

In Ignotis “Into the Unknown”



Message from the Chair

Dear Colleagues,

As we step into another exciting month, I want to take a moment to acknowledge the incredible work and dedication you bring to our department each day. Our commitment to excellence in research, education, and clinical care continues to drive innovation and collaboration across our institution. Below are several important updates and opportunities that I encourage you to review and share within your teams.

First, as you all know, our Epic go-live date of June 18th is fast approaching. Epic training will be required for all clinicians and staff before the go-live date. Medical group is in the process of finalizing training schedules, which will be shared as soon as they become available. A key point to note is that graduating residents with a June 30, 2025, graduation date will be excluded from the required training, meaning they will not have access to Epic and will be unable to provide clinical care in the ambulatory setting starting June 18th. Please visit the new MG Intranet Site for the latest updates and documentation. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to reach out.

On a celebratory note, I am thrilled to share that the Sentara-EVMS Comprehensive Sickle Cell Program, led by Dr. Madeeha Deo, has been honored with the 2025 Healthcare Hero Award for "Advancements in Healthcare." This well-deserved recognition highlights their dedication to improving care for individuals with sickle cell disease. They will be featured in the March 24th edition of Inside Business and formally recognized at a celebratory awards presentation on March 27th. Please join me in congratulating them on this remarkable achievement!

The VHS Office of Research is accepting applications for the 2nd round of Junior Clinical Investigator Program (JCIP). This program provides an outstanding opportunity for junior clinical faculty to receive structured mentorship, funding, and protected research time. Two selected fellows will receive \$50,000 per year for up to three years, with 30% protected time allocated to support their research endeavors. This program is a vital step toward fostering the next generation of clinician-scientists, and I encourage eligible faculty to consider applying. Applications are due by March 21, 2025, and additional details can be found on the JCIP webpage.

Finally, I want to highlight two research awards available to support students, residents, and fellows in their scholarly endeavors. These awards are offered on a first-come, first-served basis, so I encourage interested trainees to apply as soon as possible.

Thank you all for your continued commitment to advancing our mission. Your dedication, expertise, and passion make a tremendous impact on our institution and the broader medical community. As always, please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or if there is anything we can do to support you in your work.

Peer Reviewed Publications

Houston K, D'Alessandro N, Johnson DA. From the Mouth to the Gut: The Oral Microbiome's Role in Promoting Gastrointestinal Disease. *Gastroenterology & Hepatology International Journal*. 31 Jan 2025.

Yousufuddin M, Ma Z, Barkoudah E, Tahir MW, Issa M, Wang Z, Badr F, Gomaa IA, Aboelmaaty S, Al-Anii AA, Gerard SL, Abdalrhim AD, Bhagra S, Jahangir A, **Qayyum R**, Fonarow GC, Yamani MH. Systolic blood pressure, a predictor of mortality and life expectancy following heart failure hospitalization, 2010-2023. *Eur J Intern Med*. 2025 Jan;131:71-82.

Pierce F and Yehya A. Black Patients Exhibit Greater Disease Severity Upon Chronic Inotropic Support Initiations. *Journal of Cardiac Failure*. Vol 31 Issue 1, January 2025.

Smith WR, **Qayyum R**, Ulbing A, Guy MS, Sop DM, Zhang YM. Preliminary Validity of a Daily Functional Status Pain Assessment Tool, *Journal of Sickle Cell Disease*, 19 Feb 2025.

Siraj ES, Lieb DC, Tasfaye SP, Pacak K. Editorial on Special Issue in Memory of Aaron I. Vinik: From Autonomic Diabetic Neuropathy to Neuroendocrine Tumors. *Endocrine Practice*, Vol 31 Issue 1; Jan 2025.



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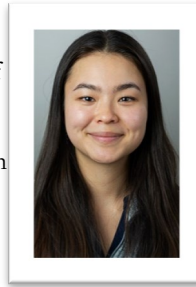
@EVMSMedicine



Researcher Spotlight — Julianne Ghiorzi, MS3

What excites you about research?

I really enjoy the collaborative aspect of research—I enjoy working with a team, discussing the best methods to answer our research question, and anticipating potential roadblocks. Of course, the best part is discovering the answer, especially when it turns out to be something unexpected! Currently, I'm involved in two major research projects. The first is a literature review on interventions for resident physician burnout, exploring ways to support doctors in training. The second examines the effect of Medicaid expansion on heart failure mortality, investigating how policy changes impact patient outcomes.



As a student, how do you manage your time to study for classes and to work on research?

To manage my schedule, I aim to take a structured yet flexible approach. I try to set aside dedicated time each day for research which allows me to keep moving forward in my projects. However, I also try to remain adaptable, and shift my priorities as needed—whether that means spending an entire day finalizing an abstract submission or studying for an upcoming exam. This balance helps me meet important deadlines in both my rotations and research.

Have you had any research mentors over the years? If so, what have they taught you, and how did you find them?

Dr. Qayyum has been an incredible mentor to me. He has taught me how to critically analyze and interpret research results, anticipate questions that might arise about my own research, and has been a wonderful model of a systematic and thorough researcher. I connected with Dr. Qayyum serendipitously. I had reached out via email to express interest in attending a Medicine research lecture and Dr. Sill, the Medicine research manager at the time, introduced me to a project where Dr. Qayyum was the principal investigator. This introduction led to an invaluable mentorship experience and amazing research opportunities moving forward.

What research skills do you hope to develop over the next few years?

Over the next few years, I hope to strengthen my data analysis skills and become proficient in data analytics software programs. Enhancing my ability to work with complex datasets will allow me to conduct more in-depth, impactful research and become a better asset to my research teams.



Presentations & Media Highlights, & Awards

- **Okhravi HR** gave a presentation on the topic of, Trailblazer-ALZ 2 Amyloid Removal & Clinical Outcomes on 26 Feb 2025.
- **Johnson DA** had a media publication on the topic of, New Gut Microbiome Research Targets Portal Hypertension & 'An Epidemiologic Nightmare': Microplastics & GI Health on 3 Feb & 12 Feb 2025. Watch the clip [one](#) and [two](#) here.
- **Okhravi HR** presented at the Leader's Summit Meeting in Atlanta, GA on 23 Jan 2025. See links [one](#) and [two](#) for his presentations.
- **Johnson DA** presented two lectures at the Inspired MD Summit: A Professional Growth & Leadership Development CMD Event for Physicians on 7 Feb 2025 on the topics of 1) How to Maximize Effective Communication and 2) Lessons Learned: Best and Worst Advice in My Career
- **Kannarkat MJ** presented at the Geriatric Medicine Fellows Most Difficult Case Conference on 5 Feb 2025. 1) Readiness for Change, 2) Multi-factorial causes of Falls in Older Patients
- **Deo M** received the 2025 Healthcare Heroes Award by Inside Business Magazine
- **Goodman BM** received the Clinical Excellence Award in Medicine at Sentara Norfolk General Hospital

Congrats to all who have recently had Abstracts accepted for Upcoming Conferences

- **Bulchynskaya T** (PGY3) x2, **Kovalenko I**—ACP in New Orleans, LA
- **Seward A** (MS3), **Qayyum R**—ACP in New Orleans, LA
- **Flathers E** (PGY2) **Tahhan S**—ACP in New Orleans, LA
- **Shahid L** (PGY3), **Tahhan S**—ACP in New Orleans, LA
- **Armas D** (PGY1) - ATS in San Francisco, CA

March 2025 Reminders:

Medicine Grand Rounds: Wednesdays, 12-1 p.m.

3/5/25—Dr. Michael Blaha;
Johns Hopkins Ciccarone
Center for the Prevention of
CVD

3/12/25—Dr. E. Wesley
Ely; Vanderbilt University
Medical Center

3/19/25 - Dr. Catherine
Derber; Macon & Joan Brock
Virginia Health Sciences,
EVMS at ODU

3/26/25 - No Grand
Rounds

Research Events:

Second and Fourth Tues-
days 5:00-6:00 p.m.

Hybrid: 5th Floor Large Con-
ference Room & Zoom

3/11/25 - Research Work-
shop, Tips for Conducting
Survey Research

3/25/25 - Research Journal
Club

⇒ Please note that Macon &
Joan Brock VHS, EVMS at
ODU Physicians are eligi-
ble for the Public Service
Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) if
taken from USDoE

Please send scholarly updates
& photos to:

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