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Congratulations from the PAMED Executive Vice President



Congratulations on all of your accomplishments in 2023!

From the PAMED Executive Vice President, *Martin P. Raniowski, MA, FCPP, CAE*

Over this past year, the Pennsylvania Medical Society (PAMED) has enjoyed celebrating its 175th anniversary by sharing stories of triumph and innovation, posting fun facts, articles about our history, old photos and salient membership moments.

Looking back on our history has been fun, but the most important thing is our future and that is what you are a part of. The next 175 years will celebrate your innovation and drive to go above and beyond the regular work schedules.

Our Top Physicians Under 40 award recipients are physicians across the commonwealth that are showcasing their unique perspectives on the practice of medicine. You'll read about a physician

who works with professional athletes in sports medicine, one who is leading his field in electrophysiology and another whose research aims to understand how lung disease develops in preterm babies.

The recipients of our Voluntary Service and Distinguished Service Awards are three African American women who are not only making a large impact in their field of medicine but also in the community at large.

In this publication, you'll read about the recipients of our 2022 Innovation Grant. These grant recipients are physicians putting their ideas into projects that will change the way you currently practice as a physician. Likewise, our poster contest winners are some of the best and brightest young medical students and residents, poised to use their research to change perspectives and advance the future of medicine.

As a bonus to celebrate our 175th anniversary, you'll read articles about our history and where we started as an organization.

I'm so proud to read these stories and celebrate all your accomplishments. You are continually there to push the limits on the quality care you provide your patients in Pennsylvania. We're happy to call you our members! ★

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martin P. Raniowski".

Martin P. Raniowski, MA, FCPP, CAE
CEO/Executive Vice President, PAMED



Top Physicians Under 40 Awards

Pennsylvania's Top Physicians Under 40 Award recognizes the best of the best early career physicians. This year we recognized 41 physicians across 27 specialties and 18 counties.



Danish Ahmad, MD
*Pulmonary & Critical Care
Medicine*
Philadelphia County



**Natasha
Alligood-Percoco, MD**
Obstetrics & Gynecology
Lycoming County



John Allison, DO
Family Medicine
Greene County



Blake Bailey, DO
Emergency Medicine
Berks County



Nicholas Bonazza, MD
Orthopedic Surgery
Mercer County



Tara Braithwaite, DO
Family Medicine
Greene County



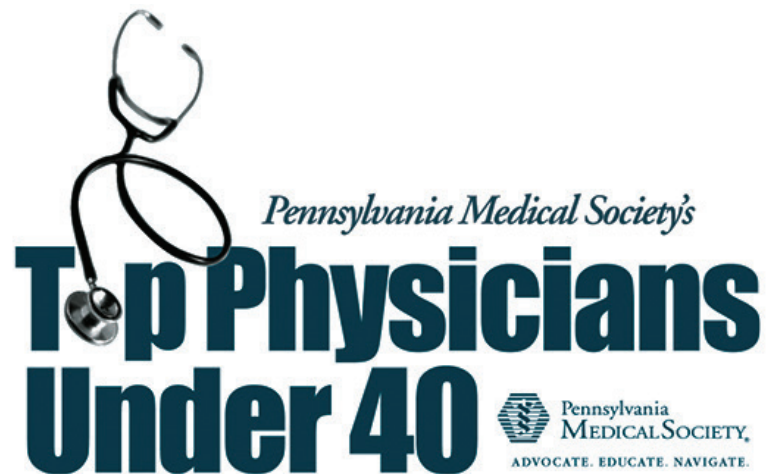
Alan Cherney, MD
Emergency Medicine
Philadelphia County



Ryan Collins, MD
*Pathology - Anatomic &
Clinical*
Lycoming County



Tiffany DuMont, DO
*Pulmonary & Critical Care
Medicine*
Allegheny County



Top Physicians Under 40 Awards



Caitlin Matthis, DO

Family Medicine

Washington County

Early Career Physicians Combatting Physician Burnout

Caitlin Matthis, DO

Riddhi Shah, MD

Physician wellness is a term that has gotten a lot of attention in the last year. But, how do you know where to start?

For **Caitlin Matthis, DO** she realized she was experiencing burnout early on.



"I had realized in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic that I was experiencing burnout myself. I was basically questioning, with being only a couple of years out of school, what was wrong with me?" she said.



It wasn't until the American Academy of Family Physicians mailed out a letter about a 10-month program called Leading Physician Well-Being, that she thought it might be time to try something.



Riddhi Shah, MD

Hospitalist

Luzerne County

"I figured I could use some wellness and even if I bring one or two things back, it would be helpful. I was not anticipating it to be as powerful as it was."

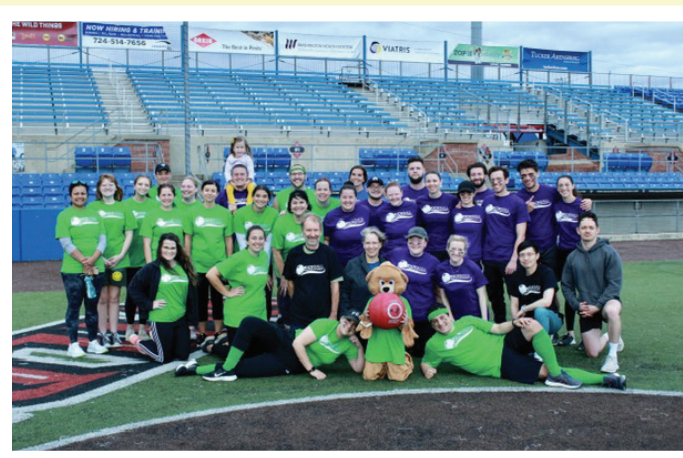
She said early in the program, she learned that she is not the problem.

"Being a young female, early career physician with a young child, I was at high risk for burnout. It made me realize I wasn't alone in how I was feeling."

During the program, Dr. Matthis said she knew she wanted to bring what she learned back to her work system.

"It sparked my interested in improving wellbeing for our residents and also looking towards system change as well and not just focusing on individual wellness."





to collaborate on this workshop and open it up to as many people as possible.”

Dr. Shah says she always considered herself to be a writer but it’s something that gets harder to do with a busy career and busy life.

“Writing doesn’t have to be a big production,” she said. “It can be something you do for a few minutes every day to collect your thoughts and reflect.”

“Narrative medicine” is a tool that has been proven to aid with burnout prevention for physicians. The workshops focus on listening, reflective writing and sharing of stories.

Since completing the program, she has been actively creating and implementing wellness education, programs and policies.

She led a faculty development session on how to better implement and teach wellness to learners while leading health system wide continuing medical education (CME) sessions. She also leads a one-hour didactic session every month for residents, focusing on topics such as self-care and preventing burnout.

Self-care is something that is also a passion of **Riddhi Shah, MD**, a hospitalist from Luzerne County, who says there is no “one size fits all” when it comes to self-care.

“For some people it’s travel or going on a spa day. And other people, it’s taking a day at home to relax, not talk to anyone and put your phone on airplane mode,” she said.

For Dr. Shah, writing has been that self-care outlet. She and her colleagues at the American College of Physicians (ACP) created a monthly workshop using narrative medicine to aid physician wellness.

“When I went to the ACP conference in Chicago, it was just a very energizing experience. While I was there, I met a wellness champion for ACP and was already doing a lot of narrative medicine. That’s when we decided

Dr. Shah said, “We have a tremendous privilege in medicine. We get to help people feel better and get healthy and stay feeling well but we also see people at their most vulnerable and it can be a lot to process not just as a patient but also as a physician. Especially if you’re a physician who is also coping with other chronic health issues.”

“Start with your sphere of influence and go where your energy is welcome,” Dr. Matthis said. ■

Top Physicians Under 40 Awards



Ravi Ved, DO

Internal Medicine
Allegheny County

An Inside Look at a Sports Medicine Physician's Journey

Ravi Ved, DO

Ravi Ved, DO wasn't sure where his journey through medicine would take him. He practiced internal medicine during his rotations and ruled out the operating room. It wasn't until his wife was diagnosed with psoriatic arthritis while she was training for a marathon, that he wanted to focus his specialty on joints. Researching between both rheumatology and sports medicine, he ended up with a fondness for the latter.



"I liked the lifestyle and patient satisfaction with sports medicine. The patients are more motivated in their health and to get back to their activities."

After growing up in Harrisburg, he completed his undergraduate studies at the University of Pittsburgh where he now practices as an internal medicine and primary care doctor at Allegheny Health Network, specializing in sports medicine.

In addition to seeing patients in the office, he has extensive experience working with athletes of all sports and levels, from high school to Olympic-level athletes.



He is the current Director of Internal Medicine with the Pittsburgh Pirates and has also worked with the USA Rugby team.

"My first week as an attending I covered the World Cup for Rugby in San Francisco," he said. "We ended up having to spine board a player in front of 50,000 fans and take him off the field."

Dr. Ved said he did that before he even saw a patient in a regular doctor's office.

"It was great, in a way, because that's what we practice; being able to respond when all eyes are on you."

Now, he teaches medical education to the USA Rugby medical staff, including CPR courses and how to respond to injuries on the field.

Dr. Ved said, "If a player goes down on the pitch, we teach how to approach them because in rugby the play doesn't stop. So, there could be a player injured on the field and the game keeps going."

In addition to rugby and high school sports, he is also the Director of Internal Medicine for the Pittsburgh Pirates. There he is part of a team of four doctors rotating between primary medicine and orthopedic surgeons.

"We get calls if there are any medical issues with the players. Even if a player has a cold, they'll send them to us for evaluation."

With the Pirates, Dr. Ved rotates weeks in Florida during spring training and does the official player physicals for their draft records.

"It's a really great experience. I get access to the games with myself and my fellows, and even can bring my family with me to spring training," he said.

Between the coverage of all those different sports, Dr. Ved said he sees all types of injuries.

"We see all injuries from head to toe," he said. "Sprains in the shoulder, ankles or rotator cuff injuries, we've seen them all. We use X-ray machines and ultrasounds to help evaluate any injury we see," he said.

In the last year, he said they have seen around 5,000 concussions.

"They're a huge part of what we do."

In his position, he works closely with the athletic trainers of these teams who will inspect the injuries and send them to the team doctor if further evaluation is needed.

Dr. Ved said, "If there is concern about a concussion, we can do a neurocognitive screening."

"When we see a player get diagnosed with a concussion, we can talk about supplements or brain rest. We've done research on concussions along what they call a balloon model, which just limits the amount of strain on a person's brain."

Even with a hectic schedule, Dr. Ved says he wouldn't trade it for anything.

"I love my practice, it's a nice balance between the office and the on-the-spot coverage." ■



Top Physicians Under 40 Awards



Shaili Amatya, MD

*Neonatal-Perinatal
Medicine*

Dauphin County

Improving Outcomes in Preterm Babies

Shaili Amatya, MD

When **Shaili Amatya, MD** started her residency at Pediatrics Maimonides Medical Center in New York, she already knew she wanted to study neonatology.

"I went into my pediatric residency and even at that moment, I was drawn towards neonates. That's how I structured my residency studies. By the time I reached my fellowship, I knew I wanted to do lung research."

After finishing her studies, she took a position with Penn State Health Children's Hospital as a physician scientist where, along with her clinical work, she can study and investigate mechanisms of how lung diseases develop in preterm babies.

Dr. Amatya says that her drive for her research comes with wanting to provide babies with a good long-term life without complications.

"These babies are born as early as 23-week gestations. They weigh nearly a pound or so," she said. "Some of them stay with us for weeks and months in the NICU. I wanted to learn why some babies are healthy and lucky, but others need more breathing support that will stay with them for the rest of their lives."

The focus of her studies is surfactant protein, its receptors and how the baby regulates its immune system. To do these studies, she uses small mouse pups.

"We use animal models, specifically mouse pups and expose them to infection and recapitulate to study the lungs and samples. We want to learn how the intracellular communication works."

Another focus of her work was implementing and establishing guidelines on the Bubble CPAP, a non-invasive ventilation strategy for newborns. The guidelines improved the overall usage of the Bubble CPAP and made sure babies were being weaned appropriately. This helps the preterm babies in being able to make their way home to their families.



Dr. Amatya said, "As a neonatologist and a physician, to be able to send these babies home with their families but also to make sure their long-term quality of life is good, that's what weighs on my mind. It's not enough that the babies survive but their quality of life is the best we could provide."

"It's such a humble profession and its very gratifying in the same sense. I feel fortunate to be able to do the work I do and at the end of the day if I can make a positive difference in these babies' lives, it's important."



Abby Geletzke, MD

General Surgery
Lancaster County



Kelly Goodsell, MD

Emergency Medicine
Philadelphia County



Nicholas Ierovante, DO

Interventional Cardiology
Lackawanna County



Sabrina Islam, MD

Cardiovascular Disease
Philadelphia County

Top Physicians Under 40 Awards



Saad Javed, MD

Gastroenterology
Mercer County



**Joanna
Kraynak-Appel, DO**

Family Medicine
Columbia County



Daniel Latta, DO

Colon and Rectal Surgery
Bucks County



Christina Lawson, MD

Dermatology
Lancaster County



Hammad Liaquat, MD

Gastroenterology
Lehigh County



Kristen Lutzkanin, MD

Allergy and Immunology
Dauphin County



Caitlyn Moss, MD

Internal Medicine
Berks County



Heidi Ochs, DO

Pediatrics
Venango County



Gurleen Pasricha, MD

*Hematology & Medical
Oncology*
Crawford County



Dustin Paul, DO

Child Neurology
Lebanon County



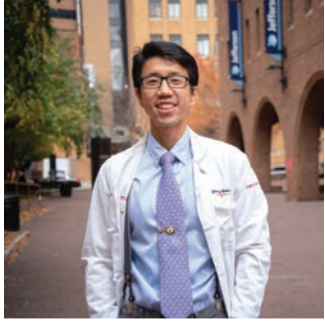
**Chaitanya Rojulpote,
MD**

Internal Medicine
Lackawanna County



Kyle Shilk, DO

Anesthesiology
Venango County



Xiao Chi Zhang, MD

Emergency Medicine
Philadelphia County

Triple Threat: Early Career Physician Works Towards Advancing Medicine Through Medical Student and Patient Education

Xiao Chi Zhang, MD

Xiao Chi Zhang, MD has a passion for people, it's what made him want to become a physician. Born and raised in China, he moved to America when he was 10 years old. He went on to study at Tufts University in Boston for his undergraduate, graduate and medical degrees where he triple majored in chemical engineering, biomedical engineering and pre-med.

"My initial idea was that I would be a single unit, interdisciplinary research physician. The goal was to weave my engineering background with the clinical practice of medicine," said Dr. Zhang. He stated that before he had any exposure to the medical field, he was interested in orthopedic surgery because that is where engineering usually takes place.

He said, "As I got more immersed within my medical school education, I found myself falling in love with emergency medicine... and here I am."

Now an emergency medicine physician with Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, Dr. Zhang works as a facilitator at the Medical Education Scholarly Inquiry, a required part of the Sidney Kimmel Medical College curriculum to provide medical students with skills and experience needed to become consumers and producers of medical knowledge.

It is a fairly new program which Dr. Zhang started as one of the facilitators and research mentors.

Dr. Zhang said, "One of my passions is mentoring, especially medical students. I want to leverage not only their interests but also their passion and proactive nature. I want to give them all the opportunities to succeed, not only as a medical student but as a scholar and innovator."



Top Physicians Under 40 Awards

“Some of my successful students didn’t succeed because I gave them a project, they succeeded because they had this notion and idea, and I gave them just enough expertise to propel their career. And I find that to be one of the most rewarding things,” he said.

Another passion for Dr. Zhang is volunteering. While in medical school at Tufts University, he volunteered once a week at a free clinic on his days off rotation.

“At medical school in Boston, the free clinic was located right in the middle of Chinatown,” he said. “I remember walking some patients from the clinics to the emergency department because some of those patient populations were very hesitant to seek out western medicine.”

Although moving to a new area and becoming a father prevented his schedule from continuing to volunteer at clinics, he is still passionate about using research to combat implicit biases with minorities, specifically the Asian American communities.

Dr. Zhang said, “As a Chinese immigrant physician, I am aware of specific biases that clinicians or any sort of health care providers have towards patients based on culture, skin color or financial background. The implicit bias that we all have plays a significant role in our patient’s lives.”

He is currently researching what effect biases play in how physicians interact with their patients. His mission is to take the research and turn it into an educational curriculum not only for undergraduate learners but also for those already in the workforce.

“I want to help teach how to be more of a self-aware and objective physician,” he said. “My desire to help my patients has never gone away, it has just developed into different avenues over the years.” ■



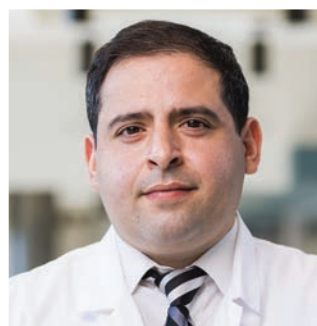
Shane Specht, DO

Internal Medicine
Lancaster County



Dillon Stein, DO

*Hospice & Palliative
Medicine*
Allegheny County



Fadi Sweiss, MD

Neurological Surgery
Lycoming County



Peter Tomaselli, MD

Emergency Medicine
Philadelphia County



**Edmond
Obeng-Gyimah, MD**

*Clinical Cardiac
Electrophysiology*
York County

Following Your Heart

Edmond Obeng-Gyimah, MD

Getting started with his medical career, **Edmond Obeng-Gyimah, MD** knew he wanted to explore the inner workings of the human heart.

"My dad had a heart attack when I was 7 years old, and we almost lost him. That is where my interest in science started." Going the traditional route of medical school at Albert Einstein College of Medicine and completing his residency and internship at Boston Medical Center, he came to the University of Pennsylvania for his fellowship in general cardiology and electrophysiology.



"During medical school, a lot of my research focused on electricity in the heart and how signals are generated, and I was really drawn to that, it made sense to me," he said. "Pulling it all together, electrophysiology was the way to go because that's all we do. We look at signals, we temperate them and we use technology to help treat abnormal signals in the heart."



At the University of Pennsylvania, he specifically studied ventricular tachycardia ablation, a procedure to eliminate the areas of the heart where erratic electrical signals cause your heart to beat too quickly. The procedure can include, but isn't limited to, inserting catheters through an artery or vein and guiding them to the heart.

"When I was a fellow at the University of Pennsylvania, the director of the program brought complex patient cases, that needed specific work done, to us because we could provide a higher level of care for them," he said. "A lot of places don't do it because it can be a complex procedure."

Dr. Obeng-Gyimah came to WellSpan Health in 2019 to build their cardiology program, where he is now the director of the Ventricular Tachycardia and Complex Ablation Program.

"When I got to WellSpan they were doing maybe 20 of these procedures a year and since I got here, we're doing over 100 a year."

Building the program, he said, takes a lot of time.

Top Physicians Under 40 Awards



“Like with anything, you need to build a team and there needs to be a lot of education,” he said. “When you bring something new that is that complex, you have to teach people in your operating room what to do, you have to even talk to your colleagues about when to refer a patient, when to give medication – so it was a process.”

But Dr. Obeng-Gyimah said the most important thing is always the patient.

“When you start doing a procedure that isn’t done a lot you have to make sure there aren’t a lot of complications. Eventually you earn the trust, and you start to get more referrals, so it’s been a good build of the program.”

In addition, Dr. Obeng-Gyimah says WellSpan is establishing itself as an expert training center for these procedures. They open their doors for physicians around the world to learn how to perform these procedures.

“In a few weeks, I have a doctor coming from China to learn from us and just recently trained a doctor from Johns Hopkins as well.”

Recently, Dr. Obeng-Gyimah offered to be part of an outreach program at the Cornerstone Baptist Church in York, PA. The program seeks to reach out to African Americans in the community to offer the opportunity to learn about heart disease, ask questions and get to know a physician in their community.

“It’s something that is very dear to me because we know that African Americans are more likely to die from heart disease, but they seek the least care for a couple of reasons: one is distrust, and one is just accessibility.”

“It’s important to meet people where they are, like their church. Being a black physician, showing up and talking to the community gives them that trust.”

As part of additional outreach, Dr. Obeng is a player on the U.S. Medical Soccer Team; a physician-only soccer team that plays other teams around the world. They were just recently in Vienna, Austria for its world cup.

“I love it. It combines my two favorite things, medicine and soccer.”

As a part of the soccer team, the physicians visit underserved communities and talk to middle schools about a career in medicine and how to stay healthy.

“It’s a good balance in terms of using what I do as a physician just through sports. It’s a good way to come together,” said Dr. Obeng-Gyimah. ■





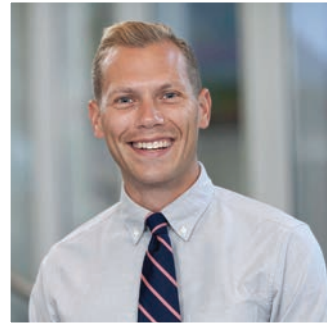
Elizabeth Ungerman, MD

Adult Cardiothoracic Anesthesiology
Allegheny County



Anthony Villano, MD

Surgical Oncology
Philadelphia County



Austin Williams, MD

General Surgery
Philadelphia County



Vanessa Wookey, MD

Internal Medicine
Philadelphia County



Meilin Young, MD

Internal Medicine
Allegheny County



Hans Zuckerman, DO

Family Medicine
Lebanon County

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Top Physicians Under 40 Awards — Photo Gallery





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a 2024 Top Physician
Under 40!

Deadline: January 14, 2024

Pennsylvania Medical Society's

**Top Physicians
Under 40**

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Congratulations to the Pennsylvania Medical Society 2023 Top Physicians Under 40



Dr. Shaili Amatya
Neonatal – Perinatal
Medicine



Dr. Kristen Lutzkanin
Pediatric Allergy and
Immunology



Dr. Dustin Paul
Pediatric Neurology,
Pediatric Neuromuscular Medicine



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Jefferson Health is a proud supporter of the Pennsylvania Medical Society.

Congratulations to Dr. Edith Mitchell on receiving the Distinguished Service Award.

Edith P. Mitchell, MD, FACP
Associate Director for Diversity Services, KCC Program Leader, Gastrointestinal Oncology Professor

Congratulations to the Top Physicians Under 40 Jefferson Health Awardees

Alan R. Cherney, MD, *Emergency Medicine*
Kelly K. Goodsell, MD, *Emergency Medicine*

Peter J. Tomaselli, MD, *Emergency Medicine*
Xiao Chi Zhang, MD, *Emergency Medicine*



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VOTED 2023
Top Physicians Under 40

Daniel Latta, MD
Colorectal Surgery

Daniel Latta, MD
Colorectal Surgery



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Distinguished Service Award (DSA)

The Distinguished Service Award is PAMED's most prestigious award, first given to Jonas Salk, MD, in 1956 for his role in developing the anti-polio vaccine.

Edith P. Mitchell, MD, MACP, FCPP, FRCP

When **Edith Mitchell, MD**, left her home in rural Tennessee to attend college, she knew she wanted to make a difference, but had no idea where the path would lead.

Decades later, Dr. Mitchell is board certified in internal medicine and medical oncology and the recipient of PAMED's 2023 Distinguished Service Award. The award recognizes her decades of achievements in medicine. She is currently the director of the Center to Eliminate Cancer Disparities for Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson Health, a past member of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Council of Councils, a former advisor on the President's Cancer Panel, has achieved Master level in the American College of Physicians (ACP); and is one of the few people in the United States who are fellows in the Royal College of Physicians, London (RCP).

Dr. Mitchell was also the first African American female physician to become a Brigadier General, but her journey into the military was unplanned. She met her husband at Tennessee State University where he was in the Air Force ROTC program and required to serve after graduation. After they married, her husband began pursuing his military training and she enrolled in medical school at Virginia Commonwealth University, then called Medical College of Virginia.

It was there that she connected with a physician who encouraged her to apply for a new scholarship the Air Force was introducing and was to give the military two years of service. She was accepted and, upon completion of her residency, was given a high-profile commission.

"I practiced internal medicine for the 89th wing at Andrews Air Force base, which is the squadron assigned to the President of the United States," said Dr. Mitchell. "And it was so cool! I grew up on a farm in Tennessee and I was now the doctor for people who I had only seen on tv or read about in the news."



She went on to receive many promotions during her time in the military, working with the National Institute of Health, establishing a variety of cancer research programs for the Air Force, and eventually, outranking her husband.

Just as she began thinking about retiring from the military at the twenty-year mark, Dr. Mitchell was approached about the possibility of becoming a general. The only thing standing in her way was the flight school requirement.

“Most people go to flight school in their early to mid-20s. I was in my 40s with teenage daughters,” shares Dr. Mitchell. “So, with family support, I signed up for flight school. I got my flight wings and my certification in aerospace medicine. And I am the first woman physician to ever become brigadier general in the Air Force.”

After retirement from the Air Force and tenure at the University of Missouri, Dr. Mitchell relocated to Pennsylvania to join the faculty at Thomas Jefferson University.

There she conducts pancreatic cancer research and development of new therapies, as well as serving as the associate director of Diversity Programs for the Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Jefferson. She has been the recipient of numerous awards and accolades for her dedication to cancer research, including the American Cancer Society Cancer Control Award in 2009; the National Medical Association Council on Concerns of Women Physicians Pfizer Research Award; ‘Physician of the Year’ by Cancer Care; and the 2011 Practitioner of the Year Award from the Philadelphia County Medical Society.

In 2012, Dr. Mitchell established the Center to Eliminate Cancer Disparities within the Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson and, in 2016, she was selected as one of 28 cancer experts for Vice President Joe Biden’s Cancer Moonshot Initiative.

Originally appointed by President Trump in 2020, Dr. Mitchell recently completed her three-year term on the President’s Cancer Panel in the Biden administration.

“I tell people, I’m not working for a president, I’m working for the people of the United States. If I can give a president something that allows him to understand cancer, to understand what the president needs to do for cancer, I will do that,” she said. “You have to rise above personal issues, political issues, and you’ve got to be able to reach politicians in a way that makes them understand what they need to do. You need to be able to get along with people, to communicate with people, in a way that is relevant to them.”

In November 2022, Thomas Jefferson University sought to celebrate Dr. Mitchell’s incredible history of service, research and care by unveiling her official portrait, making her the first Black woman to receive the honor.

“I don’t see myself as a trailblazer. I see it as doing what I think is important and what I’m able to do,” Dr. Mitchell shares.

“I’m looking ahead to see what else I can do. When I meet with medical students, residents, fellows, I tell them to take every opportunity and not be afraid to try new things. Make choices that allow you to do the things you want to do.” ■

Physician Award for Community Voluntary Service

This award recognizes members who have donated their time and expertise in community and international settings. In even-numbered years, it recognizes international volunteerism. In odd-numbered years, the award recognizes volunteerism in their community.

Elana McDonald, MD and Delana Wardlaw, MD

Not only are they sisters, but **Delana Wardlaw, MD** and **Elana McDonald, MD** are twins. Born and raised in Philadelphia, they both sought a path of medical education, first attending Temple University and then Pennsylvania State University College of Medicine at the Hershey Medical Center.

So, it wasn't surprising that they would end up working together to establish their own organization, Twin Sister Docs, which aims to increase awareness of health care disparities and help close the gap on inequality in health care.

Coming from a neighborhood in Philadelphia that they call "humble beginnings", they grew up seeing firsthand the economic and social struggles that play into quality health care.

Dr. Wardlaw said, "Our interest in medicine was piqued when our maternal grandmother died of breast cancer at the age of 53."

"When we got older, we sort of realized that our grandmother was working multiple jobs," said Dr. McDonald. "Thinking back, you put the pieces together and realize she probably didn't have health insurance or the proper access to health care. This was a big part of our why."

Both Dr. McDonald and Dr. Wardlaw saw a need to extend their practice and reach outside of the medical offices.

"We've been working in underserved communities for 20 years," Dr. Wardlaw said. "Our mantra is that your zip code shouldn't determine the quality of health care that you receive."



The mission of Dr. Wardlaw and Dr. McDonald is to not only educate the communities but also to help physicians understand the disconnect between minority communities and the distrust with the medical establishment.

“We also talk about cultural competency,” Dr. Wardlaw said. “Physicians need to be aware of the challenges of the communities that they serve.”

The concept of Twin Sister Docs was educating people about general information to take back to their doctor.

“We started out doing lives on Instagram where we would focus on breast cancer and statistics, how it is impacting the African American community, and why it’s important to get your mammogram,” Dr. Wardlaw said.

In addition to breast cancer, topics also included cervical cancer, colon cancer, the importance of pap smears and knowing your blood pressure.

Dr. McDonald explained, “The important thing was educating people to give them enough information to have a discussion with their doctors.”

“And just as we were getting off the ground, COVID hit,” she said.

During the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, Twin Sister Docs was instrumental in providing vaccine education through a variety of platforms.

“The one thing about COVID is that it caught us all off guard – the medical establishment, the government and the information was coming so quickly and changing so rapidly, we knew that would raise concerns,” said Dr. Wardlaw.

“We knew this was going to be an issue with the African American community. We knew that people feel more comfortable with someone they have something in common with, people who they feel like have their

backs,” explained Dr. McDonald. “So, we knew we could offer our medical expertise and connections with the community to help educate.”

One of their first outreaches was a state senator who asked them to come on a news radio show to give information about COVID-19, before the quarantine hit. From there they reached out to a prominent African American radio station in the community to give some information about COVID-19 and why it was important to take heed.

They did a lot of town halls with politicians like Senator Bob Casey, education sessions with schools to continue to provide education as well as church organizations and civic organizations that are prominent in the African American community.

“We knew we had to meet people where they are,” Dr. Wardlaw stated. “We were living in this virtual world, but we knew people were looking for familiar faces that they can connect to.”

“The misinformation was there, and we just needed to keep combating it,” said Dr. McDonald.

To lead by example, they also publicly shared when they received their own COVID-19 vaccinations.

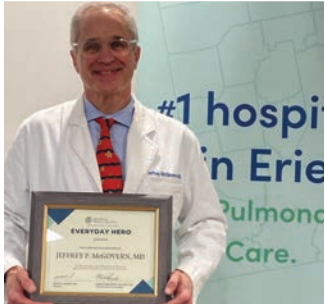
“We wanted to let people know that we are not suggesting something to them that we aren’t going to do ourselves or our family members,” Dr. McDonald said.

On learning they received the Voluntary Service Award from PAMED, they both said it was appreciated for recognition of the work they’ve done but also to further the work they still want to accomplish.

“Representation matters. If physicians don’t know the challenges that the African American communities are facing, they’re going to miss the ball on the connection with their patients,” Dr. Wardlaw said. “So, we’re glad to get this recognition and platform to share that education.” ■

Everyday Hero Awards

This award recognizes members who, in the eyes of their colleagues or patients, go above and beyond. Nominations are accepted and awards are given year-round.



Jeffrey McGovern, MD
Pulmonary Disease
Erie County



Louis Heyl, MD
Family Medicine
Allegheny County



Michael Marvin, MD
Transplant Surgery
Montour County



June Elcock-Messam, MD
Pediatrics
Delaware County



Stephen Neal, DO
Psychiatry
Greene County

Dana Morton, MD
Psychiatry
Greene County

Congratulations to These Everyday Heroes!



175th Anniversary Celebration



1848

The Beginning

175 Years Later, the Founding Attributes of PAMED Still Ring True

Prior to 1848, the commonwealth of Pennsylvania had just a handful of district and county medical societies, and there was little to no communication or collaboration between the groups. Realizing the need for a more organized, statewide system, Wilmer Worthington, MD, of Chester County prepared the following resolution at a meeting in December 1847:

"Whereas, No state medical society exists in Pennsylvania; and believing that such an institution would greatly contribute to the advancement of medical knowledge within its bounds; therefore,

Resolved, That it is expedient to hold a convention at such time and place as may be hereafter agreed upon...

Resolved, That the corresponding secretary be directed to forward a copy of these proceedings to the different medical schools and associations in the Commonwealth and solicit their early cooperation."



1965 PAMED Time Capsule Plaque

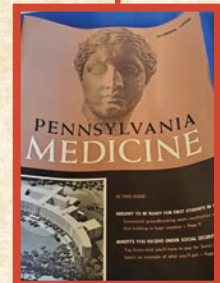
1965 PAMED Time Capsule



1965 Erford Road, Lemoyne



1965 PA Medicine Catalog



175th Anniversary Celebration

Spurred by this resolution, Lancaster County offered their own declaration soon after:

“Resolved, That this society now proceed to the election of delegates to a state medical convention, for the purpose of forming a state medical society, at such time and place as may be hereafter agreed upon.”

In early 1848, physicians in Chester and Lancaster counties extended an invitation to their colleagues in county medical societies and medical schools across Pennsylvania to attend a “convention of medical men.” The meeting was held on April 11th at the First Methodist Episcopal Church in Lancaster, and a total of 61 people gathered, representing the counties, the University of Pennsylvania, the Jefferson Medical College, the Pennsylvania Medical College, and the Philadelphia Association for Medical Instruction. This meeting set in motion the initial plans to establish a state medical society, with the group electing their first president, Samuel Humes, MD, and voting for each attendee to pay \$1 to help offset the costs of publishing the meeting’s notes.

The second meeting was held one year later, in April 1849, this time with only 31 physicians in attendance. The group looked to the model of the newly founded American Medical Association, reflecting on its objective to “promote the science and art of medicine and the betterment of public health,” as they crafted their own goals and initiatives.

Dr. Humes and the group addressed an extensive agenda, with topics ranging from ethical and legislative issues to a smallpox outbreak in Lycoming County. The meeting ended with passing a resolution to seek vital statistics legislation that would register births, marriages, and deaths, as well as a plan to pursue universal vaccination.

Early meeting records illustrate physicians’ concerns with the ethics of their profession, as well as worries over safeguarding medical education and professional qualifications. It was also evident that the society faced an urgent need for physician activism and leadership as it grappled with a variety of public health issues, including topics such as, “Does dysentery prevail most in sections where iron is infused in the soil?” and “Does clearing off of timber tend to increase affections of the nerves and intestines?”

As time went on and the Society solidified its presence, the group celebrated many accomplishments during its first century, including the passage of a bill for statewide registration of vital statistics, the creation of the Pennsylvania Department of Health, and the establishment of a state commissioner of public health.

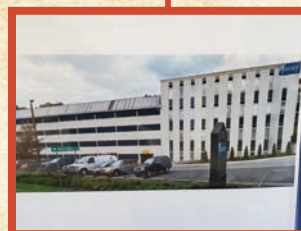


1980 PAMED Time Capsule Plaque

1980 PAMED Time Capsule



1980 Erford Rd, Lemoyne (expanded)



1980 PA Medicine Bicentennial Issue



The 100th year anniversary marked new innovations and discoveries for the Society, accompanied by a medical profession that was thriving nationally. During the 1950's, the Society initiated a "Safeguard Your Health" program, which aimed to share more information about public health with a wider audience. Through the use of newspaper columns, pamphlets, academic conferences, press releases, radio service messages and extensive scientific session coverage, the Pennsylvania Medical Society was known throughout the state for being the first and best source for public health-related education.

A 1955 radio show script notes, "Yes, medicine has made much progress in the past 40 years.... so much so that some doctors feel that medicine before this period can be considered as medicine practiced in the Dark Ages. With the discovery of sulfa, penicillin, streptomycin, and other new drugs in the past few years, we are able to cure many diseases today - diseases that took the lives of many people before the discovery of these new drugs."

And while the Society remained a leader in medical initiatives, the second half of the 20th century brought with it sweeping changes and adjustments as the world continued to quickly progress. The role of being a public health informer began to fall more to the private and public agencies who held the resources necessary for the expansive education needed.

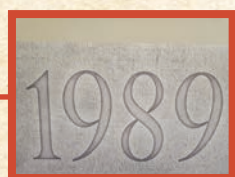
After dealing with unprecedented challenges including the introduction of Medicare, the evolution of complex hospital systems, HMOs, and the malpractice insurance crisis, the Society decided to shift its focus, opting to utilize its professional strength to protect and promote the well-being of physicians across the state.

Today, 175 years after that first meeting in Lancaster, the Pennsylvania Medical Society continues its original purpose of fostering the advancement of medical knowledge, relieving suffering, and promoting the health of the community. The mission remains the same as William S. Foster, MD, shared during his 1896 address to the State Society Delegates: "...it then follows that the ordinary physician who willingly, earnestly, and actively fulfills the ordinary demands of citizenship becomes the state's most valuable citizen.... A doctor ought to take an interest in politics - local, state, and national.... There is much for this Society to do for the state, and in doing for the state to advance at once its own honor and the welfare of every citizen however humble." ■

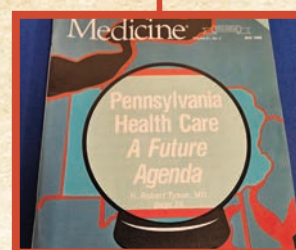
1989 PAMED Time Capsule

1989 East Park Drive, Harrisburg

1989 PA Medicine Catalog






1989 PAMED Time Capsule Plaque



Nominate a friend as a 2024 Everyday Hero!

www.pamedsoc.org/awards

Deadline: January 14, 2024

CALL TO NOMINATE



INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTARY SERVICE AWARD

www.pamedsoc.org/awards

Deadline: January 14, 2024



Pennsylvania MEDICAL SOCIETY
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Physician's Voice in Politics



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 Funds from corporations are prohibited.



www.pamedsoc.org/awards

CALL TO NOMINATE

**DISTINGUISHED SERVICE
AWARD**

Deadline: January 14, 2024



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How PAMED Leadership Has Evolved Throughout the Years

For 175 years, the Pennsylvania Medical Society has provided a voice to physicians as they navigate both changes and challenges in an ever-evolving health care system. Making sense of the many moving parts that accompany having a career in this field requires not only guidance and support, but also steady leadership.

From the time Samuel Humes, MD, was named as the first president of the society in 1848, PAMED has consistently elected strong leaders who prioritize advocating for its members.

“Since the early beginnings of our country, the physicians of Pennsylvania have been recognized leaders in their fields,” says G. Alan Yeasted, MD, PAMED’s 13th District Board of Trustee. “The Pennsylvania Medical Society has represented physicians and patients in their efforts to improve the health of the commonwealth.”

Over the past 40 years, with the dawn of Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs) and the introduction of Medicare, the Society has taken on an active role in the legislative matters that physicians are frequently faced with.

“One of the most important things we do is legislative advocacy, whether it is trying to get a new law passed or an old law revised, to better protect the patient and physician relationship,” shares PAMED President F. Wilson Jackson, MD. “Legislative activity is a huge value to the members and that’s what they are looking for, a voice to champion in Harrisburg regarding legislation.”

PAMED works with the Pennsylvania legislature to not only advocate for policy, but also to engage with them and encourage more diverse thinking. “I think that legislators come from a variety of backgrounds and may not have the medical expertise as they are thinking of solutions to problems. The Society informing and educating legislators on the medical perspective and the impact of some of their proposals is invaluable,” says Denise Johnson, MD, FACOG, FACHE, former Acting Secretary of Health and Pennsylvania Physician General.



SAMUEL HUMES
Lancaster County, 1848

State Medical Convention.

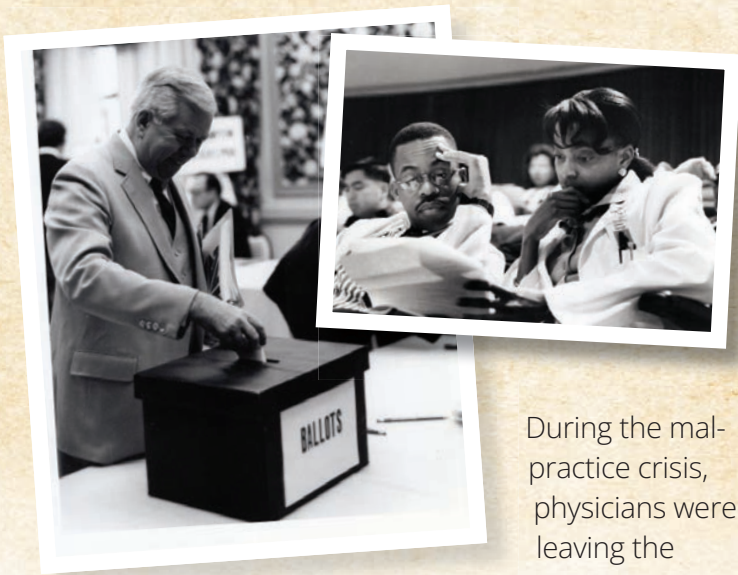
This body meets in the Methodist Episcopal Church, (Rev. William Urie's) in North Duke street, in this city, at 10 o'clock to-day. Among the delegates we recognize the names of some of the most eminent medical gentlemen in the state whose deliberations will doubtless prove highly instructive and interesting. We hope to have it in our power to furnish a detailed account of the sessions in our next.

Letters have been received by the Corresponding Secretary of the Lancaster Medical Society, informing him of the following appointments of Delegates:

Schuylkill County Medical Society.—Drs. James S. Carpenter, S. Morton Zulich, and John G. Koehler.

Berks County Medical Society.—Drs. I. P. Hiestler, William Moore and I. Horace Settger.

Philadelphia College of Medicine.—Professor Jesse R. Burden and Henry Gibbons.



During the mal-practice crisis, physicians were leaving the state, retiring, and rethinking their careers in record numbers. PAMED was a significant component in finding traction and assisting members in working through the confusion.

“That’s a great example of where the Medical Society has been able to step in and have a voice. Because they have access to the legislature, the Governor’s office, and the Department of Health, they were able to make a huge difference,” says Dr. Jackson.

As the pillars of health care structure and delivery have shifted, the Society has continued to adapt as well, helping to shape the current landscape.

“There has been a fair amount of consolidation in the marketplace in terms of health care delivery systems. In parallel to that consolidation has been the shift of independent, private medical practices becoming more often employed. That movement from private to academic or other employment models has gone above and beyond just physicians becoming part of an integrated health network system,” says Jackson. “PAMED has been extremely active in adapting to these changes and recognizing that as there are fewer and fewer independent physicians and adjusting based on the composition of the membership.”

Despite changes, the Society continues to evolve and remain relevant, providing members with the resources they need to practice the highest quality medicine. This includes offering a wide range of CME opportunities, allowing members to meet their state requirements, along with various educational modules and activities that encourage further learning.

“It has been my experience that PAMED truly advocates not only for us as physicians, but also for our patients. As member of the CME Collaboration Initiative, I have firsthand knowledge of PAMED’s institutional commitment to educating physicians through continuing medical education and providing expert resources and elevating the level of expertise to all of our members,” shares Julio A. Ramos, MD.

When looking towards future growth, the same themes that the Society was originally founded on still echo, including advancing the ethical practice of medicine through physician leadership, education, professional satisfaction, practice sustainability, and the public’s health.



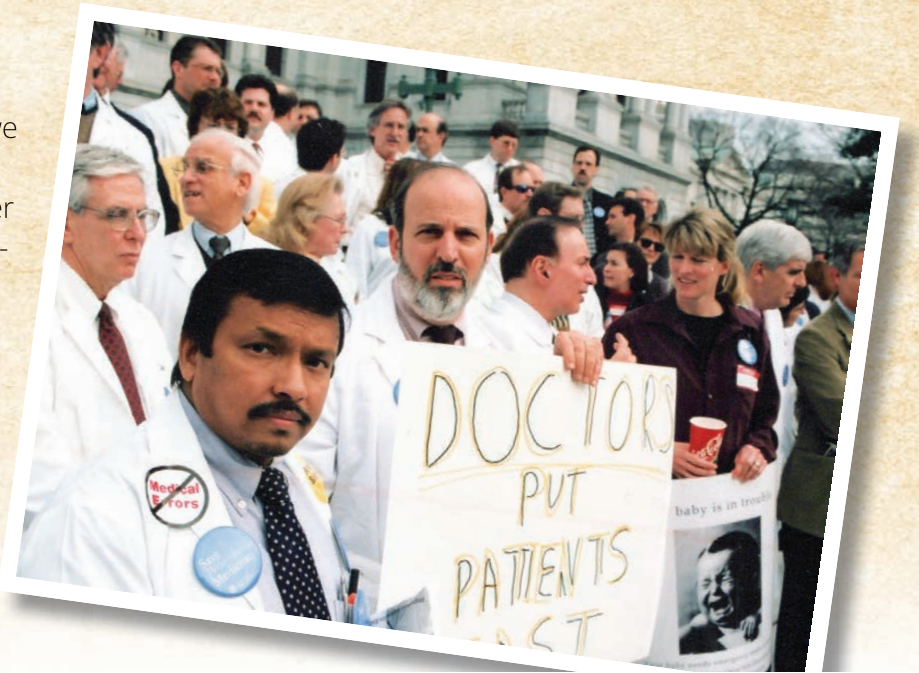
“I’m hoping for communication and increasing awareness around the physician’s responsibility in terms of rising health care costs. We need to get a handle on that and physicians need to recognize that they need

175th Anniversary Celebration

to be a part of that conversation," says Jackson. "Educating physicians can help bring them to the table regarding how we contain these costs. It's really about encouraging physicians to stay in the center of the leadership, engaged in our profession regardless of where their career is taking them."

Cynthia DeMuth, MD, shares that she had the privilege of helping formulate the new strategic plan and is looking forward to seeing those ideas develop further. Some of the targeted goals include growing membership, adapting to changes in both medicine and the marketplace, and continuing to prioritize physician wellness and mental health.

Says Dr. DeMuth, "PAMED brings physicians together to accomplish what we cannot do alone. As a trustee I have been very impressed by the amazing people on our board, in our leadership, and on the PAMED staff. They truly care about helping physicians improve their practice of medicine, advocate in the legislature for the best interests of physicians and patients and help physicians cope with the stress of our profession. I hope to have more physicians become members of our society and benefit from all it has to offer." ■





Thank You

F. Wilson Jackson, III, MD
for serving as PAMED's
173rd President



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NATIONAL Doctors' Day

MARCH 30TH 2023



We were #PAMEDProud to celebrate Doctors' Day in 2023! Congratulations to all of our 2023 physician honorees, including these PAMED members:

Bharat Adroja, MD
Allison Aggon, DO
Shefali Amin, DO
William Auriemma, MD
Atul Bali, MD
Parul Barry, MD
Catherine Bene, MD
Mark Biedrzcki, MD
Adam Biuckians, MD
Patricia Bononi, MD
Scott Brenman, MD
Jason Evans Burmeister, MD
Jaclyn Cappel, MD
Sriram Chowdary, MD
Tara Churilla, DO
Robert Coben, MD
Peter Cognetti, MD
Steven Cohen, MD
Michael Cohen, MD
William Coppula, MD
Cara Corpora, DO
Kelley Crozier, MD
Emilia Cuneo, MD
Erica Cusick, DO
Antionietta D'Urso, MD
Scott Dale, MD
Eldra Daniels, MD
Sarahgene Defoe, MD

Maria DeMario, DO
Kelli DeSanctis, DO
Nipa Doshi, MD
Darlene Dunay, DO
Mitchell Edelson, MD
Zaheer Faizi, MD
Amtul Farheen, MD
Jeffrey Farma, MD
Herbert Fellerman, MD
Timothy Flynn, MD
Simon Galapo, MD
Laurie Gallagher, DO
Emily Galli, MD
Mark Gannon, MD
Kenneth Gentilezza, MD
Priyanka Ghosh, DO
Lisa Goss, MD
Sharon Griswold, MD
Barbara Haeckler, MD
Daniel Haimowitz, MD
Marsha Haley, MD
Mohamed Hassan, MD
Andrew Haussmann, MD
Jenny Held, MD
Louis Heyl, MD
Scott Heyl, MD
Angela Hogue, MD
Nathan Hoskins, DO

Vanneta Hyatt, MD
Alessandra Intili, MD
Sabrina Islam, MD
F. Wilson Jackson, III, MD
Saad Javed, MD
Thomas V. Kantor, MD
Mary Kelleher, MD
Brian Kelly, MD
Koroush Khalighi, MD
Ayaz Khan, MD
Caren Kirschner, MD
Bruce Klugherz, MD
Julie Kmiec, DO
Christopher Koman, MD
Juanita Kreiser, DO
Rebecca Kreston, MD
David Lesseski, DO
Robin Licker, MD
Cinda Liggon, MD
Kirsten Lin, MD
Stanley Lobitz, MD
Stephen Lockey, MD
Kanesh Lohano, MD
Stephen Longenecker, MD
Mariano Loveranes, MD
Daniel Lutz, MD
Matthew Macken, MD
Scott Magley, MD

Mona Masood, DO
Mary Ann McDonald, MD
Glenn McGrath, MD
Jillian McLaughlin, DO
Jeff Minteer, MD
Steven Morganstein, DO
Dana Morton, MD
Karam C. Mounzer, MD
Jennifer Mungari, MD
Stephen Neal, DO
Anastasia Neil, DO
Lauren O'Brien, MD
James O'Bryon, MD
Heather Osher, DO
Mohamed Osman, MD
Donnie Ours, DO
Michael Pagnotto, MD
Raymond Pan, MD
Kelsey Pappas, MD
Deval Reshma Paranjape, MD
Gurleen Pasricha, MD
Sachin Patel, MD
Umang Patel, DO
Shripali Patel, DO
Peter Patitsas, MD
Herbert Patrick, MD
Stanley Peters, MD
Joseph Petfield, MD

Terry Philbin, MD
 Victor Pilewski, MD
 Pamela Pinto-Pannafino, MD
 Alex Pozun, DO
 Jennifer Rajan, MD
 Taryn Reichard, DO
 Andrew Richards, MD
 Stacey Robert, MD
 David Rolston, MD
 Danielle Rubinstein, DO
 Albert Ruenes., Jr, MD
 George Ruiz, MD
 Anuja Manju Sabapathy, MD
 Stephen Sacks, DO
 Usama Sadiq, MD
 Tad Scheri, MD
 Jessica Schwartz, DO
 Tameka Scott, DO
 Sueny Seeney, MD
 Hany Shanoudy, MD
 David Shober, DO
 Donald Shoenthal, MD
 Robert Shogry, MD
 Stephen Shore, MD
 David Siu, MD
 John Six, MD
 Chad Smith, MD
 Matthew Sniezek, DO
 Dillon Stein, DO
 Joseph Strangarity, MD
 William Surkis, MD
 Nita Tastogi, MD
 Kayleigh Taylor, MD
 Travis Taylor, MD
 Peter Tomaselli, MD
 Carolyn Van Why, MD
 Vince Vena, MD
 Arvind Venkat, MD
 Amber Warren, DO
 Mark Woodburn, MD
 Richard Wozniak, MD
 Alexander Yu, MD



View all of the honorees at
www.pamedsoc.org/DoctorsDay



PAMED Trustee Dr. Jeffrey Farma presented Dr. Sanjay Reddy with his Doctors' Day recognition.



Dr. Mariano Loveranes poses with PAMED staff member Janet Thompson on Doctors' Day 2023.



Drs. Cara Corpora, Koroush Khalighi, and Alissa Romano were recognized at Lehigh Valley Health Network's campus on Doctors' Day 2023.




Drs. Steven Cohen and Mitchell Edelson smiled with staff at Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center on Doctors' Day 2023.

— NATIONAL —

Doctors' Day

MARCH 30TH 2023




PAMED Vice Chair Dr. John Mantione presented Dr. Juanita Kreiser with her recognition alongside PAMED membership staff members Sarah Affeld and Julie Carr.



We were #PAMEDProud to recognize 5 Washington County members on Doctors' Day 2023!



Dr. Robert Shogry was presented with his Doctors' Day recognition from Allegheny County Medical Society staff member Nadin Popovich.



We're #PAMEDProud of 2023 honoree Dr. Herbert Fellerman.



Dr. David Shoher is pictured here with his Doctors' Day nominator Anne Thorman.



Dr. Stanley Lobitz poses with his award and loyal staff member Drake.



Doctors' Day honorees from Conemaugh Medical Center pose together with their executive leadership and PAMED staff.



Join Me in 2024 as We Work Together to Restore the Joy in Medicine

"I am honored to be stepping into the role of President of the Pennsylvania Medical Society in 2024. As I take office in January, I plan to focus on helping my colleagues and PAMED members restore the joy of practicing medicine. Along with our team at PAMED, I'll be sharing tips and tricks, education, and resources all aimed to restore pride in the profession you love."

—Kristen Sandel, MD



Pennsylvania
MEDICAL SOCIETY

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Congratulations TO THE 2023 AMES SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

The Foundation of the Pennsylvania Medical Society is pleased to announce the recipients of its 2023 Alliance Medical Education Scholarship (AMES) to seven Pennsylvania medical students.



NICHOLAS W. KIERAN
Sidney Kimmel Medical College at
Thomas Jefferson University
Class of 2025
\$2,500



YASH B. SHAH
Dr. William J. West Jr. Award
Sidney Kimmel Medical College at
Thomas Jefferson University
Class of 2025
\$3,000



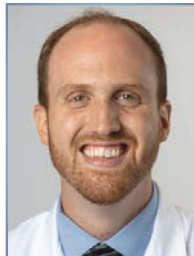
SAHAJ S. SHAH
*Dauphin County Medical Society
Alliance Award*
Geisinger Commonwealth School
of Medicine
Class of 2025
\$2,500



DENIZ SISO
Penn State University College
of Medicine
Class of 2024
\$2,500



MCKENZIE SICKE
University of Pittsburgh School
of Medicine
Class of 2025
\$2,500



DAVID H. TALARICO
Barbara Prendergast Award
Drexel University College of Medicine
Class of 2025
\$2,500



LYDIA R. SMELTZ
Robert and Arlene Oyler Award
Penn State University College
of Medicine
Class of 2025
\$3,000

Year-Round Leadership ACADEMY

Leadership Training for All Physicians.

Congratulations to the 2023 Year-Round Physician Leadership Academy Graduates!

Throughout the year, these physician members worked on their foundational leadership skills through online CME, in-person team building and education sessions, one-on-one coaching, and a capstone project.



▶ Register for the 2024 Year-Round Leadership Academy at www.pamedsoc.org/YRA!
The program begins late-January 2024.

Innovation Grant Winners

Examining Accuracy of Autism Classification Made by Pediatric Care Providers



If the project is successful, it aims to reduce frustration with systemic barriers that could impede caring for patients and supporting autistic children in accessing services to improve quality of life.

For the study, Dr. Lieberman and her team worked with colleagues to get in contact with patients, between the ages of 12-36 months, who they suspect needed a developmental evaluation. They are then recording the diagnosis and referring them to be seen within a month – either through telehealth evaluation or gold standard evaluation. At the end of the year, the team will compare notes and see how they were with successful diagnosis.

Dr. Lieberman said she would not be able to do this work without PAMED's Innovation Grant.

She said, "PAMED understands that we physicians in our practice can seek out and use creativity to solve gaps and to be supported to test them in a real and impactful way. We as physicians are naturally innovative. We're always looking for solutions. It stands to reason that there isn't always support for that but PAMED can see that need." ■

Recipient

Alexis Lieberman, MD, East Suburban Pediatrics
Advocare Fairmount Pediatrics, Philadelphia, PA
Grant amount—\$100,000

Alexis Lieberman, MD has been working as a pediatrician for 27 years caring for babies, children and teens. This year, she was the recipient of PAMED's Innovation Grant with a focus on testing primary care providers on their accuracy, confidence and acceptability when diagnosing autism in young children.

The goal of the project is to facilitate a future tiered diagnostic approach in which Primary Care Physicians (PCPs) can rule in or rule out autism in children for whom diagnosis is clear and refer more complex cases for specialist evaluation.

Dr. Lieberman said, "The current status of autism diagnosis is that children are referred to early intervention, a concept the school systems use to determine a child being ready to begin school."

She says the diagnosis of autism for school aged children is often late, and that a pediatrician can diagnose much earlier and start intervention.

"I see it in my own practice. We have some families that we suspect autism but didn't get diagnosed until 4 years old," she said. "Some we suspected autism at 15 or 18 months and the parents were able to get early intervention."



Alexis Lieberman, MD pictured with research collaborator Diana Robins, PhD.

Innovation Grant Winners

A Needle-Free Delivery System for Cutaneous Cancer Treatment

Recipient

Daniel Mazzaferro, MD – RheoTek Medical, LLC
Project location: University of Pennsylvania – Philadelphia, PA

While Mohs micrographic surgery and conventional excisional surgery offer excellent cure rates for localized skin cancer, many of these cancers are located on cosmetically sensitive sites including the face, ultimately resulting in negative psychosocial impact, scarring and complications.

Approximately 5.4 million keratinocyte carcinomas (basal and squamous cell) and 100,000 melanomas are diagnosed in the United States annually. For patients who are not surgical candidates, intratumoral immunotherapies alone or in conjunction with systemic therapies have the potential to improve outcomes.

This Innovation Grant project aims to be the first needle-free injector optimized for delivering immunotherapy for treatment of skin cancer. The project has developed a functional benchtop prototype that has been used on animals and human cadavers and is in the process of developing an alpha prototype. While needle-free injectors do exist, they are limited by 20 pounds of applied force, insufficient seal, single dose injection and a bulky power supply.

Our device can deliver liquid with a patent pending seal, power supply and technology to decrease the applied force while also performing highly precise injections at predetermined depths (dermis or fat). It can perform multiple injections with improved dispersion and decreased pain.

With the Innovation Grant, the team can complete these next steps in our development and testing, and ultimately facilitate our institution to be a leading contributor to a new treatment approach and help millions suffering from skin cancer in the United States annually. ■



The Recovery of Consciousness via Evidence-Based Medicine and Research (RECOVER) Program: A Novel Paradigm for Neuroprognostication



Recipient

David Fischer, MD, Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania

University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA

What is your education background?

I studied psychology, neuroscience, and philosophy of mind at Haverford College, and subsequently decided to pursue medicine with the intention of better understanding consciousness and using that understanding to treat patients. I attended Harvard Medical School where I completed a Howard Hughes Clinical Research Fellowship to learn advanced neuroimaging techniques for studying consciousness. I then completed a neurology residency and neurocritical care fellowship at Massachusetts General Hospital and Brigham and Women's Hospital, where I developed a specific interest in neuroprognostication, or the prediction of consciousness recovery after severe brain injury.

How did you come up with the idea for your Innovation Grant project?

Despite profoundly impactful implications for patient mortality and morbidity (particularly for decisions about continuing or withdrawing life-sustaining treatment), neuroprognostication is performed haphazardly and inaccurately at most institutions. A main cause for the variable and error-prone neuroprognostication practices is the conventional clinical

infrastructure for these evaluations. Frequently neurologists make these evaluations in isolation, have no specialized training in this area, do not have access to cutting-edge prognostic techniques and do not witness the full spectrum of neurologic recovery. To address these shortcomings, I conceived of the Recovery of Consciousness Via Evidence-Based Medicine and Research (RECOVER) Program, which aims to provide comprehensive and longitudinal support to patients with disorders of consciousness after severe brain injury. The program provides specialized consultation, access to advanced prognostic techniques, interdisciplinary input and support to patients and families throughout the timeline of recovery.

How is the development of your project coming along?

With the support of the Pennsylvania Medical Society Innovation Grant, the RECOVER Program has been successfully launched and developed. The program now consists of an inpatient consult service and an outpatient clinic, with a post-acute arm of the program in development. The program supports a weekly interdisciplinary conference regularly attended by neurointensivists, epileptologists, neuroradiologists, physiatrists, physical therapists, occupational therapists and ethicists, among others. The program has evaluated over 100 patients over the course of the year, providing specialized evaluation and advanced prognostic techniques (such as functional MRI).

Have you had any unexpected roadblocks along the way?

Even without formal advertisement, the RECOVER Program has begun to attract attention from clinicians and families at other Pennsylvania institutions. I have received numerous referrals for patients who require specialized neuroprognostication before families make a final decision about whether to continue or withdraw life-sustaining treatment. I

Innovation Grant Winners

was thrilled with the dissemination of the program and the enthusiasm about participation. However, a roadblock has been bandwidth. Though a long-term goal has been to attract other clinicians to the program to help support patient demand, demand has already begun to exceed that supply. My hope is that as the program continues to grow, we will continue to work towards meeting the needs of patients across Pennsylvania.

What are you hoping to accomplish with this project?

This project has multiple long-term goals, including the advancement of research in this field and quality improvement. However, perhaps the most important long-term goal is to establish Consciousness Prognostication and Recovery as a new sub-specialty in the field of Neurology, which will help ensure that patients across Pennsylvania, and across the

country, can access specialized neuroprognostic evaluations before making critical decisions about withdrawing life-sustaining treatment. To achieve this goal, we intend to expand services to other institutions through tele-evaluations and transfers and establish dedicated training in this emerging sub-specialty. With the help of the Pennsylvania Medical Society, we hope to establish Pennsylvania as the birthplace of this innovative approach to patient care. ■



Heal Well: Patient-Focused, Web-Based Program to Enhance Prehabilitation for Surgery



Recipient

Everett Hills, MD, Global Pain Management Solutions, Inc

Penn State College of Medicine, Hershey, PA

What is your education background?

Medicine is a second career for me. I originally studied to be an engineer and pivoted to medicine after

a year of research in the medical device industry. I gravitated to physical medicine and rehabilitation (PM&R) because of its focus on the whole person and improving quality of life. I graduated from the George Washington University School of Medicine and pursued my residency training in PM&R at the Thomas Jefferson University Hospital in Philadelphia, PA. I have a master's degree in applied mechanics from Northwestern University and completed a one-year fellowship in PM&R research at the University of Missouri.

How did you come up with the idea for your Innovation Grant project?

I had submitted a proposal for the innovation grant cycle in 2021-22 that went through the selection process but unfortunately was not granted. I was talking with a former colleague at the Penn State Hershey Medical Center about prehabilitation and creating an online, personalized, easy-to-understand

program for patients seeking assistance preparing for elective surgery. The idea of a digitized “pre-hab-to-rehab” program based on modifying lifestyle medicine issues that could be made available to patients regardless of location or access to traditional care seemed like a good idea.

How is the development of your project coming along?

The whole project has been an intellectually exciting, creative and personally fulfilling activity. Stage one was filled with many discussions and conversations with various experts about exercise, nutrition, mindfulness, tobacco and alcohol use and pain management. Pulling together our thoughts was one challenge. Another challenge was learning project management concepts as I did not have an extensive background. Fortunately, PAMED had study guides for project management for physicians that provided practical and pragmatic advice.

Stage two involved the creation of educational material for the website, all of which would not have been possible without this innovation grant. We were able to successfully recruit a young college graduate with a degree in computer science and experience with stack design who helped us create the webpage.

Stage three is focused on obtaining institutional review board approval to use our website in its current minimally viable product stage for patients to use for free and to give us feedback.

Have you had any unexpected roadblocks along the way?

I can't say there were unexpected roadblocks along the way. We were immediately aware of the importance of having multi-factor authentication to protect the users. Mostly, there have been unforeseen expenses that required using grant funds for different purposes than originally budgeted. We were fortunate to have a program manager who could sign “Heal-Well” up for free trials of busi-

ness platforms, data management sites and communication systems that were HIPAA-compliant.

What are you hoping to accomplish with this project?

We hope “Heal-Well” will change one’s personal value of medicine by helping each patient understand that they can help contribute to a positive recovery/outcome following a major life-changing event such as surgery. We believe “Heal-Well” will improve each patient’s health-literacy leading to a heightened sense of control and feeling of better health through education and the application of simple, reliable, personalized and evidence-based interventions. ■



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Innovation Grant Winners

Improving Access to Quality Coordinated Pediatric Care for Rural Pennsylvania School-aged Children via Telemedicine



Recipient

Marlene Wust-Smith, MD, Do No Harm, PLLC

Project location: Northern Potter School District, Ulysses, PA

What is your education background?

I am a board-certified pediatrician and owner and co-founder of DoNoHarm PLLC. I am partnering with Blueberry Pediatrics to provide telemedicine services for rural schoolchildren in Ulysses, PA. After studying at Cornell University for medical school and residency, I moved to rural Pennsylvania in 2006 and became an early adopter of telemedicine years before the COVID-19 pandemic made it the only alternative. I have extensive telemedicine experience with patients across the age spectrum.

How did you come up with the idea for your Innovation Grant project?

When children (grades pre-k through high school) at the North Potter School District get sick and are sent to the school nurse with a symptom that might normally prompt the nurse to have the child picked up and screened elsewhere, it is not uncommon that pediatricians and family practitioners are not available to promptly accommodate same-day sick requests. Children are then often referred to an Urgent Care or ER for care that should have and could have been handled more efficiently. Families with children in the North Potter School District will

have access outside of school hours with Blueberry Pediatrics which is available 24/7 to parents.

How is the development of your project coming along?

The development of our project has been steadily progressing. We are still actively enrolling families. To date, we have achieved nearly 50 percent participation, and thanks to the generous grant from the Pennsylvania Medical Society, children in these families will continue to have access to telemedicine services through the end of the school year (May 2024). Utilization of telemedicine services has been highest amongst schoolteachers with sick children; the convenience of being able to go to work (without needing to request the day off and securing a substitute teacher) has had a huge impact on the district.

Have you had any unexpected roadblocks along the way?

One of the unexpected roadblocks we encountered was that many eligible parents/families were not initially aware that the opportunity to receive free telemedicine services existed. We discovered that middle and high school students did not reliably give their parents the paper form/flyer that the school nurse had sent home with them. To address this issue, we proactively designed marketing tools, including informational poster boards, QR codes and an attractive table display with prize baskets. We disseminated this information via the school and PTA's social media pages, and we engaged a few high school students as facilitated enrollers. These initiatives were showcased at various community and school-sponsored events, which not only raised awareness about the grant but also assisted families who had already completed the first step but had not yet signed on to the Blueberry Pediatrics app. The initial onboarding process for Northern Potter School District families to Blueberry Pediatrics was a bit cumbersome. The Blueberry Pediatrics Engineering team was able to create a system of unique codes that significantly streamlined the process. We

are very grateful to Blueberry for taking the time to create this “workaround” as they were very busy developing and launching a new user platform AND expanding to many new states. The introduction of the unique codes substantially reduced delays in onboarding new families. Using JotForms, we were able to create a HIPAA and FERPA-compliant permission form and survey that significantly enhanced the overall efficiency and compliance of the process.

What are you hoping to accomplish with this project?

The goal is to allow the option for a “quick chat” option for children and parents when a child is sick at school. It enables the parents to also remain informed and involved with their child’s condition. The program also allows parents to remain at work or at home, instead of having to take their child to the doctors’ office or to urgent care. We can diagnose and treat a wide range of common pediatric conditions such as ear infections, strep throat, pinkeye, skin infections and viral syndromes. ■



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Poster Contest Winners

In 2023, our annual poster contest for medical students, residents, and fellows returned to an in-person poster competition! This next generation of physicians had the opportunity to present their research and gain feedback from seasoned physicians.



1ST PLACE WINNER

Kelly Stahl, Resident**

Penn State Health
Milton S. Hershey
Medical Center
***presented by
Antoinette Hu*

Research title: Benefits of Surgical Treatment in Stage IV Male Breast Cancer in Patients with Known Hormone Receptor Status

←—————→
difficult times in their lives. Pursuing a degree in medicine not only allowed me to care for patients during these difficult times, but it has provided me the knowledge to answer their questions and provide them with surgical interventions to fix their problems.

What aspirations do you have for your future in health care?

I am currently applying to Endocrine Surgery Fellowship. After fellowship I hope to work at an academic medical center as an Endocrine Surgeon and I plan to research barriers to care and quality outcomes for patients with diseases of the adrenal, parathyroid and thyroid gland. ■

Why did you choose this topic for your award-winning poster?

I had previously researched the benefits of surgical treatment in women with stage IV hormone receptor positive breast cancer and I was interested to see if the findings would be similar in men with the same stage disease. Given that male breast cancer is a rare condition and usually found at later stages I was curious to know if men would have similar survival benefits based on the surgical intervention they received.

What (or who) inspired you to enter the field of medicine?

In college, I worked as an adjunct chaplain at a pediatric children's hospital and as a sexual assault counselor. These two experiences exposed me to patients and their families who were going through very difficult situations and provided me with a glimpse into the very personal side of medicine. I was able to see the impact that I could have caring for patients and their families during the most



2ND PLACE WINNER

Madison Gladfelter, Student

Geisinger
Commonwealth School
of Medicine

Research title: Impact of Fragmented Care on Survival and Textbook Outcomes in Rectal Cancer: A NCDB Study

What (or who) inspired you to enter the field of medicine?

I chose to enter the medical field after watching my grandpa battle cancer at an early age. I became curious about the medical field and the jobs it had to offer after being exposed to the hospital setting during my grandpa's care. Then, I had the opportunity to work in the operating room (OR) at my local hospital during my pre-medical school years. My time in the OR has directed my medical school trajectory as I then knew I wanted to go into a surgical specialty.

What aspirations do you have for your future in health care?

I am an aspiring otolaryngologist/ENT with the hopes of specializing in head and neck cancer. I like the balance between clinic and surgery that ENT has to offer because I want to get to know my patients and their families. I'm leaning toward head and neck cancer because I want to give the same kind of care that the doctors gave my grandpa in his cancer battle. ■

Why did you choose this topic for your award-winning poster?

The idea of fragmentation of cancer and oncologic outcomes are interesting topics. The goal of researching these topics is to figure out how to improve oncologic outcomes to increase overall survival and improve the quality of life for these patients. Most of the literature we investigated showed that fragmentation of cancer would negatively impact oncologic outcomes due to the discontinuity between treatment modalities. However, our research on fragmentation of care showed the opposite; those patients who received surgery at a high-volume center and chemo/radiation locally had better oncologic outcomes. While our results differ from most of the literature, fragmentation of care is a variable that has the potential to impact overall survival in oncological patients and thus should be studied.



Poster Contest Winners



3RD PLACE WINNER

**Alexander Adams,
Resident**

Rothman Institute at
Thomas Jefferson
University

Research title: Preoperative Opioid Use Results in Greater Postoperative Opioid Consumption after Thumb Basal Joint Arthroplasty

What aspirations do you have for your future in health care?

After completing my residency in orthopedic surgery at Thomas Jefferson University/Rothman Orthopedics next June, I will go to Harvard Massachusetts General Hospital to complete my Orthopedic Hand and Upper Extremity Surgery Fellowship. In my future practice, I aim to deliver optimal patient care while continuing to teach as well as perform clinical research.

Do you have anything else to add related to your experience participating in the poster contest?

I am very grateful to PAMED for providing the opportunity to present my research in the poster contest. It was great meeting other PA physicians and PAMED members and staff, and I hope to continue my involvement in the future! ■

Why did you choose this topic for your award-winning poster?

This study uniquely uses Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) data to determine risks for prolonged opioid use in a large series of patients undergoing surgery for a common area of thumb arthritis. Preoperative opioid use was the greatest predictor of continued opioid use and only 9 percent of supplemental opioid prescriptions were prescribed by surgeon's office. Information from this study could assist surgeons with patient selection, counseling and analgesia strategy for thumb basal joint arthroplasty. This study is accepted for publication by Journal of Hand Surgery Global Online and presentation at multiple national meetings, including an award at the American Society for Surgery of the Hand.

What (or who) inspired you to enter the field of medicine?

I was originally inspired to pursue a career in science after learning the sliding filament mechanism of muscle contraction in my high school AP biology course, which fascinated me. During college, I confirmed I wanted to become a physician while volunteering as an EMT and tutoring students in human biology, when I realized I could combine my interest in science with helping others.





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Congratulations

Gurleen Pasricha, MD

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One of Pennsylvania Medical Society's Top Physicians Under 40 for 2023



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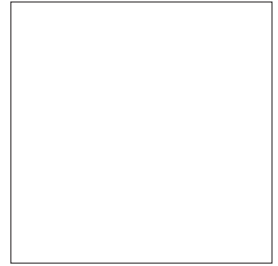
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