FROM THE CHAIR

This month’s LSU Department of Pediatrics newsletter is all about transitions. We start by honoring two faculty members (Dr. Alfonso Vargas and Dr. Lily Leiva) who dedicated their lives and talents to our Department and the children of Louisiana and are now entering the retirement phases of their careers, we announce important changes to our Departmental leadership, and we welcome five new faculty members.

In addition, the newsletter highlights the many important activities of our faculty. In the areas of awards and recognition, research and publications the faculty of the Department of Pediatrics are defining our place in the world of academic medicine.

The 2016 Research Day marked a transition of medical research experiences and accomplishments to our early career physicians. The newly created Department Wellness Program championed by Jerussa Levy, Chelsey Sandlin and Rayne Faucheux marks a transition of our focus towards the health and wellbeing of ourselves and our colleagues.

Continued on next page

DR. ALFONSO VARGAS RETIRES

The LSU Department of Pediatrics celebrated the career of Alfonso Vargas, MD earlier this year as he retired after 28 years of service to the LSU School of Medicine and 39 years in the field of Pediatric Endocrinology. As Professor and Vice-Chairman of the Department, it is estimated that over 400 residents and 14 Pediatric Endocrinology fellows have trained under Dr. Vargas during his tenure at LSUHSC.

Dr. Vargas was born in Santafé de Bogotá, DC, Colombia. He received his MD from the Universidad Nacional de Colombia in 1973 and completed a rotating internship at the Hospital San Pedro Claver-ISS in 1972. He did his Pediatrics Residency at the University of South Florida in Tampa from 1975-1977 and completed his Fellowship in Pediatric Endocrinology at the University of South Florida and All Children’s Hospital in St. Petersburg, Florida in 1979. Dr. Vargas served as faculty at USF until 1988 when he was recruited to the LSU Department of Pediatrics as Associate Professor. While at LSUHSC, Dr. Vargas served as Director of the Pediatric Student Program from 1988-1995 and Director of the Pediatrics Residency Training Program from 1995-2002. He became a tenured Professor and Vice-Chairman for Education in 2001.

Dr. Vargas was also honored as a “Master Pediatrician” by his peers at the annual meeting of the Louisiana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics in August. He is enjoying his retirement with his wife Maria-Eugenia Cediel de Vargas, DDS and is now able to spend more time with their two sons, Alfonso Vargas-Cediel, MD and Juan-Carlos Vargas-Cediel, MD and 6 grandchildren.
The summer of 2016 also marked a transition of the strengthening relationships between the State of Louisiana, the LSU Health Sciences Center in New Orleans and our clinical partners. Improved funding now has LSU and the Department of Pediatrics looking ahead to new initiatives and the future. One tangible example of improved resources is the establishment of the Department of Pediatrics Academic Program Development Fund.

For our hospital partner, Children’s Hospital, the future includes a $225-250 million campus expansion, introduction of the EPIC electronic medical record system and improved strategic alignment between the hospital and department.

Finally, the months ahead will concentrate on recruiting: recruiting our next class of pediatrics, medicine-pediatrics, and emergency medicine-pediatrics residents, recruiting our next class of sub-specialty fellows and recruiting our next generation of pediatric faculty.

The LSU Department of Pediatrics has had an exceptional 2016. I am very proud of what you have accomplished. Now is the time to look ahead to what we can accomplish in the future.

Raymond G. Watts, MD
Professor and Head
Department of Pediatrics
LSUHSC School of Medicine – New Orleans
William H. Stewart, MD Chair in Pediatrics

DR. LILY LEIVA RETIRES

Another retiree from this past summer, Lily Levia, PhD, spent the last 27 years as Head of the Immunology Lab at Children’s Hospital and the Department’s Immunology Research Lab. In recognition of her many achievements and contributions, Dr. Watts offered her the title of Professor Emeritus before retirement.

Dr. Leiva received her Ph.D. from Tulane University in 1988. After Dr. Sorensen recruited her from Tulane in 1990, she went on to develop flow cytometry at Children’s Hospital into a high laboratory serving diagnosis of immune abnormalities, she was instrumental in supporting preparations for stem cell transplantation for a large number of patients, developed several new tests of flow cytometry and immunity that were then officially tested and approved for clinical use by the Children’s Hospital Clinical laboratory. And according to her mentor, Dr. Ricardo Sorensen, her most important achievement was the development of pneumococcal antibody testing by participating in the WHO and CDC standardization of the ELISA test that we still use today. Dr. Sorensen said Dr. Leiva has had a worldwide impact through her help developing the useful ELISA test with improved flow cytometry in Chile, Montreal, and Freiburg, Germany.

Her colleagues in the department will agree that Dr. Sorensen said it best, “Greatness is defined in so many different ways – all of them apply to Lily Leiva.” Dr. Leiva will spend her retirement with her three daughters, Lily, Natalia, Tatiana and her four grandchildren Kyle, Bryce, Stella and Nico and visit her 9 siblings in England and El Salvador.
NEW APPOINTMENTS

Department Head Raymond Watts, MD appointed Bonnie Desselle, MD as Vice Chair of Pediatrics for Education back in April. Dr. Desselle assumed her formal duties after the retirement of Alfonso Vargas, MD who served as a Vice Chair of Pediatrics for several years. Dr. Desselle will have oversight of all Department of Pediatrics educational programs and missions which will include assisting Dr. Watts with oversight and planning for Medical Student Education, Resident and Fellow Graduate Medical Education and Pediatric Grand Rounds. Dr. Desselle joins Brian Barkemeyer, MD who was previously appointed to the role of Vice Chair of Pediatrics for Clinical Services.

Dr. Watts announced recently that Michael Marble, MD will assume leadership of the Division of Genetics beginning November 1, 2016. He replaces Yves Lacassie, MD who has been a great division head over the years, emigrating from Chile 30 years ago to join the department to establish the Genetics Program. Dr. Watts thanks Dr. Lacassie for his tremendous service developing and leading the division and clinical programs and welcomes Dr. Marble to the new role as he continues to work tirelessly to support the Genetic and Metabolic Disease clinical, education and research programs at LSU.

Vice Chair of Education Bonnie Desselle, MD appointed Diego Aviles, MD to lead our Department’s Grand Rounds Conference. He has large shoes to fill in replacing Alfonso Vargas, MD whose dedication kept this conference vibrant over the many years. Using the results of the recent needs assessment survey (which 100 plus members of the department and community responded to!), this conference will be enhanced to meet the changing needs of current and future pediatricians. One recent enhancement is the ability to remotely view the conference using the GoToMeeting software. Information on its use is available in the weekly email announcements. Contact Dr. Aviles if you have interest in presenting or inviting a national expert in your field. See you on Wednesdays at 8 am!

DEPARTMENT WELLNESS PROGRAM

“If physicians aren’t happy, they can’t heal others.”

-Dr. Vivek Murthy, Surgeon General

In response to the recommendations from the AAMC, ACGME and even the Surgeon General, Dr. Watts is supporting the development of a Department Wellness Program. The rates of burnout, stress, and depression in health care professionals have been recently reported to be at dangerously high levels. To address this problem, institutions are encouraged to create programs tailored to recognize and support the emotional well-being of their staff. Several members of the department are working on this new initiative. Jerussa Levy, MD has been appointed as our Chief Wellness Officer. Under the guidance of Chelsey Sandlin, MD, third-year resident and rising chief resident Rayne Faucheux, MD and an active group of junior faculty and residents who are juggling the many roles of motherhood have formed a Working Mommy Support Group. Be on the lookout for upcoming events and contribute any ideas to these folks.
AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

Three members of the department were given Aesculapian Excellence in Education Awards for the 2015-2016 school year. Robin English, MD received the First Year Professor Award (Fall), Chelsey Sandlin, MD received the Third Year Faculty Award, and Medicine/Pediatrics chief resident Kieran Leong, MD received the Fourth Year Resident Award.

Ricardo Sorensen, MD received the Academic Distinction Award by the Chilean Society of Pediatrics (SOCHIPE) earlier this month. He was honored at the society’s 56th Annual Meeting in Viña del Mar, Chile. This is the first time this distinction is given to a pediatrician working outside of Chile. The society unanimously decided to give it to Dr. Sorensen in recognition of his contributions to the academic excellence of Pediatrics in Chile. Dr. Sorensen is grateful to his home country for giving him a free medical education and high quality training in pediatrics which allowed him to embrace an academic career in the United States, first in Cleveland and then at LSUHSC in New Orleans. Here at LSU, he found an environment that made it possible for him to realize his clinical, research, administrative and teaching goals.

Back in August, Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health Dr. Rebekah Gee appointed Yves Lacassie, MD to serve as the DOH’s designee on the Birth Defects Monitoring Network Advisory Board. The board makes recommendations on the implementation and continuing operation of the Louisiana Birth Defects Monitoring Network.

Under the leadership of former director Jaime Morales, MD and current director Maria Velez, MD, Children’s Hospital/LSU’s Hemophilia Treatment Center was recently designated a Center of Excellence by the Foundation of Women and Girls with Blood Disorders. In other Hematology/Oncology division news, Division Head Lolie Yu, MD congratulates well-deserving Pinki Prasad, MD, MPH on her acceptance to the 2016 Early Career Women Faculty Professional Development Seminar which was held earlier this summer.

Pinki Prasad, MD, MPH was also elected to serve on the School of Medicine Faculty Assembly along with two other members of the department, Jeffrey Surcouf, MD and Marcella Houser, MD. Over the next three years, the delegates will provide an important voice for faculty in the School of Medicine. Members of the department should feel comfortable talking with them about any faculty matters, or in asking them to bring faculty concerns to the Faculty Assembly meetings.

Congratulations to Endocrinology Fellow Mahmoud Hamdan, MD for receiving an Endocrine Fellows Foundation Grant for his project titled “Does Iron Status Explain Racial Disparity in HbA1c Outcome for Children with Type 1 DM?” He will present his work at the foundation’s meeting in January. Dr. Hamdan was also among only 25 fellows selected for a travel and fellows retreat award from the Pediatric Endocrine Society to present “Cutaneous Manifestation of Endocrine Diseases” at an upcoming meeting. The third-year fellow was also selected to present at the upcoming Health Disparity Meeting in April and the Focus on Fellows meeting at the upcoming American Diabetes Association meeting in June. He also recently became a Certified Diabetes Educator (CDE).

New Orleans Magazine included approximately 25% of the Pediatrics faculty on its annual Top Doctors list:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ken Paris</th>
<th>Ernest Siwik</th>
<th>Stuart Chalew</th>
<th>Maria Velez</th>
<th>Abraham Gedalia</th>
<th>Dina Penn</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ricardo Sorensen</td>
<td>Aluizio Stopa</td>
<td>Ricardo Gomez</td>
<td>Lolie Yu</td>
<td>Brian Barkemeyer</td>
<td>Dana Rivera</td>
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<td>Betty Lo-Blais</td>
<td>Bonnie Desselle</td>
<td>Renee Gardner</td>
<td>Rodolfo Bégué</td>
<td>Minnie Buys</td>
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<td>Kelly Gajewski</td>
<td>Gary Duhon</td>
<td>Pinki Prasad</td>
<td>Diego Aviles</td>
<td>Staci Olister</td>
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Dr. Watts thanks the following members of the Department of Pediatrics for volunteering their time to the School of Medicine “Houses” mentorship program: Brian Barkemeyer, MD, Jessica Patrick-Esteve, MD, Amanda Dumas, MD, Amy Creel, MD, Gary Duhon, MD, Robin English, MD, Jay Hescock, MD, Brent Keith, MD, Chelsey Sandlin, MD, and Megan Murphy, MD. Mentors facilitate small groups in Clinical Skills Integration 100 and 200 and are also assigned individual mentees to meet regarding professional development and provide feedback on history and physical exam assignments. If you are interested in joining the program, please contact Dr. Julio Figueroa at jfigue@lsuhsc.edu.
RESEARCH NEWS

Ryan Pasternak, MD, MPH, Head of the Ambulatory Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine Division, congratulates Amanda Dumas, MD on her recent award of a one-year research grant from the Community Scholar’s Program of the Louisiana Clinical and Translational Research Center’s Community Engagement and Outreach Resource (CEOR) Core. Dr. Dumas will partner with Healthy Start New Orleans to increase the capacity of academic-community partnerships to conduct research with mutual ownership of the processes and products, and ultimately, improve the health of our communities. The main objective of this study is to create a Community Advisory Board consisting of various stakeholders in adolescent parenting that will develop proven and effective methods to support low-income adolescent parents and their children. The study will use Community-Based Participatory Research methods to achieve this objective and ensure that future directions adhere to the needs and goals of the stakeholders and adolescent parents themselves.

Dr. Dumas’ achievements continued in May when she received the LaCATS Roadmap Scholar award which will provide her 75% protected time over a 2-year period. Since joining the department in 2013, she has worked hard developing her research interests, collecting preliminary data and developing an independent research plan. This award will increase that momentum and help with additional training and specific career/research mentoring.

NEW FACULTY

The Ambulatory Division welcomed two new faculty members in July. Assistant Professor William Morgan, MD received his medical degree from and completed his Pediatrics Residency at the University of Mississippi School of Medicine. The division also welcomed Assistant Professor Kyle Fulton, MD who recently graduated from our residency program. Dr. Fulton received the Outstanding Teaching Resident Award and the Gretchen Life Award upon graduation. He received his medical degree from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences.

Two new faculty members joined the Critical Care Division in recent months. Assistant Professor Nihal Godiwala, MD recently completed a Pediatric Critical Care Fellowship at Children’s National Health System in Washington, DC. He received his medical degree from Tulane University and did his Pediatrics residency at Yale-New Haven Children’s Hospital. Assistant Professor Richelle Monier, MD completed her Critical Care Fellowship and Pediatrics Residency at Le Bonheur Children’s Medical Center in Memphis. She received her medical degree from LSU School of Medicine.

The Endocrinology Division welcomed Peter Tieh, MD in September. The Assistant Professor graduated from Ross University School of Medicine. He completed his Pediatrics Residency at Texas Tech University Health Science Center in Amarillo and most recently finished his Pediatric Endocrinology Fellowship at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center in Torrance, California. Dr. Tieh also completed a Track 2 Certification Program in Translational Science at the Clinical and Translational Science Institute from 2013-2015.

Stefani Samples, MD joined the Cardiology Division earlier this week as Assistant Professor. She completed her Pediatric Cardiology fellowship in June at Augusta University/Children’s Hospital of Georgia. She did her Pediatrics Residency at the same institution and received her medical degree from Meharry Medical College. Her professional interests include non-invasive imaging, including fetal echocardiography and transesophageal echocardiography.
PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS


An article written by Jerussa Aita-Levy, MD and Pamela Musacchia, MD titled “A Curious Case of Reversible Tetany” has been accepted for publication in *Clinical Pediatrics*.


Chelsey Sandlin, MD and Bonnie Desselle, MD (left) presented a poster titled The Multiple Mini-Interview for Pediatric Resident Selection at the Spring Meeting of the Association of Pediatric Program Directors in New Orleans. Jay Hescock, MD coauthored the abstract and poster.

The Gastroenterology fellows represented the division well in Montreal, Quebec, Canada earlier this month, presenting the following abstracts at the World Congress of Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition which is held every four years. Congratulations to second-year fellow Russell Zwiener, MD (right) who received a ribbon for his “Poster of Distinction” in neurogastroenterology.

- “Dysphagia Lusoria”, Rami Arrouk, Rachel Herdes, Paul Hyman
- “Isolated Intestinal Neurofibroma in a Pediatric Patient”, Rami Arrouk, Rachel Herdes, and Patricio Arias
- “Biliary Dyskinesia in Children: A Systematic Review”, Neha Santucci, Sunny Z Hussain, Carroll Harmon, Julie H Schiavo, Paul E Hyman
- “Improved Self-efficacy in Children with Functional Constipation is Associated with Treatment Success”, Neha Santucci, Miranda van Tilburg, Aryn Karpinski, Allan Rosenberg, Rachel Herdes, Eva Stoops, Lauren Rein, Amir Amado-Feeley, Paul E Hyman
- “Prevalence of Rome IV Functional Gastrointestinal Disorders in children and adolescents in the USA”, Russell Zwiener, Paul Hyman, O Palsson, M Saps, C Di Lorenzo, R Shulman, J Hyams, S Nurko, MA van Tilburg

Also traveling abroad, Endocrinology fellow Mahmoud Hamdan, MD presented two lectures in Norway at the International Society for Pediatric and Adolescent Diabetes meeting. He lectured on a rare diabetic case and “Racial Disparity in HbA1c in Children with Type 1 Diabetes: Not Due To MBG and CBC Indices Alone”.

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Raymond Watts, MD, Wayne Backes, PhD, and Janis Letourneau, MD present certificates to the Research Day winners.

RESEARCH DAY 2016

Research Day gave faculty, research staff, fellows, residents and medical students a chance to highlight their recent research activities. Department Head Raymond Watts, MD, Associate Dean for Research Wayne Backes, PhD, and Associate Dean for Faculty and Institutional Affairs Janis Letourneau, MD presented awards for the Best Research Day Presentation in four categories. The winning researchers were:

**Best Oral Presentation (tie):**
**Tyrus Stewart, BS**
*Research Associate, Nephrology*
Activation of the IL-2 Receptor in Podocytes: A Potential Mechanism for Podocyte Injury in Idiopathic Nephrotic Syndrome?
Authors: Diego Aviles, MD; Tyrus Stewart, BS; Jeannine Ascani, MS; David Tate, BS; William Smoyer, MD; Beatriz Finkel-Jimenez, PhD; Anna Wilk, PhD; Krzysztof Reiss, PhD; Arnold Zea, PhD

**Best Oral Presentation (tie):**
**Elizabeth Wisner, MD**
*Fellow, Allergy/Immunology*
Harnessing Pharmacogenomics to Guide the Treatment of Primary Immunodeficiency
Authors: Elizabeth Wisner, MD and Victoria Dimitriades, MD

**Best Poster Presentation by a Student (tie):**
**Yunuen Cacique-Borja, BA and Lauren F. Weachter, BS**
*Students, Dr. Seth Pincus’ Lab*
Design and Production of Engineered Double Variable Domain (DVD) Antibodies that Bind to HIV Envelope at Two Distinct Sites
Authors: Yunuen Cacique-Borja, BA; Lauren F. Weachter, BS; Michelle C. Rice, BS; Ramez Iseed and Seth H. Pincus, MD

**Best Poster Presentation by a Student (tie):**
**Stephen Lambert**
*LSUHSC-NO Medical Student*
Severe West Nile Virus Meningoencephalitis in a Pediatric Renal Transplant Recipient: Successful Recovery and Long-Term Neuropsychological Outcome
Authors: Stephen Lambert; Diego Aviles, MD; Matti V. Vehaskari, MD, PhD; Isa Ashoor, MD

**Best Presentation by a Resident:**
**Vicki Ruleman, MD**
*Resident, Pediatrics*
Post-Surgical Pleural Effusion as the Initial Identification of a Missense Variant in KRT8 in a Child with Recurrent Vomiting and Diarrhea: Further Evidence for KRT8 Mutations Predisposing to Gastrointestinal Disease
Authors: Neha Santucci, MD; Brent Keith, MD; Vicki Ruleman, MD; Michael Marble, MD

**Best Presentation by a Fellow or Postdoc:**
**Mahmoud Hamdan, MD**
*Fellow, Endocrinology*
Differences in RBC Indices Do Not Explain Racial Disparity in HbA1c in Children with Type 1 Diabetes (T1D)
Authors: Mahmoud Hamdan, MD; James Hempe, PhD; Jodi Kamps, PhD; Ricardo Gomez, MD; Stuart Chalew, MD

**Best Presentation by Jr. Faculty or Research Professional:**
**Isa Ashoor, MD**
*Pediatric Nephrologist, Children’s Hospital*
A Pilot Quality Assessment and Performance Improvement Project to Enhance the Reproductive Health of Adolescent Kidney Transplant Recipients
Authors: Pamela LeBlanc, RN; David Seymour, RN; Isa Ashoor, MD

Thank you to all who participated, especially our 2016 judges: Julie Gallois, MD, Ricardo Gomez, MD, Lily Leiva, PhD, Michael Marble, MD, Casey McAtee, MD, Seth Pincus, MD, Stephanie Sonnier, RN, BSN, MBA, CCRC, Ricardo Sorenson, MD, Hong Xin, MD, PhD, and Jovanny Zabaleta, MS, PhD.
CODING CORNER  with Sheri Russell-Cromwell, CPC

Essential Documentation Requirements

The volume of documentation should not be the primary inspiration upon which specific level of service is billed. It would not be medically ethical or suitable to bill a higher level of evaluation and management service when a lower level of service is warranted. Remember The Golden Rule, “If it is not documented it was not done.” Adequately recording information is beneficial to the protection of the patient, staff and institution.

Evaluation and Management Records must include:

- Patient’s name, DOB and, most importantly, date of service
- Chief complaint (must be included on every documented report)
- History (brief if subsequent visit)
- Physical exam
- Assessment & Plan (A&P) (medical decision making) – document all diagnoses treated. Signs and symptoms may only be reported when a definitive diagnosis has not been established.
- Physician’s signature must be legible. Electronic signatures are the best option.

Services should be documented during or as soon as possible after it is provided in order to maintain an accurate medical record. All medical record entries should be legible including the provider’s signature and date of service. The use of abbreviations and symbols are discouraged because they can easily be misinterpreted. Keep in mind- an auditor will not take the time to query a provider about his/her illegible handwriting, unfamiliar acronyms or symbols.

While coding an office or inpatient visit according to time is favorable for the more complex cases, please proceed with caution. A visits’ duration is a secondary factor and does not control the level of service to be billed unless more than 50 percent of the face-to-face time or more than 50 percent of the floor time is spent providing counseling/coordination of care. Documentation must be in sufficient detail to justify the code selection when time is the basis. Write a short summary containing:

- Statement “more than 50 percent of the face to face time was spent…”
- Medical decision making (assessment and plan)
- Description of the coordination of care
- Counseling provided

A well written medical record provides proof for appropriate treatment, billing, and quality control.

SAVE THE DATE

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 11</td>
<td>Department of Pediatrics Faculty Meeting, 12:00pm, Auditorium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 12</td>
<td>Purple and Gold Gala, WWII Museum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 14</td>
<td>Division Directors Meeting, Board Room B</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 18-19</td>
<td>JMC-LAPIN Symposium, Harrah’s New Orleans Hotel</td>
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<td>Nov 19</td>
<td>Tiger Run, Audubon Park</td>
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<td>Nov 24-25</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Holidays</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 12</td>
<td>Division Directors Meeting, Board Room B</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 23-Jan 2</td>
<td>Christmas/New Year Break</td>
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