The 2018 Excellence in Cardiovascular Sciences (EICS) summer research program was a great success this summer, resulting from the outstanding mentoring by our Wake Forest School of Medicine faculty, many of whom are members of the Cardiovascular Sciences Center. The students in this program, undergraduates from schools all over the United States, arrived the first of June and spent two months in the laboratories of faculty, participating in both basic science and clinical research projects. Ten of the scholars are attending and/or presenting their summer research at the 2018 Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students (ABRCMS) meeting this month in Indianapolis, attesting to the high quality of their summer research projects. The EICS program is supported by a grant from the NHLBI. The EICS scholars, the undergraduate institutes where they are currently students and their WFSM mentors included:

- Rabina Mainali, Salem College
- Joseph White, Berry College
- Dajja McKenzie, WSSU
- Chloé Carpenter, Cornell University
- Sheldon Smith, WSSU
- Nataleigh Austin, WSSU
- Mykasia Simpkins, WSSU
- Alexis Echols, Spelman College
- Jennifer Paxton, WSSU
- Adam Burke, WSSU
- Avery Salmon, Mars Hill University
- Jee Young Yoo, CUNY
- Nia Garrett, Villanova University
- Brandon Travis, WSSU
- Joshua Waller, WSSU
- Lauren Cliness, Liberty University
- Dr. Harion Yaday (Molecular Medicine)
- Dr. Leah Solberg-Woods (Molecular Medicine)
- Dr. Andrew South (Pediatric Nephrology)
- Dr. Nicole Levi (Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery)
- Dr. Bethany Kerr (Cancer Biology)
- Dr. Rong Chen (Physiology & Pharmacology)
- Dr. TanYa Gwathmey-Williams (Surgery/Hypertension)
- Dr. Jennifer Jordan (Internal Medicine/Cardiology)
- Dr. Gagan Deep (Cancer Biology)
- Dr. Tim Hughes (Gerontology & Geriatric Medicine)
- Dr. Jasmina Varagic (Surgery/Hypertension)

**Career Development Corner**

The Academic Journeys Seminar Series

The Academic Journey meetings are held monthly, featuring a faculty member at Wake Forest School of Medicine or a visiting clinician/scientist from the Cardiovascular Sciences Center Seminar series. These meetings are designed for graduate and medical students/postdoctoral fellow and residents/junior faculty members to spend time with distinguished physicians and scientists from our institution or other academic institutions and learn about their journeys to becoming successful clinicians/research scientists/educators. Our first meeting of the 2018-2019 year will be with Dr. Scott Levick from the University of Sydney, on November 15th at 4:00. Our January speaker will be Dr. Jody Hung, from Massachusetts General/Harvard University, on January 17th at 4:00. These informal meetings will be held in the Cardiology Conference Room on the 1st Floor of Watlington Hall, with light refreshments. We will continue to update you on the Academic Journeys in 2019.

**Watch Out, AHA…Here Comes Wake Forest!**

Dr. Cheping Cheng, Dr. Heng-Jie Cheng and their group of research fellows have been very busy this year turning out project after project and it seems all of their hard work is paying off. From the group, 18 total abstracts were accepted for presentation at the 2018 American Heart Association’s Scientific Sessions in Chicago, IL. These abstracts consists of 13 poster presentations, 4 oral presentations, and 1 moderated digital poster presentation. The group’s research interest spans the Cardiovascular spectrum to encompass topics such as Heart Failure, Diabetes, Genomics, Ageing, Metabolism, Obesity and more, while using mouse, canine, and monkey models. Congratulations to Drs. Cheng and Cheng and their team of researchers (Yixi Liu, Xiaowei Zhang, Zhi Zhang, and Zhe Chen); thank you all for your outstanding representation of Cardiovascular Medicine here at Wake Forest!

**Wake Forest in the News**

Our very own Dr. Jeff Williamson was recently featured in “USA Today” and “Time Magazine” after presenting strong evidence that lowering blood pressure can reduce the risk of Mild Cognitive Impairment through the SPRINT-MIND study. Dr. Williamson is the co-director of the Alzheimer’s Research Center here at WFU and helped to lead the SPRINT-MIND study. The study found that patients who were treated to reduce their systolic blood pressure to 120 mm Hg were 19 percent less likely to develop mild cognitive impairment than those whose blood pressure was targeted to 140 mm Hg. In the “USA Today” article, Williams says, “I wasn’t sure myself as a scientist, was blood pressure-lowering as good for the brain as it was for the heart? That was a really unanswered question.” So far, the results of the study are suggesting this could be the case. To read the full articles in “USA Today” and “Time Magazine,” visit https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2018/07/25/lower-blood-pressure-reduces-risk-mild-cognitive-impairment-study/832090002/ and http://time.com/5347592/blood-pressure-lower-risk-dementia/
Dr. Wagenknecht has been with WF SOM since joining the faculty in 1991. Over the years, she has held the titles of Chair for the Department of Epidemiology and Prevention, Associate Director of Public Health Sciences, and Associate Dean for Interdisciplinary Research. Congratulations to Dr. Wagenknecht on her new appointment!

Giselle Melendez, MD, was recently selected as a 2018 Dean’s Hero award recipient. Dr. Melendez received this award for her Dean’s Research Symposium topic, “Myocardial Fibrosis: A New Frontier for Discovery in Cardiotoxicity Induced by Cancer Treatment,” after being chosen by Dr. Julie Freischlag. In recognition of her excellent work, she will receive a $20,000 award to be used to help further advance her research.

Jasmina Varagic, MD, PhD, was appointed to the Innovative Project Award Study Section for the American Heart Association. The Innovative Project award serves to support innovative, high impact research that could ultimately lead to critical discoveries or advancements that will accelerate the field of CV and stroke research.

Fatima Ryalat, a graduate student mentored by Dr. David Díaz, was awarded a Wake Forest Alumni Student Travel Award for the American Society for Matrix Biology Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada in October where she presented “Targeting Thrombospondin-1/Cd47 Signaling Axis Regulates Hypoxia & Metabolism in The Tumor Microenvironment to Enhance Anti-Tumor Immune Responses”.

Giselle Melendez, MD, recently received the exciting news that her K-Award application titled, “Cellular Senescence: A Novel Mechanism of Doxorubicin-induced Cardiotoxicity” received a fundable score.

Andrew Michael South, MD, was awarded first place at the on-site poster competition at the AHA Council for Hypertension in Chicago, IL for his poster titled, “Children with Food Insecurity at Risk for High Blood Pressure.” This has subsequently garnered media attention from the U.S. News & World Report as well as several other news stations. To read the full report from U.S. News and World Report, visit https://health.usnews.com/health -care/articles/2018-09-06/kids-without-access-to-good-food-face-high-blood-pressure-risk.

Dr. Kitzman

Cardiovascular Medicine research fellow, Christopher Schaich, PhD, received a fundable score for his F32 application titled, “Heart Rate Variability as a Predictor of Cognitive Performance in the Multi-Ethnic Study of Atherosclerosis.”

Mark Chappell, PhD, received a 3-year AHA Transformative Grant Award titled, “Endocannabinoid-Antiinotensin Systems in Diabetic Hypertension.”

Congratulations to John Parks, PhD, on the pending renewal of his R01 titled, “Hepatocyte Abca1, Cholesterol Trafficking, and Lipid Management.”

Events

The annual American Heart Association Winston-Salem Heart and Stroke Walk was held on Sunday, October 14 at Bailey Park. So far, the total for the entire walk has reached $489,150! The Heart and Vascular Service Line raised a whopping $15,925 with the help of many creative and exciting fundraisers, which included 13 different Walk Teams! The CVSC sends a huge “Thank You” to all of those who helped make these generous donations possible!

Cardiovascular Sciences Center Guest Speakers

Save the dates for these upcoming guest speakers at Cardiovascular Medicine Research Grand Rounds! Grand rounds are held every Friday, 7:30-8:30 am in the Medical School Board Room

- January 18, 2019: Dr. Judy Hung - Massachusetts General
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- March 29, 2019: Dr. Stavros Drakos - University of Utah
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Wednesday, November 7th was the Surgical Sciences 26th Annual Residents’ and Fellows’ Research Day. The keynote speaker, Dr. Todd Rasmussen presented a lecture titled, “From Combat Zone to Civilian Market: Lessons from a Military Program in Endovascular Device Innovation for Torsional Bleeding and Shock.” Several members of the CVSC (or their mentees) were award recipients.

Basic Science

Fellow Gold

Michael U. Runnison, PhD
Katherine L. Cook, PhD - Mentor
Hypertension and Vascular Research

Student Gold

Omer Kuhlem, BS
Patricia E. Gallerher, PhD and E. Ann Tullis, PhD - Mentor
Hypertension and Vascular Research

Student Silver

Elizabeth H. Ritting, MB
David Soto-Pastia, PhD - Mentor
Hypertension and Vascular Research

Clinical Science

Fellow Silver

Mike C. Lin, Bi
James E. Jordan, PhD - Mentor
Cardiovascular Surgery

Student Silver

Tracy Ph, BS
Adrian Lucian Lata, MD - Mentor
Cardiovascular Surgery

Fellow Silver

Inomin Kontopidis, MD
Leonard J. Wuldl, MD - Mentor
Cardiovascular Surgery


**Accomplishments**

Effective October 1, 2018, Lynne Wagenknecht, PhD, MPH, was named the Director of Public Health Sciences after serving as interim director since August of 2017. Dr. Wagenknecht has been with WFSOM since joining the faculty in 1991. Over the years, she has held the titles of Chair for the Department of Epidemiology and Prevention, Associate Director of Public Health Sciences, and Associate Dean for Interdisciplinary Research. Congratulations to Dr. Wagenknecht on her new appointment!

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During the AHA Scientific Sessions in Chicago, Charles German, MD, was highlighted as being a prime example of someone who takes community based interventions to increase physical activity through his work with the Walk with A Doc program.

Congratulations to both Dalane Kitzman, MD, and Bob Applegate, MD on achieving the elite honor of being named Top Reviewers for JACC: Heart Failure in 2018.

**Funding and Awards**

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**Basic Science**

**FELLOWSHIP**
- Manuel U. Ramirez, PhD
- Katarina L. Cook, PhD - Mentor

**STUDENT GOLD**
- Omid Rezaei, BS
- Patricia E. Galler, PhD and F. Ann Tulliez, PhD - Mentors

**Hypertension and Vascular Research**

- Elizabeth H. Ritting, MB
- David Soto-Pantoja, PhD - Mentor

**Clinical Science**

- Mike C. Lin, BS
- James E. Jordan, PhD - Mentor

- Ender Furstun, BS
- Adrian Lucian Lata, MD - Mentor

- Tracey Ph, BS
- Cardiovascular Surgery

- Ineem Kottipadi, MD
- Leonard J. Wadu, MD - Mentor

- Cardiovascular Surgery
Invited Lectures, Presentations, and Conferences

Liliya Yamaleyeva, MD, MS has been invited to give a talk titled, “Hemodynamic Effects of Apelin in Preeclampsia” at the ASPET sponsored symposium during the 2019 Experimental Biology Meeting in Orlando, FL.


Joseph Yeboah, MChB, and colleagues recently published a manuscript in Atherosclerosis titled, “The Prognostic Value of Interleukin 6 in Multiple Chronic Diseases and All-Cause Death: The Multi-Ethnic Study of Atherosclerosis (MESA).”

Dr. Yeboah

CT Surgery Procedures
Inpatient……………….886
Outpatient……………….8

Vascular Surgery Procedures
Caths……………………3,253
PCIs……………………1,386
New Patient Consults…5,435
New Therapies**………544

**MitrClip, Watchman, TAVR

Cardiac Cath Lab

Cardiac Ultrasound
TTE…………………..24,686
TEE…………………..994
Stress…………………..4,419

Heart and Vascular Service Line Patient Care By the Numbers*

CV COE Faculty and Fellow Publications July through November

During the last five months, Wake Forest School of Medicine CV COE faculty published 114 manuscripts in peer-reviewed journals including Journal of the American Heart Association, Circulation, JACC, and Atherosclerosis. Below are a few articles from the list. All of the publications can be found at https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sites/myncb/1JSeQd2xokMcollections/57098868/public.

Dr. Register

Dr. Diz

Dr. Rangel

Dr. Yeboah

Dr. Soliman

Dr. Yeboah

Dr. Register

Dr. Diz

Dr. Shaltout

Dr. Rangel

Dr. Shaltout

Dr. Yeboah

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Heart Failure and Transplant
Referrals……………………11
Transplants……………….17
LVADs…………………….17
Readmission Rate……..17.4% (National average is 22%)
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Andrew Michael South, Patricia A. Nixon, Mark C. Chappell, Debra I. Diz, Elizabeth T. Jensen, Hossam A. Shaltout, Lisa K. Washburn. Preterm Birth is Associated with Increased Blood Pressure and Increased Urinary Angiotensinogen in Young Adults.

Snezana Petrovic, Ellen Tommasi, Xuming Sun, Debra I Diz. Effects of Proton Receptor Gpr4 Deficiency on Angiotensin Receptors in Kidney and Hindbrain.


Callie Brown, Andrew Michael South, Deepak Palakshappa. Obesity Modifies the Association between Food Insecurity and Hypertension in Children and Adolescents.

Fatima Ryalat, Nildris Cruz-Diaz, Jasmina Varagic, Patricia Gallagher, Ann Tallant, Debra Diz, Lilya Yamaleyeva. Sex Differences in the Effects of Chronic Mucosal and Gastro-Intestinal Treatment on Cardiac Function Parameters and Aortic Pulse Wave Velocity (PWV) in Hypertensive Transgenic (mRen2)27 Rats.

Hossam Shaltout, Adina Zeki Al Hazzouri, David M. Herrington, Timothy M. Hughes. Impaired Autonomic Function in Young 135 Adults Born Preterm with Very Low Birth Weight is Associated with Elevated Serum Uric Acid Levels.”

Debra Diz, PhD, was the keynote speaker at the WF SOM Medical Student Research Day, held on October 10. The title of her talk was, “Insights into Orthostatic Intolerance in Children: A Multidisciplinary Team Effort.”

The American Heart Association (AHA) annual Council on Hypertension/AHA Council on Kidney and Cardiovascular Disease joint Scientific Sessions was held September 6-9 in Chicago, IL. This is a three-day scientific program for clinical and basic researchers focusing on recent advances in hypertension research. The following posters were presented at the meeting:<>Hossam A Shaltout. Vitamin D Supplementation Improves Cardiovascular Response to Head Up Tilt in Adolescents Suffering from Syncope.

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Joseph Yeboah, MBChB, and colleagues recently published a manuscript in Atherosclerosis titled, “The Prognostic Value of Interleukin 6 in Multiple Chronic Diseases and All-Cause Death: The Multi-Ethnic Study of Atherosclerosis (MESA).

Octavia Rangel, MD, and colleagues published an article in the Journal of Cardiac Failure titled, “Estimation of Incident Heart Failure Risk among US Hispanics/Latinos Using a Validated Echocardiographic Risk-Stratification Index: the Echocardiographic Study of Latinos.”

Elsayed Soliman, MD, and colleagues published a paper in JAMA titled, “Racial Differences in Atrial Fibrillation-Related Cardiovascular Disease and Mortality: The Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities (ARIC) Study.”

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Dr. Giselle Melendez (Internal Medicine/Cardiology)
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