coordinator. “Those interested in being trainers fill out an online application,” explains Christina. “The Foundation vets the applicants and then sends potential trainers to me.”

From there she walks them through the process and does a home visit to help with puppy proofing. Once the animal is placed they do monthly training sessions to help the trainers best work with the dogs.

Now at 10 months old Sansa is a regular fixture at UNC Medical Center. She has her yellow vest and accompanies Dr. Haithcock on rounds as well as sees patients in the clinic with him. “We’ve been all over the hospital and it’s been good training for her to get used to other people, see things on the floor, medical equipment and stuff like that,” says Dr. Haithcock. “I think it’s been a pretty great experience for her.”

“I do have to remind people not to touch the dog,” explains Dr. Haithcock. “Sansa is a cool looking black lab and so friendly and wants to greet everyone but we are trying to train her to stay focused and on the job and not get distracted. What’s been awesome is that the residents have gotten used to her and see her like just another intern.”

Sansa is learning right along Dr. Haithcock on this journey. We wish them luck and ask that those that encounter Sansa in the hospital appreciate her cuteness but give her space to do her job.
HIGHLIGHTS & HONORS FACULTY

Booker T. King, MD
Professor and Chief, Division of Burn Surgery, elected Vice Chair for Burn Surgery to the North Carolina Committee in Trauma (NC-COT)

Michael Meyers, MD
Professor, Division of Surgical Oncology, was elected to the American College of Surgeons Board of Governors as the Surgical Specialty Society Governor from the Southeastern Surgical Congress (SeSC)

GRANTS & AWARDS FACULTY & RESIDENTS

Trista Reid, MD
Assistant Professor, Division of General Surgery, won the FY20 Carolina Care Award

Ian Kratzke, MD
Resident, General Surgery PGY4, is the Inaugural Recipient of the Erle E. Peacock, Jr., MD Award

The Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS) program received recognition for institutional spread and sustainability as part of the UNC Medical Center Quality and Safety awards program. This program developed out of a desire from senior leadership to recognize quality improvement efforts across the Medical Center, including both inpatient and outpatient services.

“The ERAS team is so proud to have received the UNC Medical Center Quality and Safety Award for institutional spread and sustainability of our enhanced recovery program,” says Dr. Katharine McGinigle, Surgical Director of the ERAS program. “In addition to the many pathways in the general surgery department, now all surgical departments are using ERAS. Now that ERAS concepts have spread throughout the institution, we will focus in on sustaining and improving the existing pathways. The ERAS team aims to help each of you elevate the quality care that you provide. Thank you for your support!”

Desai Included as Panelist on Global Summit of Indian Scientists and Academics

By Carleigh Gabryel, appeared in Vital Signs November 4, 2020

The Vaishvik Bharatiya Vaigyanik (VAIBHAV) Summit of international scientists of Indian origin was a nearly month-long initiative of the prime minister of India, and sought to create a broader ecosystem of knowledge and innovation in the country through global interactions. Chirag Desai, MD, Professor of Surgery, was invited to give an expert opinion and proposal for the development of Cell Transplant Programs.

The VAIBHAV Summit took place virtually Oct. 3-31st and included deliberations held under a structured framework of 80 subjects including health and medical sciences. The goal was to create a framework for systematic and objective driven collaboration between international academia with Indian roots and current Indian residents to pave the way for the country’s advancement in academics and scientific research.

Chirag Desai, Surgical Director of UNC’s Liver Transplant and Autologous Islet Cell Transplant Program, discussed the mechanism to lay the foundation for developing a cell isolation facility for a clinical program, how to help with standard operating procedure guideline development, establishing a clinical program, and also discussed the potential of research collaboration in the field.
Dr. Wood received his Bachelor of Science degree from Weber State University summa cum laude in 2009. His medical degree was awarded from Boston University in 2013. He then completed his General Surgery residency at the University of Connecticut, followed by a Vascular Surgery fellowship at the Medical College of Wisconsin, which he completed in July 2020.

Dr. Wood joins our Department of Surgery as a vascular and endovascular surgeon in the Division of Vascular Surgery. Dr. Wood has a particular interest in human anatomy and physiology. As an undergraduate, he served as a Human Anatomy instructor and Laboratory Coordinator and received the Arnold Award in Human Anatomy. Art is part of his life, creating medical illustrations for book chapters and journal articles. His publication credits include medical illustrations for three textbooks. Read more about Dr. Wood in his interview.

Dr. Eckert received his BS and BA degrees from Saint Louis University in 2000 and a medical degree from Loyola University in 2004. He completed his general surgery residency at Madigan Army Medical Center in 2010, followed by critical care and trauma/acute care surgery fellowships at Vanderbilt University in 2012. This year, he completed a Master of Health Professions Education (MHPE) program through the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences.

Dr. Eckert joins our Department of Surgery in the Division of General and Acute Care. He was most recently the Trauma Medical Director and Chief of General Surgery Clinics at Madigan Army Medical Center, an active duty Lieutenant Colonel in the US Army and Assistant Professor of Surgery at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences. Dr. Eckert served numerous combat deployments in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Africa with the United States Special Operations Command. Read more about Dr. Eckert in his interview.

Jessica Johnson
Advanced Practice Provider
Surgical Oncology

Jessica received her Bachelor of Science in Biology from the University of Florida in 2010 and went back to get her Bachelor of Science in Nursing in 2012. She completed her Masters in Nursing in 2019 from UNC Chapel Hill. She has over seven years of bedside nursing, mostly in the ICU. She has worked in the Surgical ICU and Medicine progressive units at UF, and the PACU and MICU at UNC Medical Center in Chapel Hill. Ocala, FL will always be home, but she has her heels stuck in the NC tar. She enjoys walks in the woods with her two Australian Shepherds, cheering on the Florida Gators, and spending time with family.

Cameron Wilson
Advanced Practice Provider
Burn ICU Surgery

Cameron received his Bachelor of Science from Grand Valley State University and went on to get his Masters degree in Physician Assistant Studies from Penn State Hershey College of Medicine. He has experience as a Wound Care Tech at Spectrum Regional Burn Center in Grand Rapids, MI, a Physician Assistant in the Burn ICU Leigh Valley Health Network in Allentown, PA and at Arkansas Children’s Hospital in Little Rock, AR. A fun fact about Cameron is that he used to play in an 80’s cover band. He enjoys playing the drums, renovating houses, fantasy football and boating/water skiing.


PUBLICATIONS | CARDIOThorACIC CONTINUED


PUBLICATIONS | GASTROINTESTINAL


PUBLICATIONS | GENERAL & ACUTE CARE


PUBLICATIONS | PEDIATRIC


**Dates:** August, September, October 2020

**PUBLICATIONS | SURGICAL ONCOLOGY continued**


Alzumaili B, Xu B, Spanheimer PM, Tuttle RM, Sherman E, Katabi N, Dogan S, Ganly I, Untch BR, Ghossein RA. Grading of medullary thyroid carcinoma on the basis of tumor necrosis and high mitotic rate is an independent predictor of poor outcome. Mod Pathol. 2020 Sep;33(9):1690-1701. Epub 2020 Apr 20. PMID: 32313184; PMCID: PMC7483270.


**PUBLICATIONS | VASCULAR**


Kibbe MR, Kapadia MR. Underrepresentation of Women at Academic Medical Conferences—“Manels” Must Stop. JAMA Netw Open. 2020 Sep 1;3(9):e2018676. PMID: 32986104.


Pascarella L. USLME Step 1 Scoring System Change to Pass/Fail-Perspective of a Clerkship Director. JAMA Surg. 2020 Sep 2. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 32876687.


PUBLICATIONS | VASCULAR continued


PUBLICATIONS | MEDICAL ILLUSTRATIONS

Natalia Smith, Registered Nurse in the Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Division worked on illustrations with faculty to be published in upcoming journals.

- DIEP flap — Natalia worked on the illustration with Dr. Nishant Bhatt. It is used in clinic every week and it’s been helpful for patients and families as well as residents.

- Perineal reconstruction — Natalia and Dr. Adeyemi Ogunleye worked on the illustration together for an article to be published in the Journal Obstetrical and Gynecological Survey

NEW CLINICAL TRIALS

NCT04066699
Intraoperative, EMB-Guided, Percutaneous Localization of Peripheral Pulmonary Nodules: a Prospective, Open-Label, Multi-Center Registry Study of Thoracic Surgery Outcomes (PLOTS trial).

The objective is to measure successful identification of tumor margins and localization-related safety events, measure localization time, characterize nodule characteristics, report type of resections, and characterize demographic data on subjects undergoing early stage lung cancer screening and resection.

Principal Investigator: Jason Long
PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT
Grace Chen, BA, our Research Administrator provides support for all areas of proposal development including clinical trials and will be your main contact. She will help you with developing your budget, compiling the appropriate documentation for your proposal, routing your grant for submission and coordinating with the Office of Clinical Trials, the sponsor, and administration. Please notify Grace as early as possible, but at least 6 weeks before the due date, as external grants must be routed and submitted to the university 7-days before the due date!

To request grant submission assistance or clinical trial contract submission, please complete the online service request form found under Research on the UNC Surgery website. To request clinical trial contract submission, please complete the online service request form.

BIOSTATISTICS
The Department of Surgery is collaborating with the North Carolina Translational and Clinical Sciences Institute (NC TraCS) to provide biostatistical consultations and support to our faculty members and residents. Biostatistics support can be requested through the NC TRaCS website. If you are using a database, creating a database or have questions as to whether you need a biostatistician, please continue to contact Charley Gaber through the online service request form found under Research on the UNC Surgery website.

DATABASE MANAGEMENT
We are sad to report that Dr. Paula Strassle’s last day with us was on November 30, 2020. We are recruiting for her position, although we know her shoes will be hard to fill. Please check out the links below for additional information. This information can also be found on the Department of Surgery Research Resources webpage.

Creating of a consult request form https://www.med.unc.edu/surgery/research/resident-research/available-databases/consult-request-form/. This online request form will take the place of directly emailing anyone in the database manager group and will be for: feedback about project ideas, answer database questions, comment on article methods, etc.

Email correspondence will occur through the Database Manager email and portal (surgerydataman@med.unc.edu; https://www.med.unc.edu/surgery/research/resident-research/available-databases/database-manager-request-form/). Proposal requests (including spin off/secondary projects) sent via email to an analyst will not be accepted.

All requests must be submitted at least 4-6 weeks before any deadlines. Projects which utilize administrative claims data (MarketScan, Medicare) will require substantially more notice, as they are much more labor intensive. For projects which require chart review or data abstraction from EMR, the data must be complete and ready for analysis at least 4 weeks before the deadline. If you have questions about how long your project may take, please submit a consult request.

The Database Manager team will provide assistance for data collection, database set-up, and chart reviews. They will help you organize and think about your data so that you will be able to analyze it when you are ready. Still have questions? Check out the FAQs. They are in charge of the NIS, NSQIP, and SEER databases and can also point you to other databases that may be of assistance. Please contact them BEFORE you start any project involving data. To request their assistance, please complete the online service request form found under Research on the UNC Surgery website.

EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICE AND RESEARCH
A clinical librarian and liaison from the Health Sciences Library provides support for evidence-based practice and research, including:

- Focused or comprehensive literature searching
- Critically appraising evidence
- Collaborating on systematic reviews
- Advice on presenting/publishing results
- Education on research tools and resources, including searching PubMed and other literature databases, SPIN for finding funding sources, Covidence for systematic reviews, and citation management software.

To request systematic review assistance, please complete the online request form. For any other requests, contact Rebecca at rcarlson@unc.edu.
ABSTRACT DEADLINES

2021 Trauma, Critical Care, & Acute Care Surgery
Meeting Date: April 11-14, 2021 | Location: Las Vegas, NV
Abstract Deadline: None
More information available here

2021 Vascular Annual Meeting
Meeting Date: June 2-5, 2021 | Location: San Diego, CA
Abstract Deadline: January 13, 2021
More information available here

2021 American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO)
Meeting Date: June 4-8, 2021 | Location: Pending
Abstract Deadline: February 17, 2021
More information available here

2021 Academy Health’s Annual Research Meeting (ARM)
Meeting Date: June 12-15, 2021 | Location: TBD
Abstract Deadline: pending announcement
More information available here

2021 International Society for Burn Injuries
Meeting Date: June 14-17, 2021 | Location: Birmingham, UK
Abstract Deadline: Open in November
More information available here

2021 Americas HPB Association Annual Meeting
Meeting Date: August 2-5, 2021 | Location: Miami Beach, FL
Abstract Deadline: Open in December
More information available here

2021 Southeastern Surgical Congress (SESC)
Meeting Date: August 21-24, 2021 | Location: Atlanta, GA
Abstract Deadline: February 19, 2021
More information available here

2021 American Association for the Surgery of Trauma Annual Meeting
Meeting Date: Sept 29 – Oct. 2, 2021 | Location: Atlanta, GA
Abstract Deadline: pending announcement
More information available here

2021 Annual Meeting of the American Pancreatic Association (APA)
Meeting Date: November 3-6, 2021 | Location: Miami Beach, FL
Abstract Deadline: Open in early spring 2021
More information available here

FACULTY

NC TraCS Pilot Awards for Translational Research
Application Deadline: September 22, 2020 and March 2021
the next deadlines for three NC TraCS Pilot award programs:
• $5-50K Translational Research Matched Pilot Grants
• FastTraCS Funding: Special emphasis on drugs, devices, and diagnostics development
• Translational Science Methods and Process Awards (TSMPA)
For more information about these pilot grant mechanisms please contact Paul Kerr or nctracs@unc.edu.

FACULTY & RESIDENTS

NC TraCS $2K Grant Awards
Application Deadlines: Pending 2021
Award Amount: $2,000
More information available here.

RESEARCH RESOURCES

Carolina Data Warehouse for Health (CDW-H) is a central data repository containing clinical, research, and administrative data sourced from the UNC Health Care System.

In response to the COVID-19 situation, they will be following the university’s lead and adjusting their event scheduling as needed. They have suspended all on-site office hours until further notice. CDW staff are still available to answer research questions: just request a consult and they will be in touch. Please visit UNC-Chapel Hill’s dedicated coronavirus updates webpage for Carolina’s most recent announcements regarding COVID-19.

SPIN Plus is a comprehensive funding opportunities database that gives UNC researchers access to over 40,000 funding opportunities from more than 10,000 federal and non-federal sponsors. Additional information about SPIN is available here: https://research.unc.edu/research-development/finding-funding/spin-plus-funding-database/

Research Electronic Data Capture (REDCap) Training
REDCap is a secure web application that can be used to build and manage case report forms, surveys and other data capture mechanisms for clinical research. NC TraCS offers training classes to assist researchers in getting started with building REDCap data collection forms for their research projects. For more information about REDCap or to sign-up for future trainings, please visit the https://tracs.unc.edu/index.php/services/biomedical-informatics/redcap.

Introduction to EMERSE
EMERSE (Electronic Medical Record Search Engine) allows users to search free text (unstructured) clinical notes from the electronic health record. This training will cover what EMERSE is, how it works, and how to use it appropriately. For more information about EMERSE or to sign-up for future trainings, please visit the https://tracs.unc.edu/index.php/services/biomedical-informatics/emerse.
GRAND ROUNDS

Wednesdays 7:15 am - 8:15 am at the 4th floor Clinic Auditorium

12/9/2020
Faculty Meeting with Wesley Burks, Dean UNC School of Medicine and Cristy Page, MD, MPH Executive Dean, UNC School of Medicine; William B. Aycock Distinguished Professor of Family Medicine

12/16/2020
George F. Sheldon Distinguished Visiting Professor Jayme E. Locke, MD, MPH, FACS, FAST, Associate Professor of Surgery, Chief, Division of Transplantation, Mark H. Deierhoi, MD Endowed Professor, University of Alabama at Birmingham

12/23/2020
NO GRAND ROUNDS
Winter Break

12/30/2020
NO GRAND ROUNDS
Winter Break

1/6/2021
Career Corner Presentation: Writing a Manuscript Melina Kibbe, MD, Colin G. Thomas Jr. Distinguished Professor and Chair Department of Surgery and Professor, Department of Biomedical Engineering

1/13/2021
Chief Resident Presentations: Manuel Sanchez, UNC General Surgery, and Karishma Reddy, UNC Plastic Surgery

1/20/2021
Oliver R. Rowe Distinguished Visiting Professor Brian S. Zuckerbraun, MD, FACS, Chief, Division of General Surgery Professor of Surgery, University of Pittsburgh, PA

1/27/2021
Quality Quarterly
Tom Ivester, Professor, Maternal-Fetal Medicine

2/10/2021
Academic Surgical Congress Research Presentations - Speakers TBA

2/17/2021
Ethel F. and James A. Valone Distinguished Visiting Professor Paul S. Cederna, MD, Chief, Section of Plastic Surgery, Professor, Department of Biomedical Engineering, Robert Oneal Collegiate Professor of Plastic Surgery, Department of Surgery, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan

2/24/2021
Faculty Meeting (6:30-8:15am)

IN THE LOOP

EDUCATION

The PGY 4 and PGY 5 General Surgery residents had their first virtual Mock Orals on September 13, 2020. Thanks to all the faculty, examinees, and administrative staff (Crystal Boney and Melainie Bolick) who helped ensure a successful event. In addition, on October 16, 2020 the PGY 5 General Surgery residents participated in the Statewide Mock Orals hosted by Duke University. Our next UNC Mock Orals event is scheduled for March 16, 2021 at 5-6:30PM. Please plan to participate.

Dr. Roy Phitayakorn from Harvard was our virtual professor for the annual Resident as Teacher workshop on 9/29/2020. His topic “Feedback on Feedback: How to Give Constructive Feedback” was well appreciated by learners across the department. In addition, he also gave a fascinating virtual Grand Rounds on “Emotional Intelligence and Teamwork in Surgery” on 9/30/20.

Other Career Development and Educational Grand Rounds this quarter included Dr. Jonathan Oberlander, who spoke on “Impact of the Elections on the ACA” on 9/9/20, and Dr. Annamarie Connolly who tackled “We Can Agree: Nobody Starts the Day Wanting to Do a Bad Job: Getting to Our Best Days Through Critical Thinking, Effective Feedback and Innovation” on 11/4/20.

Upcoming Career Corner speakers include Dr. Melina Kibbe (“Writing a Manuscript” - 1/6/21) and Dr. John Ikonomidis (“Time Management” - 4/14/21).

Thank you for your dedication to the teaching mission at UNC.

Timothy Farrell, MD
Vice Chair of Education

Muneera Kapadia, MD, MME
Associate Vice Chair of Education
TOP 6 FACULTY PROFILE VIDEOS (August - October 2020)

Randal Zhou, MD (Treating Patients Like Family)
Views: 227  Avg view duration: 30

Adeyemi Ogunleye, MD (No Higher Calling Than Treating Sick Patients)
Views: 128  Avg view duration: 2:03

Hong Jin “HJ” Kim, MD (We Take Very Good Care of Cancer Patients)
Views: 115  Avg view duration: 2:23

Chirag Desai, MD (Most Rewarding Part of What He Does)
Views: 113  Avg view duration: 1:55

Andrea Hayes-Jordan, MD (Saving Generations of Children)
Views: 108  Avg view duration: 1:50

Felicia Williams, MD (Wants to Make People Feel Better)
Views: 106  Avg view duration: 1:02

COMMUNICATIONS

SOCIAL

Dr. Gerber awarded the Defense Meritorious Service Medal by the Secretary of Defense

4,4k Impressions
197 Engagements

Hayes-Jordan featured in Chapel Hill Magazine

7.2k Impressions
320 Engagements

Day of Surgery Pediatric Video

253 Watch Time (hours)
25.6k Views

UNC Surgery Department Video

218 Views
469 Followers

Published patient story, Cynthia Stingone

COMMUNICATIONS | FALL 2020 | UNC SURGERY 27
MAKE A GIFT
Philanthropy inspires innovation and paves the way for healthier futures for our patients. Gifts to the Department of Surgery advance surgical care in the operating room and the clinic, enable us to pursue bold ideas in the research arena, and provide a rigorous training experience for tomorrow’s surgical leaders.
For information about ways to support the UNC Department of Surgery or to make a gift, please contact Erin Kinney, Director of Development with the UNC Health Foundation, at (585) 622-7425, erin_kinney@med.unc.edu, or visit go.unc.edu/uncsurgery.

MISSION
The Department of Surgery’s mission is to provide the highest quality patient care to all people through innovation, world-class research, and training the next generation of surgical health care professionals and scientists.

VISION
To be the nation’s leading public academic Department of Surgery.