

medicine minute

August 12, 2025

kudos



UT Southwestern Selected for National Heart Failure Care Initiative

UT Southwestern has been selected as one of 40 sites nationwide to participate in the American Heart Association's HFpEF/HFmrEF Quality Improvement Initiative, a three year collaborative program aimed at enhancing care for patients with preserved and mildly reduced ejection fraction heart failure. **Ambarish Pandey, M.D., M.S.C.S.**, an Associate Professor in the Division of Cardiology, will serve as Clinical Champion for the initiative.

"The program provides annual financial support and connects UT Southwestern with leading institutions through collaborative learning sessions, process mapping meetings, and involvement with the Get With The Guidelines Heart Failure program," Dr. Pandey says. "This partnership underscores UT Southwestern's commitment to evidence-based care and offers opportunities to influence national heart failure treatment standards through webinars, conferences, and research dissemination."

Heart failure with preserved ejection fraction (HFpEF) affects more than half of the 6.7 million Americans living with heart failure, according to the American College of Cardiology. It is associated with a one-year mortality rate of 20 to 29% and a 30-day hospital readmission rate of 21%. Experts warn that HFpEF is on the rise due to aging populations and increasing rates of hypertension, diabetes, and obesity.

"HFpEF is a complex and often underrecognized condition that places a significant burden on patients and the healthcare system," Dr. Pandey says. "Its prevalence is growing rapidly, and we anticipate it will soon surpass that of heart failure with reduced ejection fraction. This initiative is a vital step toward improving outcomes and

standardizing care for these patients.” ■



Tatara, Colleagues Receive Wilkins Award for Bone Cement Research

Alexander Tatara, M.D., Ph.D., an Assistant Professor in the Division of infectious Diseases and Geographic Medicine, and colleagues have been honored by the Musculoskeletal Infection Society (MSIS) with its 2025 Jeanette Wilkins Award for their oral presentation, “Inherently Anti-staphylococcal Bone Cement,” which described their work in developing next-generation bone cement designed to prevent and treat medical device infections.

Bone cement is a material used in surgeries to fix devices, such as artificial joints, into place or to fill voids in bony tissue. Researchers in the Tatara laboratory have engineered a new type of bone cement that inherently resists infection, especially by the most common causes of bone infection (*Staphylococcus aureus* and *Staphylococcus epidermidis*).

In their presentation at the MSIS conference, members of the Tatara lab introduced their new biomaterial and shared data pertaining to its unique architecture and antimicrobial properties. Co-authors in the Tower laboratory assisted in radiographic analysis.

The MSIS initiated the award as a tribute to Jeanette Wilkins, a scientist and leader in musculoskeletal research. ■



Al Mutar Highlights Advances in Pancreatic Cancer Research at Area Event

Salwan Al Mutar, M.D., M.S., an Assistant Professor in the Division of Hematology and Oncology and Co-Director of the Pancreatic Cancer Program, was the featured healthcare speaker at the PurpleLight 2025 event on Aug. 9. Sponsored by the nonprofit Pancreatic Cancer Action Network, the event brought together survivors of pancreatic cancer, their families, friends, and supporters, while also paying tribute to those who have died from the disease.

Dr. Al Mutar shared insights into emerging treatments and the evolving approach to pancreatic cancer care, emphasizing the importance of clinical trials and continued research. His work centers on developmental therapeutics and immune pathway targeting in pancreatic cancer.

According to the National Cancer Institute, pancreatic cancer ranks as the 10th most common cancer in the U.S., with over 66,000 new cases annually. It is projected to become the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths by 2030. ■

research roundup



Study Highlights Clinician Preference to Improve Hospital Discharge Summaries

A new multisite study co-authored by **Michael Burton, M.D., M.S.P.H.**, an Assistant Professor in the Division of General Internal Medicine, **Abey Thomas, M.D.**, an Associate Professor in the Division of Hospital Medicine, and colleagues sheds light on how inpatient clinicians use and evaluate hospital discharge summaries – essential documents for ensuring continuity of care during patient transitions. The researchers surveyed physicians, advanced practice providers and trainees across several large academic institutions to identify which components of discharge summaries are most valued.

The [study, published in the *Journal of General Internal Medicine*](#), builds on a previously published survey of outpatient clinicians and marks the first known effort to systematically evaluate inpatient preferences regarding discharge summaries. With a 31% response rate, the survey asked clinicians to rank 13 components of discharge summaries by importance. The top five elements: hospital course, discharge diagnoses, medication reconciliation, follow-up, and history of present illness. These preferences closely align with those of outpatient clinicians in the earlier survey, suggesting a strong consensus across care settings.

The authors suggest that this alignment presents a strong opportunity for healthcare institutions to develop standardized discharge summary templates that are both concise and clinically relevant.

"Improving the clarity and structure of discharge summaries can reduce medical errors, enhance communication, and ultimately improve patient outcomes during transitions between inpatient and outpatient care," Dr. Thomas says. ■

education and training



Boktor Secures Multiple Grants for IBD Fellowship Program

Moheb Boktor, M.D., an Associate Professor in the Division of Digestive and Liver Diseases and Program Director for the Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) Fellowship, has been awarded three grants totaling \$125,000 from Pfizer, Johnson & Johnson, and the GI Alliance to support the fellowship program.

"These grants are a testament to the growing recognition of the critical importance of specialized training in IBD," Dr. Boktor says. "Our goal is to equip fellows with the expertise needed to manage complex IBD cases and to lead innovation in the field."

Dr. Boktor founded the program in 2024 to train gastroenterology fellows in advanced IBD care. Its first participant, **Cinthana Kandasamy, M.D.**, graduated in June.

UT Southwestern has one of only two dedicated adult IBD training programs in Texas.

"I'm incredibly proud of what we've established at UT Southwestern," Dr. Boktor adds. "This fellowship is not just about achieving clinical excellence; it's about shaping future leaders in the field of inflammatory bowel disease." ■

in case you missed it



Infante, Marciano Appointed to Key Leadership Roles in Support of Physician-Scientist Training

UT Southwestern is expanding its commitment to training physician-scientists with the establishment of the Physician-Scientist Development Office, which will support career development for trainees and junior faculty pursuing research.

Effective Sept. 1, **Rodney Infante, M.D., Ph.D.**, will serve as the inaugural Director of the Physician-Scientist Development Office, and **Denise Marciano, M.D., Ph.D.**, will become Director of the Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP).

Dr. Infante, an Associate Professor in the Division of Digestive and Liver Diseases, will oversee strategic initiatives to support physician-scientists across all academic levels, including directing the M.D. Scientist Training Program (MDSTP).

Dr. Marciano, an Associate Professor in the Division of Nephrology, brings extensive expertise in kidney disease research and will lead efforts to elevate the MSTP's national profile.

Both leaders are recognized for their research excellence and dedication to education, and their appointments mark a significant step forward in UT Southwestern's mission to foster a collaborative and innovative scientific community. ■

Dr. Marciano holds the Carolyn R. Bacon Distinguished Professorship in Medical Science and Education.

Dr. Infante holds the Kern and Marnie Wildenthal President's Research Council Professorship in Medical Science.

News and Digital Media Featuring Internal Medicine Colleagues

- [Chinese Authorities Attempt to Limit Spread of Chikungunya Virus](#) (via *DW News*, with Krutika Kuppalli, M.D.)
- [Luka Doncic is Using this Dieting Trick to Get Fit for NBA Season. Does Science Agree?](#) (with Jaime Almandoz, M.D., M.B.A.)

this week



Vinton to Discuss Obesity Treatment on Aug. 15

Tonia Vinton, M.D., an Assistant Professor in the Division of Endocrinology, will deliver the [Internal Medicine Grand Rounds lecture](#) on **Friday, Aug. 15, at 8 a.m.** in D1-502. Her topic: "Personalized Approaches to Obesity Treatment."

Dr. Vinton holds a bachelor's degree in molecular biology from the University of Texas at Austin, where she graduated with highest honors. She earned her medical degree at UT Southwestern, where she also completed internal medicine residency training.

Certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine and the American Board of Obesity Medicine, she joined the UT Southwestern faculty in 2021. Her primary research interest is in obesity medicine.

Dr. Vinton is the founder and President of the Dallas Obesity Society. She currently serves as Medical Director of the UT Southwestern Weight Wellness Clinic at Texas Health Dallas. ■

Other Noteworthy Lectures & Conferences This Week

- Wednesday, Aug. 13, Noon: [Simmons Comprehensive Cancer Center Population Science and Cancer Control Research Program seminar](#) with Dr. Nabihah Tayob (Dana-Farber Cancer Institute) – “Evaluation of Personalized Biomarker Screening Algorithms for Detection of Early-stage Hepatocellular Carcinoma”
- Wednesday, Aug. 13, 1 p.m.: [CTSA Multisite Trial Development Forum](#) with Drs. Susan Iannaccone (Pediatric Neurology), Justin Grodin (Cardiology), Drew Bird (Allergy & Immunology), David Karp (Rheumatology), Melissa Mauskar (Obstetrics & Gynecology), Bhanu Pappu (Clinical Research Services), and Robert Toto (Nephrology) – “Developing and Executing High Quality Multisite Clinical Trials”

save the date

Physician-Scientist Collaborative to Present Panel Discussion on K Award Applications

The Young Physician-Scientist Series, a career development collaborative between UT Southwestern, Duke University, Washington University in St. Louis, and Weill Cornell Medicine, will present a panel discussion on **Wednesday, Aug. 27, at 3 p.m. via Zoom**. The topic, “Tips for Writing a Successful K Award.”

Panelists include **Emre Turer, M.D., Ph.D.**, an Associate Professor in the Division of Digestive and Liver Disease. Other presenters are **Juan Pablo Arroyo, M.D., Ph.D.**, an Assistant Professor of Medicine at Vanderbilt University; **Steven Crowley, M.D.**, a Professor in the Division of Nephrology at Duke; **Jillian Hurst, Ph.D.**, an Associate Professor of Pediatric Infectious Disease at Duke; and **Drew Schwartz, M.D., Ph.D.**, an Assistant Professor of Pediatric Infectious Disease at Washington University.

The free, virtual event will be moderated by **Rasheed Gbadegesin, M.D.**, a Professor of Pediatrics at Duke University. ■

Register to Receive the Zoom Link

Women in medicine

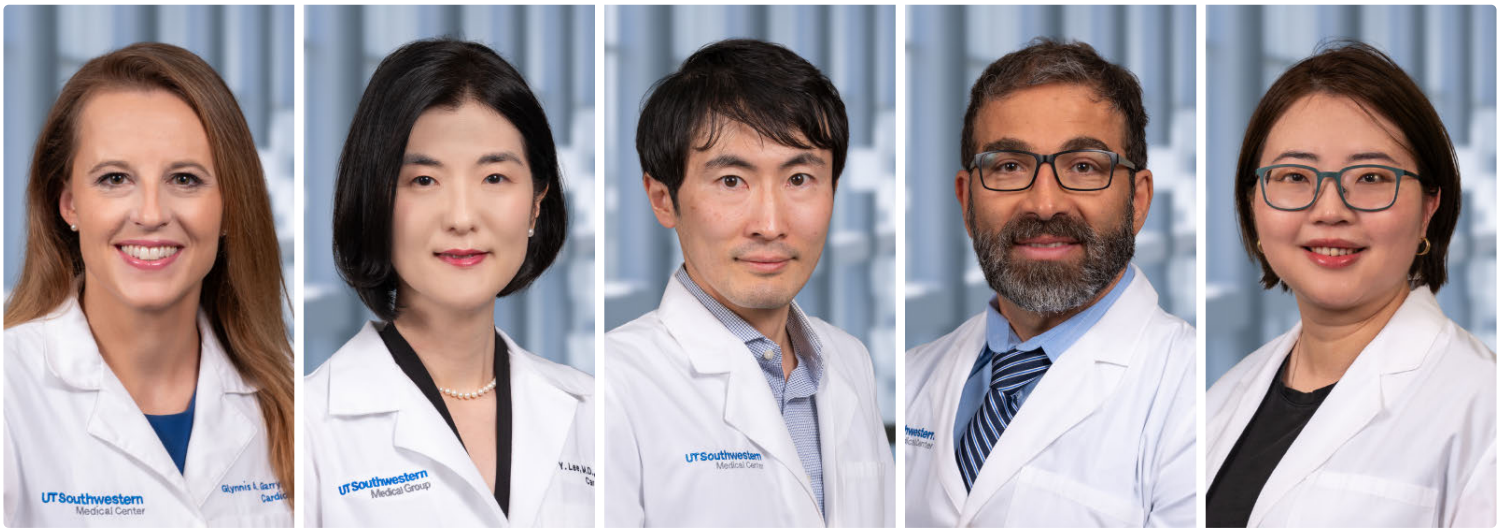


Celebrating Women in Medicine Month: Honoring Excellence and Leadership

September marks the annual observance of **Women in Medicine Month**, a time dedicated to recognizing the contributions of women in the medical field. From pioneering research to compassionate patient care, women healthcare professionals have shaped the landscape of medicine throughout history and continue to lead transformative change today.

As in previous years, the SWAG (Supporting Women Achieving Greatness) Committee will host a week of special lectures and discussions led by distinguished women colleagues. These events will spotlight the achievements of women who are advancing medical research, improving patient outcomes, and inspiring the next generation of professionals.

Women in Medicine Month serves as a powerful tribute to the dedication, resilience, and expertise of women who continue to make a lasting impact across all areas of medicine. ■



From left, Glynnis Garry Bann, M.D.; Laurel Lee, M.D., Ph.D.; Yoshiharu Muto, M.D., Ph.D.; Hani Suleiman, M.D., Ph.D.; and Jialiang "Shirley" Wang, Ph.D.

Five Faculty to Present at Research Forum on Oct. 14

Five recently appointed Internal Medicine faculty members will introduce their research during the [2025 Faculty Research Forum](#), scheduled for **Tuesday, Oct. 14 from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in the T. Boone Pickens Medical Education and Conference Center.**

- **Glynnis Garry Bann, M.D.**, an Assistant Professor in the Division of Cardiology, will present "Rewiring Fate: Epigenetic Factors as Drivers of Cardiac Reprogramming."
- **Laurel Lee, M.D., Ph.D.**, an Assistant Professor in the Division of Cardiology, will present "Immune Modulation of Vascular Susceptibility to Atherosclerosis."
- **Yoshiharu Muto, M.D., Ph.D.**, an Assistant Professor in the Division of Nephrology, will present "Cracking the Code of Kidney Disease Through Methionine Metabolism."
- **Hani Suleiman, M.D., Ph.D.**, an Assistant Professor in the Division of Nephrology, will present "Molecular Determinants of Podocyte Actin Cytoskeleton in Health and in Disease."
- **Jialing "Shirley" Wang, Ph.D.**, an Assistant Professor in the Division of Nephrology, will present "Cell-Type Specific Transcription Regulation in Skeletal Disease and Bone Cancer."

All members of the UT Southwestern community are welcome to attend the in-person event. Boxed lunches will be provided to early registrants. ■

[Register for the Event](#)

Look for the next *Medicine Minute* on **Tuesday, Aug. 19, 2025.**

Want to access an item in a previous edition of the newsletter? [Check our *Medicine Minute* archive.](#)

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