



# THE PROGRESS NOTE

## DEPARTMENT OF INTERNAL MEDICINE



Matt Blackwell, MD,  
FACP

## Welcome from the Residency Program Director

*Matt Blackwell, MD, FACP*

Greetings from Charlotte and the Department of Internal Medicine at Carolinas Medical Center! We recently celebrated another successful Match Day and are excited to welcome another nineteen resident members to our department in July.

Our incoming interns are quite an accomplished group with diverse life experiences. Collectively, the group has served internationally in Trinidad, Peru, Kenya, Mexico, Honduras, Egypt, Morocco, Cambodia, El Salvador, Vietnam, Ghana, and China! In addition, the group includes several members of Alpha Omega Alpha, the Gold Humanism Honor Society, and Sigma Sigma Phi. Among many varied backgrounds and experiences, the group includes two former UNICEF clean water advocates for the developing world, a CNN freelance producer, a PhD researcher in erythropoiesis, a Naval Sea Systems Command Intern, an Albert Schweitzer Fellowship winner, a professional ballet dancer, a children's book author and illustrator, a baseball coach, a gas station attendant, a construction company project manager, and an intelligence analyst with the CIA! The group's professional interests include everything from global health to rural medicine. The list of names and medical schools for this outstanding class of interns can be found on subsequent pages of this newsletter.

In addition, this issue of "The Progress Note" features updates on our graduates' incredible ABIM exam success, an account from a resident about a recent global health experience, an introduction to our new Resident Wellness Clinic, and various accomplishments of our wonderful residents and faculty.

Please feel free to forward this issue of "The Progress Note" to other alumni and friends of the program. Anyone who would like to receive an electronic copy of this biannual newsletter can send his/her contact information to [IMAlumni@AtriumHealth.org](mailto:IMAlumni@AtriumHealth.org). In addition, we encourage you to contact us with updates on your accomplishments and/or other changes in your professional life. We would be delighted to highlight your news in a future issue!

Finally, I hope that you will consider giving back to your former residency program through a tax-deductible monetary contribution to the **Laszlo Littmann Department of Internal Medicine Education and Research Fund**. We established this fund to honor the occasion of Dr. Littmann's retirement in 2016, and we are using the donated funds to support residency education efforts including travel to Cameroon for an experience in international medicine, residency wellness events to prevent physician burnout, resident research efforts, and special events such as residency graduation. Your contributions will allow us to continue our current outstanding educational programs as well as offer exciting new opportunities for professional development. Information about donating to the Internal Medicine Education and Research Fund is included on page 6. Thank you so much for your consideration!

Sincerely,  
Matt Blackwell, MD, FACP  
Program Director, Internal Medicine Residency  
Carolinas Medical Center

Summer | 2018

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## Residency Program Updates: Global Health



Dr. Joanna Young,  
PGY-2

This past February, one of our PGY-2 residents, Dr. Joanna Young, was the first recipient of a GO to GROW Scholarship sponsored by the financial planning group Spaugh, Dameron, and Tenny. This scholarship allowed Joanna to travel to Diriomo, Nicaragua with the non-profit organization Bless Back Worldwide for a short term medical mission trip. Prior to this trip, Joanna had served internationally in Honduras, El Salvador, and the Dominican Republic. Joanna provides this testimony of her most recent international experience...

*I served as the sole physician on the team, and I was accompanied by nine physician assistants and two nurses. For two half-days, we had the support of a Nicaraguan physician to guide us on local infections, resistance patterns, emerging infectious diseases, and how to effectively navigate the Nicaraguan health system. I spent six days in Nicaragua doing a variety of medical tasks including clinics, home visits, and education. We held formal clinics for 3.5 days there and over 400 patients were seen. We had the unique ability to petition for continued follow-up care with extra funds from the cost of our trip, which was facilitated by the local organization, Los Rayos de Esperanza. Los Rayos maintains a year-round clinic run by a Nicaraguan nurse under the supervision of an American physician assistant in our absence.*

*While there were many memorable cases throughout the week, one stands out to me for its severity and prompt resolution. Early in the week, we saw a gentleman who had suffered a spinal cord injury leading to paraplegia and the need for an indwelling foley catheter. He presented as a walk-in to our clinic complaining of abnormal drainage, and two urocutaneous fistulas were identified. With the help of our organization and several Nicaraguan physicians, he was able to establish with an in-country urologist within the week and have a suprapubic catheter placed. We visited many patients who were home bound, driving as far as the roads would take us and then hiking in further. This was a new and incredibly rewarding experience for me. We also had the opportunity to teach for a day at a nursing school in Masaya, Nicaragua where we covered topics such as diabetes, sexually transmitted infections, ovulation and birth control, wound care, casting, and heart failure. The brisk question and answer session following the lectures highlighted the students' eagerness to learn. We also had the privilege of training local community health advocates on diabetes and wound care, a critical need for the community.*

*Looking back on the experience, if I had to choose one central theme of the trip it would be education. Even though we dispensed antibiotics, antifungals, vitamins, and medications for chronic disease, education is the one thing that will continue in our team's absence. I am grateful for this opportunity to immerse myself in a different culture and find constructive and sustainable ways to make a lasting difference.*

Since returning from Nicaragua, Joanna continues to volunteer at the Charlotte Rescue Mission Rebound Clinic. Joanna says that she is "passionate about not just helping people get the healthcare they need but also the education to help avoid illness, injury, or disease going forward." She hopes to pursue fellowship training in hematology-oncology following her residency.

## Class of 2021: Incoming Internal Medicine Preliminary Residents

**Amy Blake, MD, MA**  
Eastern Virginia

**Sarah Carlock, MD**  
University of Arkansas

**Lauren Crouse, MD**  
East Carolina University

**Kelsey Kennedy, MD**  
University of Alabama-Birmingham

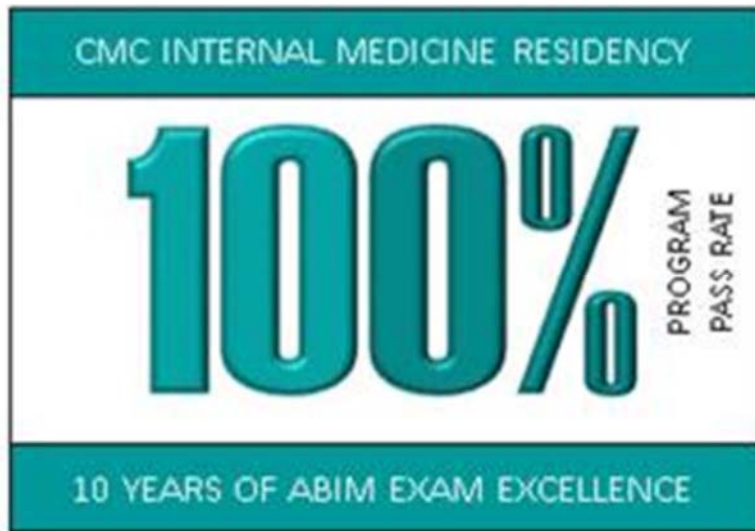
**Graham McRary, MD**  
University of North Carolina

**Tyler Smith, MD**  
University of North Carolina

**Lauren Weeks, DO**  
Edward Via College of Osteopathic  
Medicine-Carolinas

## Residency Program Updates: ABIM Exam Milestone

This past fall, we learned that each member of our Internal Medicine Class of 2017 passed the ABIM exam on their first attempt. **This marks 10 consecutive years that our program has had a 100% ABIM exam first-time pass rate!** This extraordinary decade-long accomplishment is a testament to our residents' hard work, our faculty's dedication to exceptional mentorship and instruction, and our institution's commitment to providing a superb training environment. As far as we know, we are 1 of only 2 Internal Medicine Residency Programs nationally (out of over 500 IM programs) to hold a 100% ABIM exam program pass rate for this length of time!



## Fellowship Match 2017-2018

These PGY-3 residents recently matched into the fellowship programs listed below. We are proud of their accomplishments and know that they will serve as outstanding representatives of our residency program at their respective institutions.

**Daniel Herlihy, MD:** Gastroenterology, Texas Tech University; El Paso, Texas

**Anthony Roohollahi, MD:** Pulmonary-Critical Care, West Virginia University; Morgantown, West Virginia

**Andrew Simmelink, MD:** Gastroenterology, Carolinas Medical Center; Charlotte, North Carolina

**Samuel Webb, MD:** Hospice-Palliative Care, University of Alabama-Birmingham; Birmingham, Alabama

## Class of 2021: Incoming Internal Medicine Categorical Residents

**Joseph Burch, MD, PhD**  
Medical College of Georgia

**Holden Crosby, MD**  
University of South Carolina

**Stephen Frempong, MD**  
University of North Carolina

**Alyssa Huggins, MD**  
Medical University of South Carolina

**Brooks Keene, MD, MS**  
Mercer University

**Constantine Moschopoulos, DO**  
Edward Via College of Osteopathic  
Medicine-Virginia

**Cristina Page, MD**  
Virginia Commonwealth University

**Neelam Patel, DO**  
Edward Via College of Osteopathic  
Medicine-Carolinas

**Sergio Patton, MD**  
University of Virginia

**Shadi Saboori, MD, MPH**  
Mercer University

**Will Smith, MD**  
Mercer University

**Jack Yazbeck, MD**  
East Carolina University

## Resident Wellness Week



Erin Haynes, DO (CMC Class of 2011) Founder, CMC Resident Wellness Clinic

Due largely to the efforts on one of our residency alumni, **Dr. Erin (Herrick) Haynes** (Class of 2011), Charlotte Medical Clinic has started a resident physician wellness clinic one Saturday/month to provide convenient access to care for CMC residents and fellows. Dr. Haynes has practiced at the Mint Hill office of Charlotte Medical Clinic since her graduation from our residency program.

Recently, she was inspired to begin the CMC Resident Wellness Clinic in response to the alarming national rates of physician burnout as well as several anecdotes from physicians around the county regarding how they neglected their own health. We are so grateful for the efforts of Dr. Haynes in spearheading this effort in conjunction with our graduate medical education office. In addition, we appreciate the willingness of her Charlotte Medical Clinic colleagues listed below who are committed to providing care to our residents and fellows through the Saturday wellness clinics.

Michael Friedland, MD

Benjamin Kirk, MD (CMC Class of 1999)

Laura Hahn, MD

Michelle Scullock, MD

Al Hudson, MD (CMC Class of 1989)

Laura Seth, MD

Peter Justis, MD (CMC Class of 1993)

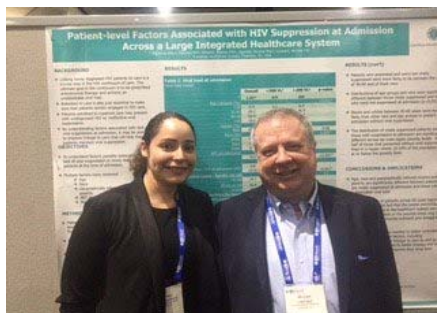
## Scenes from Winter Wellness Week, February 2018



Residents had an opportunity to make sandwiches for Urban Ministries as a part of Internal Medicine Resident Wellness Week.



## Scholarly Activity



Dr. Marielys Figueroa-Sierra (PGY-2) and Dr. Michael Leonard, ID Week



Dr. Joanna Young (PGY-2), North Carolina ACP Meeting 2018

Under the direction of our Internal Medicine resident research program coordinator, Dr. Stephanie Taylor, our residents have been more involved in scholarly activity than ever before. The residents listed below have presented their scholarly work at a regional or national medical meeting since July 2017.

**Drs. Marielys Figueroa-Sierra and Samuel Webb:** ID Week; San Diego, CA

**Drs. John Curtiss, Daniel Herlihy, and Daphne Jones:** American Thoracic Society; Washington D.C.

**Drs. Kevin Lamm and Andrew Simmelink:** American College of Gastroenterology; Orlando, FL

**Dr. Ryan Humphries:** American Society of Nephrology; New Orleans, LA

**Dr. Tripp Ference:** Association of Academic Physiatrists; Atlanta, GA

**Drs. Jessica Sang, Kevin Lamm, Lauren Wood, Maggie Devane, and Blake Goodbar:** Southern Society of General Internal Medicine; New Orleans, LA

**Drs. Bim Dang, Marielys Figueroa-Sierra, Cory Gunn, John Curtiss, Daniel Herlihy, and Anthony Roollahi:** Society of Critical Care Medicine; San Antonio, TX

**Drs. Chris Diaz, Joanna Young, and John Curtiss:** North Carolina American College of Physicians; Greensboro, NC

**Dr. Andrew Simmelink:** National Society of General Internal Medicine; Denver, CO



John Curtiss, MD (PGY-3) presenting at SCCM 2018

## Presentations and Posters



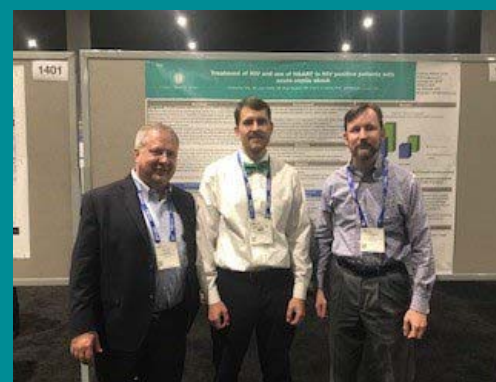
John Curtiss, MD (PGY-3) NC ACP 2018



Chris Diaz, DO (PGY-1) NC ACP 2018



Dan Herlihy, MD (PGY-3) presenting at SCCM 2018



Michael Leonard, MD, Samuel Webb, MD (PGY-3), and Christopher Polk, MD, at Infectious Disease Week

## Alumni Updates



**Dr. Daphne Jones** (Class of 2017 and current PGY-4 Chief Resident) has accepted a faculty hospitalist position at Duke Regional Medical Center in Durham, NC.



**Dr. Ruchi Jain** (Class of 2016) has accepted a faculty hospitalist position at UCLA Medical Center in Los Angeles, CA.



**Dr. Julie (Decoster) Harris** (Class of 2016) received the Top Hospitalist Award at Duke-Raleigh Hospital for her performance based on patient satisfaction, length of stay, case mix index, and mortality.



**Dr. Rob Craven** (Class of 2011) has joined McLeod Health as a hospitalist in Florence, SC.

## Faculty Updates

Dr. Stephanie Taylor received the STAR Award for a top research abstract at the Society of Critical Care Medicine meeting in San Antonio, Texas. The STAR Research Achievement Award recognizes excellence in critical care research.



### *Department of Internal Medicine Education and Research Fund*

#### *In Honor of Laszlo Littmann*

Those interested in making a tax-deductible donation to the Department of Internal Medicine Education and Research Fund can do so in two convenient ways:

Online via the Atrium Health Giving website: [HERE](#)

([https://secure2.convio.net/tchf/site/Donation2?df\\_id=2204&2204.donation=form1](https://secure2.convio.net/tchf/site/Donation2?df_id=2204&2204.donation=form1))

— or —

Supporters can mail checks to the CMC Internal Medicine Education and Research Fund

*Atrium Health Foundation, P.O. Box 32861, Charlotte, NC 28232-2861.*