



Great Doctors, Great Medicine since 1828.

Faculty Awards Ceremony

Medical College of Georgia Faculty Senate

5 p.m., Thursday, May 26, 2022



Dear Colleagues:

The MCG Faculty Senate's Faculty Awards Ceremony recognizes exceptional achievement by faculty and residents in the areas of teaching, research, clinical care and service.

Today's honorees have contributed their significant skills and passion to attaining excellence and have set a high standard for us all. We gather today to thank them for their contributions to our medical school and to the dynamic present and future of medicine.

We thank as well the members of the MCG Faculty Senate Faculty Recognition Committee for their diligent efforts to make this celebration possible.

Thank you for all you do.

Most respectfully yours,

David C. Hess, MD
*Dean, Medical College of Georgia
Executive Vice President for Medical Affairs
and Integration, Augusta University
Presidential Distinguished Chair
Professor, Department of Neurology*

Julie Dahl-Smith, DO
*President, MCG Faculty Senate
Professor, Department of Family Medicine*

Program

Welcome.....Julie Dahl-Smith, DO
President, MCG Faculty Senate
Professor, Department of Family Medicine

Remarks.....David Hess, MD
Dean, Medical College of Georgia
Executive Vice President for Medical Affairs and Integration, Augusta University
Presidential Distinguished Chair
Professor, Department of Neurology

Educator of the Year Awards.....Class Presidents

Outstanding Basic Science Teaching Award.....Class Presidents

Outstanding Clinical Science Teaching Award.....Class Presidents

Resident of the Year Award.....Natasha Savage, MD
Senior Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education and Designated Institutional Official
Associate Professor, Department of Pathology

Mentoring Excellence Award.....Lara Stepleman, PhD
Associate Dean for Faculty Success and Inclusive Excellence
Professor, Department of Psychiatry & Health Behavior

Distinguished Faculty Awards.....Almira Vazdarjanova, PhD
Chair, Faculty Recognition Committee
Secretary, MCG Faculty Senate
Professor, Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology

Eric Lewkowiez, MD
Member, Faculty Recognition Committee
Vice President, MCG Faculty Senate
Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Health Behavior

Champion of Diversity Award.....Dr. Lewkowiez

Institutional Service Award.....Dr. Lewkowiez

Outstanding Faculty Award..... Dr. Vazdarjanova

Lifetime Achievement Award.....Dr. Vazdarjanova

Spirit of MCG Award.....Dr. Dahl-Smith

Recognition of Faculty Senate Executive CommitteeDr. Hess

Closing Remarks.....Dr. Dahl-Smith

Honorees:

Educators of the Year

Lisa Leggio, MD

Professor, Department of Pediatrics

Selected By: Class of 2022, Main Campus, Augusta

Presented By: Idris Ali Amghaiab, President, Class of 2023, Main Campus, Augusta

W. Scott Richardson, MD

Clinical Assistant Professor, Department of Surgery

Selected By: Class of 2022, AU/UGA Medical Partnership, Athens

Presented By: Sreesh Sridhar, President, Class of 2025, AU/UGA Medical Partnership

Pamela Tipler, DO

Associate Professor, Department of Medicine

Selected By: Class of 2023, Main Campus, Augusta

Presented By: Idris Ali Amghaiab, President, Class of 2023, Main Campus, Augusta

Julie Martin, MD

Associate Professor, Department of Pediatrics

Selected By: Class of 2023, AU/UGA Medical Partnership, Athens

Presented By: Sreesh Sridhar, President, Class of 2025, AU/UGA Medical Partnership

Morganne Manuel, PhD

Assistant Professor, Department of Cellular Biology and Anatomy

Selected By: Class of 2024, Main Campus, Augusta

Presented By: Sholeh Rezaee, President, Class of 2024, Main Campus, Augusta

Thomas Howdieshell, MD

Professor, Department of Surgery

Selected By: Class of 2024, AU/UGA Medical Partnership, Athens

Presented By: Sreesh Sridhar, President, Class of 2025, AU/UGA Medical Partnership

Gerard Guillot, PhD

Associate Professor, Department of Cellular Biology and Anatomy

Selected By: Class of 2025, Main Campus, Augusta

Presented By: Queen Abure, President, Class of 2025, Main Campus, Augusta

Theresa Rohr-Kirchgraber, MD

Professor, Department of Medicine

Selected By: Class of 2025, AU/UGA Medical Partnership, Athens

Presented By: Sreesh Sridhar, President, Class of 2025, AU/UGA Medical Partnership

Outstanding Basic Science Teaching Award

Department of Cellular Biology and Anatomy

Selected By: Class of 2024, Main Campus, Augusta

Presented By: Sholeh Rezaee, President, Class of 2024, Main Campus, Augusta

Outstanding Clinical Science Teaching Award

Department of Pediatrics

Selected By: Class of 2022, Main Campus, Augusta

Presented By: Idris Ali Amghaiab, President, Class of 2023, Main Campus, Augusta

Mentoring Excellence Award

Kimberly Atianzar, MD



Dr. Kimberly Atianzar is the medical director for the Structural Heart Program and assistant professor in cardiology and radiology, as well as director of Structural Imaging.

Dr. Atianzar built, established and developed the Structural Heart and Valve Program at MCG. She is part of the multidisciplinary team of the recently established Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy Center. Due to her leadership and success, she has been asked to also lead the development of the Adult Congenital Heart Disease Program. She is a member of various national cardiovascular societies to include the Women in Cardiology section of the American College of Cardiology. She has proven herself a strong advocate for women in cardiology and continues to inspire colleagues, fellows and students

with her clinical and academic work.

She completed medical school at St. George's University School of Medicine. She completed an advanced fellowship in structural heart disease at the Swedish Heart & Vascular Insititute in Seattle and a fellowship in advanced cardiovascular imaging at the University of California, San Diego.

Distinguished Faculty Awards

Basic Science Teaching

Thom Gaddy, PhD



Dr. Thom Gaddy is an associate professor in the Department of Cellular Biology and Anatomy and medical educator at the AU/UGA Medical Partnership in Athens, GA. His teaching responsibilities include facilitating small group, case-based learning in the campus' medical simulation program and teaching cell biology and histology in the large group setting.

His scholarship activities revolve around undergraduate medical education curriculum design, developing effective learning materials and studying pedagogies that promote self-directed learning.

He received his master's degree from the University of Georgia and his PhD from MCG.

Clinical Science Teaching

Thaddeus Carson, MD



Dr. Thaddeus Y. Carson is an associate professor as well as the clerkship director for the Section of Internal Medicine. He practices in both the inpatient and outpatient settings, with a dedicated faculty practice and as attending physician on internal medicine ward services. He is the medical director of the Augusta University Executive Wellness Clinic, which offers preventative health care to executives in the region.

Dr. Carson is an MCG graduate and completed his internal medicine residency at MCG and AU Health. He completed the Teaching Scholars Fellowship of the Augusta University Educational Innovation Institute to gain formal education in academic medical education and further his career in academic internal medicine with a focus on medical education.

Lauren Newhall, DO



Dr. Lauren Newhall is an assistant professor in the Department of Pediatrics and serves as associate program director for the Pediatric Residency Program.

She earned her medical degree from the Georgia campus of the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine in 2010. She completed her pediatric residency at MCG and spent a year as chief resident prior to joining the faculty in 2014. Dr. Newhall is a member of the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Association of Pediatric Program Directors.

Basic Science Research

Masuko Ushio-Fukai, PhD



Dr. Masuko Ushio-Fukai is a professor and director of the Redox Signaling Program in the MCG Vascular Biology Center and Department of Medicine.

She was born in Tokyo, Japan and received a PhD from Kyusyu University School of Medicine and Pharmaceutical Sciences in Fukuoka, Japan. Then she joined Dr. Kathy Griendling's lab in the Division of Cardiology at Emory University as a postdoctoral fellow to study the role of NADPH oxidase as a major producer of reactive oxygen species, which function as signaling molecules, as well as the role of the powerful blood vessel constrictor angiotensin II as an agonist of G-protein coupled receptors, a large group of cell surface receptors that are essential to normal body function, used by disease and the target for many prescription drugs. She was promoted to an assistant professor based on her achievements.

Dr. Ushio-Fukai then joined the Department of Pharmacology at the University of Illinois at Chicago, where she was an associate professor with tenure. She joined the VBC five years ago.

Her lab is focused on elucidating the role of reactive oxygen species (ROS), especially H₂O₂, derived from NADPH oxidase and mitochondria as a signaling molecule to activate redox signaling involved in angiogenesis, the process of new blood vessel formation, which is required for wound repair and treatment of ischemic heart and limb disease. Understanding redox signaling and biology will lead to development of new therapeutic strategies for treating patients with ischemic cardiovascular disease.

Jiliang Zhou, MD, PhD



Dr. Jiliang Zhou is a professor in the MCG Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology and in The Graduate School at Augusta University.

Dr. Zhou studies smooth muscle biology. The long-term goal of his research program is to unravel the mechanisms regulating the phenotype of vascular smooth muscle cells, defining the epigenetic and transcriptional mechanisms that control the smooth muscle cells' behavior contributing to cardiovascular development, homeostasis and disease. The two major projects the Zhou laboratory is currently focusing on are Hippo-YAP-TEAD signaling and long non-coding RNAs (lncRNAs), both of which have been continuously funded by the NIH and/or the AHA for the past 15 years. Dr. Zhou is also a dedicated mentor who is highly motivated to train the next generation of cardiovascular scientists.

Dr. Zhou completed medical school at Jiangxi Medical College in Nanchang, China, then went on to receive his master's degree and doctoral degree from Zhejiang University in Hangzhou, China. He received his postdoctoral training at Indiana University School of Medicine in Indianapolis.

Clinical Science Research

Shaoyong Su, MD, PhD



Dr. Shaoyong Su is a professor of genetic epidemiology in MCG's Georgia Prevention Institute. His major areas of interest and research are mental and cardiovascular health and health disparities, with a particular interest in how early life stress influences physical, mental and cognitive health across the lifespan, and the underlying genetic/epigenetic mechanisms. He also is interested in methodology development in different kinds of study designs, like twin research, longitudinal studies and omics data analysis. He is principal investigator on two ongoing NIH R01 grants and co-investigator on several other NIH-funded projects. The ultimate goals of his research are to understand the contribution of nurture vs. nature in the early development of diseases and to identify the key modifiable risk factors, timing and subpopulations to target for

developing novel intervention and prevention strategies to reduce the burden associated with stress-related health problems at an early stage.

Outstanding Young Basic Science Faculty Award

Kumar Vaibhav, PhD



Dr. Kumar Vaibhav is an assistant professor in the MCG Department of Neurosurgery and is also affiliated with Dental College of Georgia's Department of Oral Biology and Diagnostic Sciences, The Graduate School and The Transdisciplinary Research Initiative in Inflammaging and Brain Aging (TRIBA).

Dr. Vaibhav's lab focuses on the investigation of molecular mechanisms regulating brain injury progression by deciphering the transcriptional regulatory network, including the endocannabinoid system in myeloid-lymphoid interaction during acute and chronic pathology. Dr. Vaibhav's academic achievements have earned him international recognition of his research and accomplishments in the field of neuroscience, specifically, the molecular mechanism of immune activations after brain injury and modulation of macrophages and neutrophils as potential therapeutic targets through activating AMPK and cannabinoid receptors.

He received his postdoctoral training at Hamdard University, New Delhi in 2013.

Outstanding Young Clinical Science Faculty Award

Eric Ring, MD



Dr. Eric Ring is an associate professor in the Department of Pediatrics, Division of Pediatric Hematology and Oncology. He also serves as clinical co-investigator for the Pediatric Immunotherapy Program, which offers clinical trials to families looking for immunotherapy options for their child with relapsed cancer, and as assistant program director for MCG Pediatric Student Education.

Since arriving at MCG in 2017, he has mentored multiple residents and medical students, served on various academic and clinical committees and received
(Continued on next page)

many awards for his educational efforts including Teacher of the Year for the Department of Pediatrics, MCG Educator of the Year for the class of 2021, and multiple Exemplary Teaching Awards for both undergraduate and graduate education.

He received degrees in biochemistry and mathematical sciences from Clemson University followed by his medical degree from the University of South Carolina School of Medicine. He completed a pediatric residency at Greenville Health Systems in South Carolina and fellowship training in pediatric hematology and oncology at the University of Alabama Birmingham.

Champion of Diversity

April Hartman, MD



Dr. April Hartman is an associate professor and vice chair for diversity in the Department of Pediatrics. She is the Dorothy A. Hahn Endowed Chair in Pediatrics, the division chief of General Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine and the medical director for Ambulatory Pediatric Services for the Children's Hospital of Georgia.

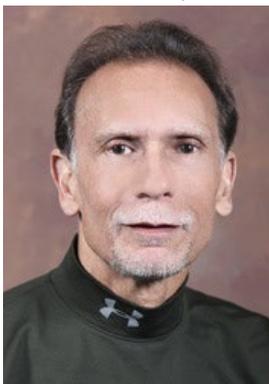
Dr. Hartman began her career serving as a community pediatrician in underserved areas of Georgia. Her direct experience with issues of access and inequity in care prompted her to pursue opportunities for leadership which would allow her to have an impact at the macro level and to address disparities in health care. Dr. Hartman serves as the co-chair of the MCG Faculty Senate Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee, chair of the AU Health Diversity,

Equity and Inclusion Pipeline Subcommittee, chair of the CHOG Pediatric Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Council, and as a member of AU Health Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee.

She completed medical school at Meharry Medical School and pediatric residency training at MCG.

Institutional Service Award

Scott Barman, PhD



Dr. Scott Barman is professor and vice chair of education in the Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology and is the assistant dean for MCG admissions and vice chair of the Admissions Committee.

His research involves studying mechanisms of pulmonary arterial hypertension. He is the recipient of a Parker B. Francis Pulmonary Fellowship Award, an American Heart Association Training Fellowship, an NIH Training Fellowship, as well as numerous extramural grants from both the NIH and AHA. His professional memberships include the North Dakota Academy of Science, Sigma Xi Scientific Research Society, American Physiological Society, New York Academy of Sciences, and he is a fellow of the AHA Council for Blood Pressure Research. He has served on AHA, NIH, Department of Defense and American Institute of

Biological Sciences grant review study sections. He has also served on the editorial boards of numerous journals and to date has published 91 Abstracts, 66 articles and 15 book chapters.

He received his doctoral degree in cardiovascular physiology from the University of North Dakota and completed a postdoctoral fellowship in pulmonary pathophysiology at the University of South Alabama prior to joining the faculty at MCG.

Outstanding Faculty Award

John Morgan MD, PhD



Dr. John Morgan is a professor in the MCG Department of Neurology.

He is director of the Georgia Memory Net Assessment Center at MCG, which is funded by a state grant and provides diagnosis and care to patients with dementia around the state. Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp appointed him to the Georgia Alzheimer's and Related Dementias (GARD) Advisory Council in 2019. He also serves as the Augusta director of the National Parkinson's Foundation's Community Partners for Parkinson's Care.

From 2008-21, he served as director of MCG's National Parkinson's Foundation Center of Excellence, one of only 35 NPF Centers in the country.

He has served as principal investigator on 14 grants from institutions like the National Parkinson's Foundation and the US Department of Veterans Affairs, and as an investigator on more than 90 industry, study group and foundation supported clinical trials. He is the author of more than 100 peer-reviewed manuscripts and 14 book chapters.

An honored educator, he has been recognized with several MCG Exemplary Teaching Awards and a Department of Neurology Resident Teaching Award. The MCG Class of 2015 named him Educator of the Year.

He received both his medical degree and PhD from MCG and completed a neurology residency and movement disorders fellowship at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. He completed a Hy & Blanche Selwyn Parkinson's Fellowship at MCG. He joined the MCG faculty in 2003.

Lifetime Achievement Award

Thomas Swift, MD



Dr. Thomas Swift joined the MCG faculty in 1973 following a fellowship in clinical neurophysiology at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. He graduated from Cornell Medical College in 1965 and had an internship at Bellevue Hospital-Memorial Sloan Kettering before moving to Seattle for an internal medicine residency. Returning to New York, he completed a residency in neurology at New York Hospital-Cornell.

Following residency, he enlisted in the US Public Health Service and opened one of the nation's first stroke units at Candler Hospital in Savannah, Georgia. He spent two additional years at Carville, the USPHS leprosy hospital in Louisiana. He has just finished a novel based on this experience, *Carville - Medicine, Mischief and Mayhem in Cajun Country*.

Dr. Swift has been president of the American Academy of Neurology, the American Association of Electromyography and Electro-diagnosis, the Society of Clinical Neurologists and has chaired the medical advisory board of the Myasthenia Gravis Association of America. He has published 150 papers in peer-reviewed journals and invented the popular game show NEUROBOWL, which was held at the American Academy of Neurology annual meeting for over 20 years.

He has been a member of NIH Study Sections where he has received grant funding. The chairperson emeritus led the MCG Department of Neurology for 20 years. He retired in 2001 but has continued to teach and see patients. He provided original descriptions of several neurologic conditions including droopy shoulder syndrome, tick paralysis and regeneration after brachial plexus injuries. His book, *Instant Neurologic Diagnosis* (Oxford), coauthored by Drs. Kapil Sethi and Christopher Hawkes, is now in its third edition. (Continued on next page)

He also has an art studio in downtown Augusta and has sold over 700 paintings. He is married to Margaret Brown and together they have three children.

Spirit of MCG Award

Lara Stepleman, PhD



Dr. Lara Stepleman aspired to be many things in life — among which were a loving family member, a compassionate friend and a thoughtful contributor to the world around her. She did not specifically aspire to be a leader in academic medicine. Yet, she finds herself leading a growing number of teams and initiatives.

She serves as the inaugural MCG associate dean for faculty success and inclusive excellence with a charge to foster a culture of faculty success through mentoring, career development and retention.

She is also the chief of Psychology and a professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Health Behavior, supervising psychology training, research and clinical care with a focus on individuals living with HIV and sexual orientation and gender minorities. She is a passionate contributor to creating a more diverse, equitable and inclusive environment within academic medicine, including serving as the inaugural LGBTQ information officer for the AU Health System.

Dr. Stepleman has dedicated much of her career to mentoring across the learner continuum, including undergraduates, medical students, graduate students, postdoctoral fellows and faculty. When not at work, she can be found playing in her expansive flower and vegetable garden, doing yoga, lying on a beach in Mexico and spending time with her loved ones.

MCG Faculty Senate Executive Committee 2021 – 2022

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Laura Mulloy, DO
Jigarkumar Parikh, MD
Cassandre Perard, DO
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MCG Faculty Senate Faculty Recognition Committee

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