

Department of Surgery

NEWSLETTER

SPRING - SUMMER 2022



Letter from the Chair

With the advent of the new academic year, I would like to congratulate our departing chief residents once again and wish them all the best as they embark upon the next chapter of their careers. I would also welcome all of the new residents who have joined our training program. Welcome to Worcester! We are delighted that you have chosen to come to UMass.

As a Department, a hospital system, and a Medical School, we have met successive waves of COVID head on, and we are stronger for it. Although the future can be unpredictable, the worst is almost certainly behind us. I look forward to our plans to continue to build and grow into the future, all part of the same team.

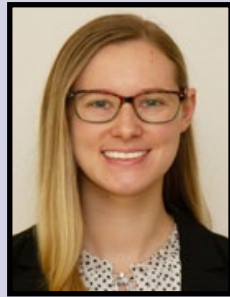
Demetrius

2021-2022 Department of Surgery



WELCOME NEW 2022 - 2023 DEPARTMENT OF SURGERY RESIDENTS

General Surgery - Categorical PGY-1



Fiona Dore, MD
UMass Chan Medical School



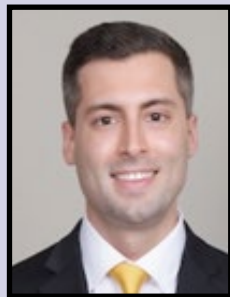
Benjamin Gallant, MD
Albany Medical



Sasank Kalipatnapu, MBBS
Christian Medical College



Nichita Kulkarni, MD
UMass Chan Medical School



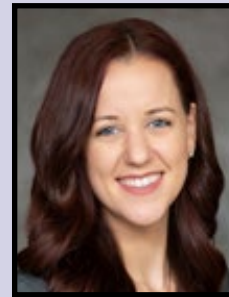
Joseph LiCausi, MD
UMass Chan Medical School



Alexander Moskovitz, MD
University of Miami



Julie Thomann, MD
Rutgers University



Kayla Widdowson, MD
University of Miami

General Surgery - Preliminary PGY-1



Athena Bain, MD
University West Indies



Elliot Cha, MD
Geisinger Medical



Angelica Nieves-Rivera, MD
Ponce University



Dallas Walter, MD
Tufts University

General Surgery PGY-2



Jiddu Guart, MD
Ross University



Yousif Kettoola, MD
Boston University

Plastic Surgery PGY-1



Sivana Barron, MD
Tufts Medical School



Jane McLarney, MD
Tufts Medical School

Vascular Surgery PGY-1



Donald Chute, MD
Geisel School of Medicine
at Dartmouth



Ryan LaGrone, MD
University of Alabama
School of Medicine

WELCOME DEPARTMENT OF SURGERY NEW FELLOWS

Advanced Minimally Invasive and Bariatric Surgery Fellow



Gil Freitas, MD
UMass Chan Medical School

Colon and Rectal Surgery Fellow



Dong (Don) H. Yoon, MD
Albert Einstein College of Medicine

Calling for Submissions!

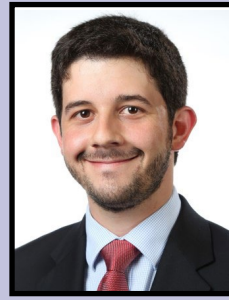
We would love to highlight your achievements! Please send all submissions including high-resolution photos to
Themia Pappas-Fillmore in the Department of Surgery (Surgical ASG)
themia.pappas-fillmore@umassmed.edu

CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATING CHIEF RESIDENTS AND FELLOWS

General Surgery



Katherine Bakke, MD, MPH
Department of Surgery
University of Wisconsin School
of Medicine



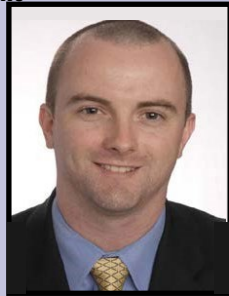
Ricardo Bello, MD, MPH
Complex Surgical Oncology Fellow-
ship, Medical College of Wisconsin



Ryan Hendrix, MD
Cardiothoracic Surgery Fellowship
Beth Israel Deaconess Med Center



Dorothy Liu, MD
Trauma/Critical Care Fellowship
Temple University



Robert McLoughlin, MD, MSCI
Pediatric Surgery Critical Care Fellowship
Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital



Salim Munoz, MD, MBEE
Abdominal Transplant Fellowship
University of Miami



Clark Murray, MD, MS
Trauma/Critical Care Fellowship
John H. Stroger Jr. Hospital of Cook County

Plastic Surgery



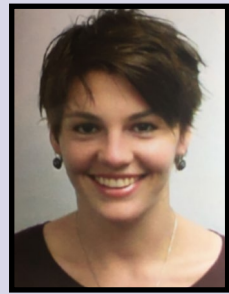
Brian Jao, MD
Hand Fellowship
UT Southwestern



Jorge Lujan-Hernandez, MD
Craniofacial Fellowship
Stanford University



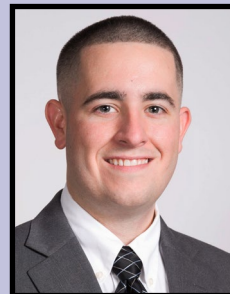
Zachary Fang, MD
The Vascular Care Group
Wellesley, MA



Hazel Marecki, MD
Baystate Health
Springfield, MA

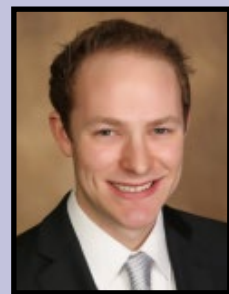
Vascular Surgery

Advanced Minimally Invasive and Bariatric Surgery Fellow



John Kelly, MD
General and Bariatric Surgery
Holy Family Hospital, Methuen, MA

Colon and Rectal Surgery Fellow



John Konen, MD
Colon & Rectal Surgery
Rush University Medical Center

2022 GRADUATION AWARDS

Clark Murray, MD, MS

Resident Teacher of the Year Award

The Resident Teacher of the Year Award, is given to a senior member of the Surgical Residency Program who best exemplifies the qualities of an outstanding teacher by sharing knowledge with fellow residents and students, and exemplifies the qualities everyone seeks in a surgeon: patience, conscientiousness, organizational ability, knowledge, technical skill.

Katherine Bakke, MD, MPH

Resident Leadership Award

The Resident Leadership Award was created in 2020 and is awarded annually by the Chair and Program Director to the resident who epitomizes leadership in the General Surgery Residency. This year's recipient was selected in light of her superior commitment to the humanistic care of patients and leadership in the COVID19 pandemic. In the darkest of times, Dr. Bakke led the Department and Residency by voluntarily serving on the front lines and caring for the sickest of patients. At the same time, she led the Department's Wellbeing initiatives, ensuring that all members were united and supported. These characteristics remain central to her daily practice.

Subhash Gulati, MD

**Brian E. Bednarz, MD Faculty Award
2022**

Presented annually to a surgical faculty member selected by the graduating chief residents for his/her extraordinary influence and dedication in mentoring residents.

Ricardo Bello, MD, MPH

The H. Brownell Wheeler Award

This award is presented annually to a surgical resident, who by mutual agreement of faculty and residents has best demonstrated those human values which are desirable in a surgeon. The individual, though early in his or her career, demonstrates the ability to comfort and encourage patients and families, elicit trust and confidence, work cooperatively with colleagues, and treat all others with respect, dignity and kindness.

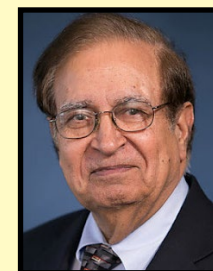
This award is made in order to recognize not only the professional achievements of our residents, but also their human and caring qualities, which may at times be difficult to express. In honoring this individual, we also seek to honor all other residents in the program who display the same characteristics.

Giles Whalen, MD

**Frederick J. McCready, MD
Teacher of the Year Award**

The Frederick J. McCready, MD Teacher of the Year Award honors the memory of Dr. McCready, a member of the staff at Saint Vincent Hospital, who found joy in teaching residents and students.

Each year at the Surgical Residents' Awards Ceremony, an attending is honored with his/her name engraved on a trophy which is displayed in the office of the recipient for the year. A plaque is also given to the award winner to keep in his/her office. It is engraved with the name of the winner and these thoughts from Gibran's The Prophet: "The teacher who walks in the shadow of the temple, among his followers, gives not of his wisdom but rather of his faith and his lovingness. If he is indeed wise, he does not bid you enter the house of his wisdom, but rather leads you to the threshold of your own mind."



Subhash C. Gulati, MD Retires

Subhash C. Gulati, MD was one of the first residents in the UMass Coordinated Surgical Residency Training Program in 1976 at Worcester City Hospital. He completed his vascular fellowship with John Herrmann, MD in 1982 and practiced General and Vascular Surgery at UMass for 40 years until his retirement, June 30, 2022.

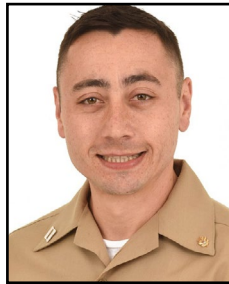
Generations of residents have benefitted from Dr. Gulati's experience and his dedication to education and mentorship, and UMass Memorial has grown and thrived because of the commitment of physicians like Dr. Gulati.

Please join me in congratulating Dr. Gulati on his retirement. Subhash and Praveen will be moving to California to join their son and his family which includes a new grandchild. - Demetrius Litwin, MD, MBA

RESIDENT UPDATES

Residents of the Month

Resident of the Month Award is awarded monthly to a surgical resident from the three Department of Surgery residency programs. We encourage all to submit names of residents for this honor at: <https://forms.gle/6LzJ5juQCpizhhF99>.



February 2022 – Daniel Baldor, MD
General Surgery Resident (PGY-4) and

March 2022 – James Stevenson, MD
General Surgery Resident (PGY-2)

This award recognizes the excellence of **Drs. Dan Baldor** (top left) and **James Stevenson** (bottom left), who demonstrate excellence daily and whose clinical superiority was critically vital on a recent call night. On this evening, Dr. Stevenson was the Memorial mid-level resident. In this role, he demonstrated incredible decision making and sound clinical judgement in the care of two critically ill patients. Part of this decision making involved calling upon Dr. Baldor, who served

as a calm and effective leader and teacher, as he guided Dr. Stevenson through the care of these patients. We thank you both for your strength of character, clarity of mind, superior decision making, and team-based excellence.



April 2022 - Eric Finnesgard, MD, MS,
Vascular Surgery Resident (PGY-2)

Dr. Finnesgard is most deserving of this honor. He was nominated by his peers: "his kind and gentle bedside demeanor puts me at ease. His patience on AM rounds is exceptional." Eric embodies professionalism with kindness, humility, work ethic, and unparalleled perseverance.



May 2022 - Kaitlan Ahrens, MD
General Surgery Resident (PGY-4)

Is there any other choice? In my mind, Dr. Ahrens is the ultimate resident. She is strong, kind to patients and clinically excellent. Vote for Ahrens! Best resident in the hospital. Always smiling & taking great care of her

patients. Incredible trauma surgeon. Knows all there is to know.

Superstar resident who demonstrates incredible strength of leadership, teaching, teamwork, and decision making. We are all better because of Dr. Ahrens. Strength of character, clarity of mind, superior decision making and team-based excellence.



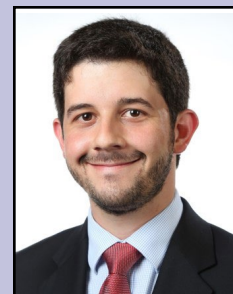
June 2022 - Tom Creeden, DO
Vascular Surgery Resident (PGY-3)

Congratulations to Dr. Creeden who was nominated by numerous residents for his truly superior teamwork and clinical excellence. Peers note that Dr. Creeden demonstrates an "above and beyond bedside manner." From others,

"Tom dominates weekend call. He sees consults, runs trauma, and operates effectively and efficiently. He's simply one of the best." As if Dr. Creeden's exceptional skill in clinical medicine is not enough, he is a true Renaissance man. His VSite review book was recently published and the #1 new release book in Thoracic and Vascular Surgery (see page 6).

Oustanding Resident Clinical Educator Awards

Ricardo Bello, MD, MPH and Clark Murray, MD, MS, were nominated by the Graduating Class of 2022 for Outstanding Resident Clinical Educator Awards. Congratulations Dr. Bello and Dr. Murray.



Ricardo Bello, MD, MPH



Clark Murray, MD, MS



The Vascular Surgery Review Book

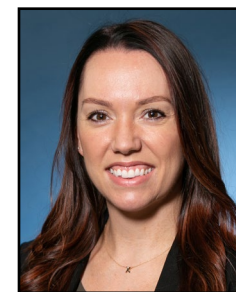
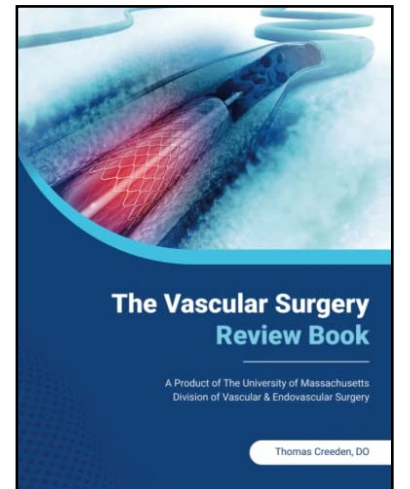
By **Thomas Creeden, DO, PGY-3,** Vascular Surgery Resident

The Vascular Surgery In-Training Exam Review Book is a high-yield reference text designed to accommodate the aspiring vascular surgeon, & vascular surgeons in-training, both integrated residents & vascular surgery fellows. The note-style & bulleted format allows for easy navigation of complex information. Use this book to prepare for the VSITE, oral & written board exams, and most importantly, to review the pathologies & treatments for patients on a daily basis.

The Vascular Surgery Review Book is the ultimate high-yield reference text which has been harvested from current vascular surgery textbooks, vascular surgery webinars, journal articles, case conferences & numerous individual presentations from vascular surgery leaders across the world. Condensed to less than 400 pages in a meticulously organized, "notes-style" format, this allows the reader to obtain their desired information with ease.

Tom Creeden is an integrated vascular surgery resident at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, under the direction of Dr. Andres Schanzer & Dr. Jessica Simons. He obtained an undergraduate degree from the University of Northern Iowa, and a medical degree from Des Moines University College of Osteopathic Medicine. Tom scored in the 95th percentile on his VSITE across all PGY-levels on his most recent attempt.

The book is now sold on [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)
Congratulations Thomas Creeden, DO



From Worcester to Zambia: Resident Meets with International Collaborators

By **Erin M. C. Scott, MD, MPH**

Global Surgery Research Fellow, General Surgery Resident

Over the last two years, our Department of Surgery has been working in collaboration with the American College of Surgeons Operation Giving Back, and colleagues from the College of Surgeons of East, Central, and Southern Africa, to support surgical training and surgical care delivery in Lusaka, Zambia. As part of this multi-institutional collaboration, I've spent the last year leading a task force in designing and implementing a needs assessment for the initiative. This May, I was able to join two other faculty members from the Research focus group on a trip to Lusaka, to finally meet our Zambian colleagues in person. Throughout the week, our team met with various stakeholders and surgical faculty to brainstorm solutions to the gaps identified in our needs assessment, and we also conducted research methodology workshops for both residents and faculty. Most importantly, our teams spent time learning about each other, our respective experiences with training and medical academia, local healthcare cultures and attitudes, and the state of surgical care delivery both in Zambia and in the US. It was a phenomenal experience, and I look forward to seeing the evolution of our collaboration in the years to come!



American College of Surgeons faculty (including **Demetrius Litwin, MD, MBA**, 3rd from right) meeting with University of Zambia faculty in the teaching hospital emergency department in Lusaka, Zambia.



Erin Scott, MD, MPH (2nd from right) celebrating a successful week with University of Zambia surgical faculty in Lusaka, Zambia.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS, APPOINTMENTS, AND PROMOTIONS

UMass Center for Clinical and Translational Science (UMCCTS) PPI Award

Congratulations to **Babak Movahedi MD, PhD**, Assistant Professor, Chief, Division of Organ Transplant Surgery, 2022 Pilot Project Program Awardee, for his work in Automatic Wild-field Optical Imaging for Transplant Organ Viability Assessment.

Wylie Scholar Award

Congratulate to **Tammy Nguyen, MD, PhD**, on receiving the Wylie Scholar Award from Vascular Cures. This is an extremely competitive grant for translational investigators and provides \$150,000 of support over 3 years. Past Wylie Scholars have included many high impact scientific leaders in vascular surgery. Please reach out and congratulate Dr. Nguyen on this amazing accomplishment! <https://vascularcures.org/category/news/>

Promotion

Jon Dorfman, MD, Chief of Surgical Care (Trauma and Surgical Critical Care): Associate Professor of Surgery.

Appointment

Leora Balsam, MD, Division of Cardiac Surgery, has been appointed to the Editorial Board of the Journal of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery, which is the highest impact journal in the field of Cardiothoracic Surgery. She is in the Adult Cardiac Surgery section.



Vascular Surgery Residents Team Building Day

Vascular Surgery Residency had a team building sledding event during the snowstorm on February 18, 2022. (Sitting, left to right) **Emily Fan, MD**, **Kris Boelitz, MD**, **Hazel Marecki, MD**, Vascular Surgery Program Director, **Jessica Simons, MD, MPH**, (Standing, left to right) **Thomas Creeden, DO**, and **Charles Fang, MD**.

Department of Surgery, General Surgery Graduating Chief Residents

(Left to right) **Robert McLoughlin, MD, MSCI**, **Dorothy Liu, MD**, **Jennifer LaFemina, MD** (General Surgery Residency Program Director), **Salim Munoz, MD, MBEE**, **Ricardo Bello, MD, MPH**, **Clark Murray, MD, MS**, **Ryan Hendrix, MD**, **Katherine Bakke, MD, MPH**.



Congratulations to our incredibly talented chiefs and now surgeons. You are ready to fly. The future of surgery is now.

Thank you for your leadership this year.

RESEARCH UPDATES

2nd Annual Department of Surgery Research Symposium

By **Cathy Beauharnais, MD**, General Surgery PGY-2, Research

The Department of Surgery hosted its 2nd Annual Research Symposium on May 19th. We were delighted at the great turnout of presenters and participants showcasing the depth and breadth of research in our various surgical fields, including General Surgery, Orthopedics, Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery and Urology. **Karim Alavi, MD, MPH**, Director of Research, delivered the keynote address. Many thanks to Dr. Alavi for offering invaluable insights to residents and faculty on some of the foundations of outcomes research, including developing and tailoring a research question. There were excellent talks, 7 podium and 20 poster presentations.

We would like to congratulate this year's award winners:

Best Podium Presentation: Daniel Baldor, MD, MPH, General Surgery PGY-4, "Identifying when CPR is no longer protective – Survival in Propensity Score Matched Full Code and Do-Not-Resuscitate patients in the ICU" (Mentor – **Ulises Torres, MD**)

Best Poster Presentation: Maggi Ahmed, MD, PhD, General Surgery PGY-1, "A Double Blinded Randomized Placebo Controlled Trial to Study the Synergism of JAK or Calcineurin Inhibitors and Phototherapy to Promote Melanocyte Transplantation Surgery in the Treatment of Vitiligo" (Mentor – **John Harris, MD, PhD**)

Best Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Presentation: Patrick Curtin, MD, Orthopedic Surgery PGY-2, "Social Determinants of Health and their Effect on Orthopaedic Trauma Care" (Mentor – **Eric Swart, MD**)

Best Medical Student Presentations: Olivia Sears, MS3, "The Association between Sarcopenia and Post-operative Outcomes in Lung Cancer Patients who Underwent Curative Resection" (Mentors – **Karl Uy, MD** and **Feiran Lou, MD, MS**)

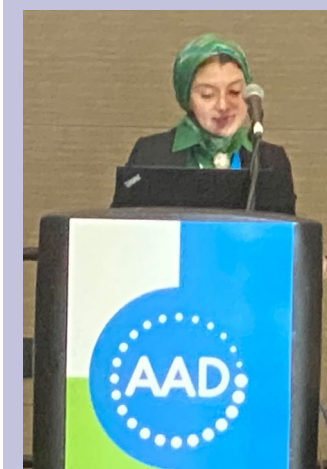
Jing Xu, MS4, "Comparing Gender Congruency in Nonsurgical versus Postsurgical Top Surgery Patients: A Prospective Survey Study" (Mentor – **Joyce McIntyre, MD**)

Thank you to all who participated! As we hope to maintain the research symposium as a yearly UMASS Surgery tradition, we look forward to seeing you next year!

Fox Award: The future of dermatology recognized

Maggi Ahmed, MBChB, MSc, PGY-1, Surgery Resident, was awarded 1st place for best presentation in the residents and fellows symposium at the American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) Annual Meeting, held in Boston, March 26.

Dr. Ahmed received the Annual Prestigious Everett C. Fox, MD Memorial Lecture Award for the most outstanding clinical abstract: A Double Blinded Randomized Placebo Controlled Study to Examine the Efficacy of JAK or Calcineurin Inhibitors Added to Phototherapy to Promote Melanocyte Transplantation in the Treatment of Vitiligo.



The Division of Cardiac Surgery had a strong presence at this year's annual meeting of the Association of Physician Assistants in Cardiovascular Surgery – **Jennifer Sullivan, PA-C** was the CME chair, with **Jennifer Walker, MD**, and **Stephanie Mayberg, PA-C** as invited lecturers.

Ricardo Bello, MD, MPH, and **Stephanie Mayberg, PA-C** presented their work on SSI reduction and readmission at this year's convention of the American Association for Thoracic Surgery.

Spring Updates from the Department of Surgery Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Task Force



Muriel Cleary, MD
Chair, DEI Task Force
Division of Pediatric Surgery

Honors

Paulo Martins, MD, PhD has been elected to the UMass Chan Medical School Personnel Action Committee (PAC) for oversight of the faculty promotion process.

Giorgio Giatsidis, MD, PhD has been selected as one of 15 faculty voting members on the UMass Chan Medical School Committee on Equal Opportunity and Diversity.

We also wish to congratulate **Patrick Curtain, MD** and **Jing Xu, MS4** on their recent awards at the 2nd Annual Department of Surgery Research Symposium (see page 9).

Outreach

Catherine Beauharnais, MD and **Muriel Cleary, MD** spoke on June 7th with enthusiastic students participating in UMass Chan College Summer Enrichment Program, a 4-week experience for undergraduate sophomores and juniors from underrepresented and disadvantaged backgrounds who are interested in careers in biomedical research, biotechnology and health professions.

DEI Task Force recommendations for Academic Year 22-23 have been formalized and presented to the Department. Further updates regarding the roll-out of additional initiatives to follow!



Medical Center Plays Pivotal Role in Aortic Aneurysm Consortium

The US F/BEVAR Aortic Research Consortium (US-ARC) now contains the world's largest cohort of patients who have undergone branched and fenestrated endovascular aneurysm repair, and UMass Memorial Medical Center has been a key player in the consortium since its 2018 inception.

Andres Schanzer, MD, Chief, Division of Vascular and Endovascular Surgery and Director, Heart and Vascular Center, serves as Medical Director of US-ARC and was a founding member of the consortium. At a recent conference, he reported that the multi-institutional study group has produced the strongest data so far on the use of fenestrated/branched endovascular aneurysm repair devices. US-ARC aggregates data from 10 US sites, which allows for a more significant impact than data being pulled from single-center studies.

As a result, "more patients are getting better care by more providers using F/BEVAR devices," Dr. Schanzer remarked. "My hope is that our work will have an impact not just in the USA but across the globe."

The consortium evaluates data which looks at custom-made fenestrated and branched endovascular devices for the treatment of patients with complex abdominal, thoracoabdominal and arch aneurysms. The group of investigators is committed to improving patient care, exchanging ideas and pushing the envelope when it comes to therapies. More information can be found on vascularnews.com.

Understanding Guns so That You Feel More Comfortable Talking to Patients About Gun Risk.

CME-accredited Gun Risk Training Course

Course Description: This course will furnish medical professionals with information and resources to aid them in discussing gun risks with patients and colleagues. The learning format combines oral presentations, discussion, visual aids, Q&A, offprints, and a live-fire shooting exercise using semi-automatic pistols and assault rifles.

Course Location: The course will be held at the Ware Gun Shop in Ware, MA, located midway between Logan and Hartford Airports, adjacent to I-90.

Class date: Saturday, July 9, 10 AM - 4 PM.

Lunch, all-day coffee/tea/soft drinks and snacks provided free of charge by our caterer, Miss Abigail.

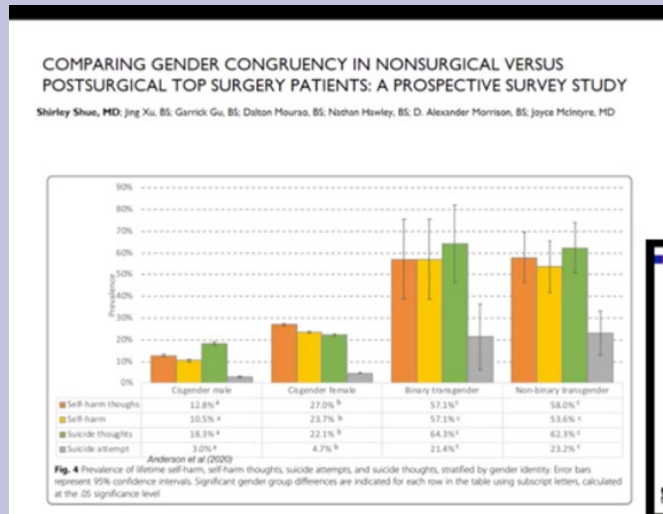
Tuition: CME credits - \$100. Non-CME - \$50.

For further information visit [Blank Page | No Guns Healthy Lives](#) and to reserve a seat, email: info@nogunshelives.org.

This activity has been planned and implemented in accordance with the Essential Area and Policies of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education through the joint providership of the University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School and No Guns Healthy Lives, Inc. The University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to provide continuing medical education for physicians. The University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School designates this live activity for a maximum of 5.5 AMA PRA Category 1 credit(s).[™] Physicians should claim only credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

Speaker Event

Joyce McIntyre, MD, Division of Plastic Surgery, was an invited Grand Rounds speaker on May 1st for the Department of Pediatrics highlighting several innovative clinical research projects including her work on gender congruency in nonsurgical versus post-surgical top surgery patients.



Speaker Event

Visiting lecturer **Utibe Essien, MD, MPH**, Assistant Professor of Medicine, University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, gave a powerful talk to the Department of Surgery on Antiracism in Medicine for our Annual DEI Grand Rounds on May 25th.

The Urgency of Now: Sustaining Antiracism in Medicine

Utibe R. Essien, MD, MPH
Assistant Professor of Medicine
University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine

DEI Grand Rounds | Department of Surgery
University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School
May 25, 2022



Email: uessien@pitt.edu
@UREssien

WELCOME DEPARTMENT OF SURGERY BABIES



Dejah Judelson, MD, Division of Vascular Surgery, and very proud dad, Mason Ashcraft, along with big brother, Dexton Reed Judelson, welcomes their baby girl, Daphne Ruth Ashcraft, on June 3, 2022.

Charles Fang, MD, PGY-3, Division of Vascular Surgery, and wife Nicole Leung, MD, welcomed baby girl, Ava Fang on April 10, 2022.



Natasha Small, Administrative Secretary, Division of Colon and Rectal Surgery, welcomed a baby girl, Aamaia Stephanie Justina Small, born April 30, 2022. Aamaia likes bubble machines, tab time on Youtube, and Mommy's Cuddles.



Sonja Grazhdani, MD, Fellow, Division of Cardiac Surgery, and fiancé, Ivica Kocevski welcomed their first child, Ines Kocevska, born April 30, 2022. Ines is also the first niece in the extended family.



Daniel Baldor, MD, PGY-4, Division of General Surgery, and his wife Megan, welcomed their new daughter, Emma Elizabeth on June 23, 2022. Mom, Emma, big brother Ponder, and Dad are doing well.



On February 3, 2022 **David Meyer, MD**, PGY-4, Division of General Surgery, and wife Elise, welcomed son, Austin William Meyer to the family. Despite Dr. Meyer's best efforts as a UNC alum, the kids are destined to be Duke basketball fans. Here, Austin and his sister Emery Rose Meyer (7/16/19) are preparing for a Final Four loss to Carolina.



Samantha Johnson, Executive Administrative Secretary, Division of Thoracic Surgery, and her husband, Troy Johnson, welcomed their first child, Noah Nicholas Johnson, on May 3, 2022.