

# medicine minute

Tuesday, December 10, 2024

## kudos

### HONORS

#### **Lazarte Recognized for Advocacy Efforts in HIV Community**



**Susana Lazarte, M.D.**, an Associate Professor in the Division of Infectious Diseases and Geographic Medicine, received a Dallas County Service Award in recognition of her efforts to advance health equity and fighting against HIV.

“In 2018, I made the conscious decision to become an advocate in the fight against HIV,” says Dr. Lazarte. “I never imagined that the HIV community in Dallas County would end up voting for me for a Service Award. It’s an honor and a privilege to care for so many unsung heroes, which I do not take for granted. Unfortunately, the end of this fight is still too far away, and after this award I will continue my advocacy

efforts even more passionately than before.”

Originally from Peru, Dr. Lazarte earned her medical degree at the Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia in Lima. She received internal medicine residency training at UT Southwestern, and then completed advanced training through a fellowship in infectious diseases and a clinical research fellowship in HIV at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis.

Dr. Lazarte serves the Texas Department of State Health Services’ HIV Medical Assistance Program as a member of its Medication Advisory Committee, the Formulary Subcommittee, and Governance and Data Subcommittee. She also is a member of the Dallas HIV Task Force executive committee, and co-chairs the LatinX Needs Workgroup. In addition, she is a member of the panel for the US DSHHS/CDC/IDSA Guidelines for Treatment and Prevention of Opportunistic Infections and the HIV Ryan White Medical Providers Coalition steering committee.

Dr. Lazarte joined the UT Southwestern faculty in 2015.

### PUBLICATIONS

#### **Trivedi Addresses Physician Burnout and Mental Health**



**Julie Trivedi, M.D.**, an Associate Professor in the Division of Infectious Diseases and Geographic Medicine, discusses physician depression and how to create a supportive work environment free of stigma and fear. Her [opinion piece](#), published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, provides a personal account of her own mental health struggles and the journey that led to her becoming a certified life and leadership coach.

“Today, I am focused on bringing light to topics that are stigmatized, talking about topics like mental health and burnout in healthcare workers that everyone wants to fix but are without

an adequate solution, raising awareness of how to recognize mental health challenges among health care professionals, being an advocate for others, and reminding everyone that help is needed,” she writes. “Help can be given, and most importantly, receiving help does not mean being broken or incapable of meeting future challenges.”

#### RECOGNITION

### Dalton Receives Leadership Award



**Thomas Dalton, M.D.**, an Associate Professor in the Division of Geriatric Medicine, received the Leadership Award during the Team FIRST Celebration and IMPACT Awards Ceremony last month. Team FIRST is a UTSW-sponsored, five-year program initiated in 2020 to provide Medical and Health Professions students with a set of evidence-based teamwork competencies through five interprofessional learning modules. Dr. Dalton was recognized for his leadership of Module 3: Teamwork in the Clinical Environment. The module takes place during the IDEAL Patient Safety Symposium, an in-person event that allows participants to practice and debrief important teamwork skills and challenges using roleplay

scenarios often encountered in clinical rotations.

Originally from the Dallas area, Dr. Dalton attended medical school at UT Southwestern, where he also completed residency training in Internal Medicine and served as Chief Resident. He then obtained fellowship training in geriatric medicine with a concentration in medical education at Duke University. Dr. Dalton joined the UT Southwestern faculty in 2014.

#### RECENT JOB CHANGES

### Staff Members Take on New Roles



We congratulate the following staff members who recently took on new positions within the Department:

- **Fouzia Ahmed** – Research Technician I, Digestive & Liver Diseases
- **Natalie Farran** – Financial Analyst II, Department Administration
- **An Khong** – Financial Analyst II, Department Administration
- **Emily Molina** – Clinical Research Assistant II, Digestive & Liver Diseases
- **Brian Morfin** – Clinical Research Coordinator I, Infectious Diseases & Geographic Medicine
- **Srisha Sridharan** – Lab Coordinator, Hematology & Oncology

- **Theodore Stewart** – Supervisor of Grants & Contracts Specialists, Research Administration
- **Julia Terrell** – Clinical Research Assistant II, Digestive & Liver Diseases
- **Vanina Toffessi Tcheuyap** – Senior Research Associate, Hematology & Oncology
- **Anissa Valero** – Program Coordinator, Vascular Medicine

## research roundup

### DISCOVERIES

## Kusminski and Colleagues Advance Understanding of Incretin Action

Obesity is a chronic complex disease defined by excessive fat deposits that can impair health. The cardiorenal metabolic syndrome, which includes obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, chronic kidney disease and fatty liver disease, is a target of GLP-1 receptor and/or GIPR incretin-based therapies. These drugs, tirzepatide (sold under the brand names Mounjaro and Zepbound) and semaglutide (sold under the brand names Ozempic, Rybelsus, and Wegovy), are now widely used for weight loss and diabetes, and as such, offer a hopeful avenue to treat obesity and its related diseases. Researchers at UT Southwestern have shown the GIP receptor (GIPR), a protein in fat cells, is a meaningful target for the development of future incretin-based therapeutic interventions for treating obesity and its associated metabolic diseases.

“Our study found that activation of GIPR in fat cells increases energy expenditure and triggers massive weight loss during obesity,” says **Christine Kusminski, Ph.D.**, an Associate Professor in the Touchstone Diabetes Center and corresponding author of the [study published in Cell Metabolism](#). “We define a new mechanism whereby the GIPR takes advantage of the energy-wasting process of futile calcium cycling in the fat cell. GIPR activation also triggers a ‘metabolic memory effect’ that prevents weight regain.”

Temporary activation of GIPR in fat cells leads to permanent changes in weight loss, she explains.

“We switch the GIPR on, then switch it off again, and the weight reduction remains,” Dr. Kusminski says. “This is distinct from incretin therapies, whereby when drug treatment is stopped, the weight rapidly bounces back.”

*Other study contributors from the Touchstone Diabetes Center include Research Scientist Xinxin Yu, M.D., Senior Research Associate Shihwei Chen, M.S., Instructor Jan-Bernd Funcke, Ph.D., Postdoctoral Fellow Leon Straub, Ph.D., Graduate Student Chanmin Joung, M.S., former Instructor Yu A. An, Ph.D., and Professor and Center Director Philipp E. Scherer, Ph.D.*

## education and training

### FELLOWSHIPS

## Residents and Alumni Match into Fellowship Programs



Fifty-eight residents and former residents matched into fellowship programs last week, including participants in the Physician-Scientist Training Program and residents in the combined Internal Medicine-Pediatrics program.

“Overall, an excellent match result,” says **Salahuddin Kazi, M.D.**, a Professor in the Division of Rheumatology, Vice Chair of Education, and Director of the Internal Medicine Residency.

“It brings us immense joy and pride to witness the remarkable achievements of our residents and alumni,” says **Sharlene Dong, M.D.**, a Chief Resident who matched into the

hematology and oncology program at MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. “We would like to dedicate a heartfelt thank-you to our faculty members who played crucial roles in supporting our residents on their journey to success.”

To view the full-sized composite, click [here](#).

## personnel updates

### LEADERSHIP

## Aguilar Appointed Section Chief of General and Noninvasive Cardiology



**David Aguilar, M.D., M.S.C.I.**, has joined the Department as Professor in the Division of Cardiology, and will serve as the Division's inaugural Section Chief of General and Noninvasive Cardiology.

Dr. Aguilar holds a bachelor's degree in zoology from Texas A&M University, which he received summa cum laude. He earned his medical degree with honors from Baylor College of Medicine and completed internal medicine residency training at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School, where he remained to obtain advanced training through a fellowship in cardiovascular medicine. He also holds a

master's degree in clinical investigation from Baylor College of Medicine and a graduate certificate in healthcare management from Rice University.

Prior to joining the UT Southwestern faculty, Dr. Aguilar served on the faculties of the UT Health Science Center in Houston, Baylor College of Medicine, the University of Kentucky, and the LSU Health Science Center in New Orleans. Additionally, he has held several administrative leadership roles at these institutions, including Assistant Chair for Clinical Affairs at Baylor and Associate Chair for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at the University of Kentucky.

In his new leadership role, Dr. Aguilar will facilitate faculty development, as well as clinical and research program development. In addition to conducting his own research in heart disease and diabetes, he will support and strengthen the relationship between the Division and the O'Donnell School of Public Health, where he holds a secondary appointment.



**Internal Medicine News Portal**  
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## in case you missed it

### MEDBLOG

## Kubiliun Discusses Pancreatic Cancer Prevention in Blog Post



Pancreatic cancer is one of the most challenging cancers, with its rates increasing by 0.3% annually, unlike other cancers whose mortality rates have stabilized or decreased. In Texas, it accounts for 7% of the 41,300 cancer deaths recorded in 2019 (American Cancer Society).

Despite being rare, with a 1% lifetime risk compared to 12% for breast cancer, general population screening is impractical.

UT Southwestern has significantly advanced pancreatic cancer prevention through a high-risk identification program, notifying over 2,000 patients about genetic risks and incidental

pancreatic cysts found during unrelated scans.

**Nisa Kubiliun, M.D.**, an Associate Professor and Clinical Chief in the Division of Digestive and Liver Diseases and Medical Director of Endoscopy Services, and **John Mansour, M.D.**, a Professor of Surgery and Vice Chair of Quality in the Department of Surgery, discuss the latest treatment options, research, and prevention strategies in their latest installment on MedBlog.

### News and Digital Media Featuring Internal Medicine Colleagues

- [Repurposed Drug has Promising Efficacy in Non-small Cell Lung Cancer](#) (via UTSW Newsroom, with **David Gerber, M.D.**, **Mitchell von Itzstein**, and **Jonathan Dowell, M.D.**)
- [Into the Unknown: Crack WHO Team Journeys Deep into the Congo to Identify Mystery Killer](#) (via *The Telegraph*, with **Krutika Kuppalli, M.D.**)
- [Endoscopic Submucosal Dissection \(ESD\) Removes GI Tumors with Precision, No Incisions](#) (via *BroadcastMed*, with **Markus Goldschmiedt, M.D.** and **Thomas Tielleman, M.D.**)
- [What Texans Need to Know About Mpox](#) (via *MedBlog*, with **Helen King, M.D.**, **Krutika Kuppalli, M.D.**, and **Netanya Uta, M.D.**)

## of interest

### FACULTY WELLNESS

### Leading Well-Being at Work



Have an idea to enhance wellness in your work environment? The UT Southwestern Thrive and Flourish Leadership Program is your chance to bring it to life while building valuable career skills.

In this program, selected faculty members are paired with a process improvement coach and a well-being expert to help implement their idea. Upon completion of training, workshops, and coaching sessions, [Faculty Wellness](#) will provide a grant of up to \$5,000 to support each participant's wellness project.

[Applications are open](#) through January, with participant

selection taking place in mid-February.

## this week

### INTERNAL MEDICINE GRAND ROUNDS

### Tujios to Lecture About Portal Hypertension on Dec. 13



**Shannan Tujios, M.D.**, an Associate Professor in the Division of Digestive and Liver Diseases, will present the [Internal Medicine Grand Rounds](#) lecture on **Friday, Dec. 13, at 8 a.m. in D1.502**. Her topic: "Portal Hypertension: Evolving Paradigms in Diagnosis and Care."

A native of El Paso, Texas, Dr. Tujios received her undergraduate degree in biology and Spanish at Washington University in St. Louis. She earned her medical degree at the University of Louisville School of Medicine and completed internal medicine residency training at the University of Michigan Hospitals. She then obtained fellowship training in

gastroenterology and hepatology at UT Southwestern, followed by an advanced fellowship in transplant hepatology at the University of Michigan Hospitals.

Dr. Tujios joined the UT Southwestern faculty in 2011.

#### INTERNAL MEDICINE RESEARCH CONFERENCE

### Munshi to Discuss Cardiac Synchrony on Dec. 13



**Nikhil Munshi, M.D., Ph.D.**, an Associate Professor in the Division of Cardiology, will present the [Internal Medicine Research Conference](#) on **Friday, Dec. 13, at noon in D1.502**. His topic: "Decoding Transcriptional Control of Cardiac Synchrony."

Originally from Palo Alto, California, Dr. Munshi holds bachelor's degrees in biomedical engineering and molecular biology from the University of California-San Diego. He earned his medical degree and his doctorate in biochemistry at Columbia University in New York. He completed internal medicine residency training and advanced training through a

fellowship in cardiology at UT Southwestern. He then completed additional advanced training through postdoctoral fellowships in molecular cardiology and developmental biology at Columbia and UT Southwestern.

Dr. Munshi joined the UT Southwestern faculty in 2011

#### Noteworthy Lectures & Conferences

- **Tuesday, Dec. 10, Noon:** [Ethics Grand Rounds](#) with **Dr. Michael Rubin** (Neurology) – "American Academy of Neurology Brain Death Practice Guideline: What's Old, What's New, and What's Next"
- **Thursday, Dec. 12, Noon:** [Vertically Integrated Programs in Cancer](#) with **Dr. James Brugarolas** (Hematology & Oncology) – "A UTSW Journey from Gene Discovery to a First-In-Class FDA-Approved Drug"
- **Thursday, Dec. 12, Noon:** [Nephrology Journal Club](#) with **Dr. Alvin Kwon** (Nephrology) – "Effect of Fluid Management Guided by Bioimpedance Spectroscopy on Cardiovascular Parameters in Hemodialysis Patients: A Randomized Controlled Trial"
- **Thursday, Dec. 12, 4 p.m.:** [Pharmacology Seminar Series](#) with **Dr. Rodney Infante** (Digestive & Liver Diseases) – "Cachexia: The Intersection of Metabolism, Inflammation, and Cancer"
- **Friday, Dec. 13, 1 p.m.:** [Endocrine Grand Rounds](#) with **Dr. Susan Mandel** (University of Pennsylvania) – "Preview of the ATA 2025 Nodule Guidelines"

#### happening today

#### NETWORKING

### Pandey to Co-chair Value-based Care Event



**Ambarish Pandey, M.D., M.S.C.S.**, an Associate Professor in the Division of Cardiology and a Principal Investigator in the Cardiometabolic Research Unit, will co-chair a free in-person event **today, Dec. 10, from 5 to 9 p.m. at the Renaissance Dallas Hotel.**

Sponsored by The Institute for Value-Based Medicine, in partnership with Optum Health, the Value-Based Care Advances in Cardiology event will feature presentations by Dr. Pandey and others, including adjunct Assistant Professor **Neil Keshvani, M.D.**, as well a networking dinner and panel discussion.

To learn more and to register for the event, click [here](#).

## noteworthy

### CAREERS

## Marciano to Discuss Becoming a Physician Scientist on Dec. 12



**Denise Marciano, M.D., Ph.D.**, an Associate Professor in the Division of Nephrology and Associate Director of the Physician Scientist Training Program (PSTP), will discuss her career in science, medicine, and beyond during a “fireside chat” hosted by the American Physician Scientists Association on **Thursday, Dec. 12, at 6 p.m. (CST) via Zoom.**

Participants can learn how Dr. Marciano combines patient care with research on kidney development, regeneration, and disease.

To attend the virtual session, click [here](#).



## Internal Medicine Events Calendar

[Click to view additional events](#)

Look for the next *Medicine Minute* on **Tuesday, Dec. 17, 2024.**  
Share feedback and news items with us at [IMNews@UTSouthwestern.edu](mailto:IMNews@UTSouthwestern.edu)

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