



GOOD NEWS!

Wake Forest University School of Medicine Cardiovascular Sciences Center

Spring 2026

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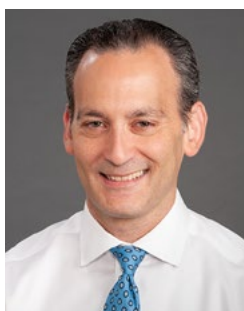
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Dr. Michael Shapiro — A National Leader in Preventive Cardiology



Shapiro

Dr. Michael Shapiro served as a member of the writing committee for the new 2026 ACC/AHA/AACVPR/ABC/ACPM/ADA/AGS/APhA/ASPC/NLA/PCNA Guideline on the Management of Dyslipidemia, a major national clinical practice guideline that retires and replaces the 2018 Guideline on the Management of Blood Cholesterol. The guideline provides updated recommendations for the evaluation, management, and monitoring of patients with dyslipidemias, including high blood cholesterol, hypertriglyceridemia, and elevated lipoprotein(a).

Dr. Shapiro's involvement reflects Wake Forest's national leadership in preventive cardiology, lipidology, and ASCVD risk reduction. In conjunction with the guideline publication, Dr. Shapiro also authored a JACC commentary, "Seeing the Whole Picture:

Apolipoprotein B and Lipoprotein(a) in the 2026

Dyslipidemia Guideline", highlighting the evolving role of apoB and Lp(a) in more precise cardiovascular risk assessment and lipid management.



[2026 ACC/AHA/AACVPR/ABC/ACPM/ADA/AGS/APhA/ASPC/NLA/PCNA Guideline on the Management of Dyslipidemia: A Report of the American College of Cardiology/American Heart Association Joint Committee on Clinical Practice Guidelines.](#)

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

Dr. Olivia Gilbert presented during the following invited talks and panels:

- Expert Advisory Panel on Effectiveness of Non-implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator (Non-ICD) vs. ICD Therapy in Contemporary Heart Failure Patients with a Low Risk for Arrhythmic Death" on 1/23/26, during the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI), Virtual.
- Panelist and Speaker for "ACC Clinical Policy: From Guidelines to Expert Consensus in CVD Prevention," on 3/29/26, American College of Cardiology, New Orleans, LA.
- Panelist: "Roundtable on the Development of Patient-Centered Guidelines," on 1/15/26, Pulmonary Hypertension Association, Washington DC.



Visker

Joe Visker, PhD, Staff Scientist for Cardiothoracic Surgery and Molecular Medicine, presented the following:

- "Solute-Carrier Bypass for Cardiac Carbohydrate Oxidation Under Stress" as an invited oral presentation during the Keystone Symposium for Solute Carrier Transporters: Structure, Physiology, and Pharmacology in Boston, MA, April 2026.
- "Pyruvate and Lactate Metabolism in the Heart" as an invited Keynote Speaker during the Tri-Beta Research Convention in Troy, NY at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.



Tomar

Dr. Tomar delivered an invited talk on cardiac fibrosis and mitochondria at the annual meeting of the International Society for Heart Research (India Section), held at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences in New Delhi, India.

Parag Anilkumar Chevli, MBBS, MS was invited to present "Cardio-Metabolic Biomarkers and Incident Atrial Fibrillation in the Multi-Ethnic Study of Atherosclerosis (MESA)" at the in-person MESA Steering Committee meeting held on April 14–15, 2026, in Rockville, MD. **Dr. Prashant Bhawe** serves as the mentor for this project.

Dr. Karl Richardson was invited to give a talk at American Society of Echocardiography (ASE) Conference on "TEE vs ICE Guidance for LAOO" and

also as a discussant on a panel focused on complex valvular disease.

Pamela Burgessm, ACS, BS, RDCS, RDMS, RVT, FASE, Cardiac Sonographer, and Dr. Anthony Ciocci, Fellow, presented an abstract at ASE titled "Ischemic Mitral Regurgitation from Coronary Cameral Fistulas."

Dr. Kaushik Gokul, IM Resident, and Dr. Mohammed Elsadany presented an abstract at ASE titled "A Rise in Diastolic Mitral Annular Tissue Doppler Velocities as a Potential Marker for Acute Severe Bioprosthetic Aortic Insufficiency."



Wilson

During the STENT SAVE a LIFE and GHATI Joint Annual Forum 2026 and the following day at Euro PCR, **Dr. B. Hadley Wilson** moderated three different sessions over two days and gave three presentations.

- GHATI 2026 – Scaling quality improvement across 40 countries
- GHATI Data Analytics: Driving quality improvement through real-time registries
- Cardiogenic Shock and Mechanical Support: Why Timing of Ventricular Unloading is Everything



Kavanagh

Dr. Kylie Kavanagh was invited to serve as a panelist for the NIA-DAB workshop "Advancing the Translational Aging Research Pipeline."

On April 17, 2026, Dr. Michael Moore gave an invited CME presentation to the Southern States CME Collaborative (SSCC) Accredited Provider Conference 2026 in Richmond, VA. The topic was "Developing Your CMEW Program Physician Leader & Champion." The SSCC accredits physician CME programs for Virginia, Mississippi, and North Carolina, including all of the North Carolina AHEC Centers.

In mid-April Dr. Michael Moore delivered an invited recorded presentation, "The Game of Life", for Liberty University School of Osteopathic Medicine's medical students. The one-hour presentation explained the importance of planning for retirement even at the beginning of a medical career and the proven strategies to help make retirement financially and functionally possible.

FUNDING

During the months of January to April, CVSC members were awarded 21 grants including 2 from federal agencies for a sum of ~ \$6.4M and 19 from other sources for a sum of ~\$4.7M.



Melendez

Drs. Giselle Melendez (PI), Olivia Gilbert (Co-I), Adrian Lata (Co-I), and Dr. Joe Visker (Co-I) received a pilot award from the Center for Precision Medicine for the project titled “Multi-Omics Workflow for Biomarker Discovery in Left Ventricular Unloading in Advanced Heart Failure: A Proof-of-Concept Study.”

Dr. Aderonke O. Adeniyi received a \$25,000 pilot award from the Wake Forest Center for Transformative Stroke Care for the project “Feasibility and Safety of Incorporating Telehealth Visits Combined with Remote Blood Pressure Monitoring in the Management of Chronic Hypertension in Pregnancy.” Collaborators include **Drs. Nicole Cyrille-Superville**, Sarah White, Ceshae Harding, **Cheryl Bushnell**, Eijiro Obioma, **Maria Octavia Rangel**, and **Austin Seals**, Yvan-Michel Ngbichi, Mary Carton Mitchener and Noah Weinstein.



Ahn

Dr. Bumsoo Ahn received an R01 titled “Synergistic Effects of Unacylated Ghrelin and Endurance Exercise on Sarcopenia and Mobility Loss,” with a project period from 02/01/2026–01/30/2031 and an award amount of \$3,311,357.

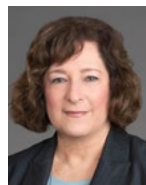
Dr. Anthony Peters was awarded an American Heart Association Career Development Award for his grant titled “Molecular and Clinical Effects of Exercise Intervention in Heart Failure with Preserved Ejection Fraction.”

Dr. Ibrahim Karabayir received a very competitive score (impact score 23, 2nd percentile) for his recent R21 titled “Population-Based Validation of Low-Cost Accessible ECG-AI Screening for Heart Failure Subtyping in Breast Cancer Survivors.”



Gwathmey

Drs. TanYa Gwathmey (PI) and **Debra Diz** (Co-I) received funding from the American Heart Association for the “Summer Program for Advancing Research in Cardiovascular Science (SPARCS)” which is designed to provide undergraduates with an immersive research training experience in cardiovascular science with a strong emphasis on epidemiology, population health, and public health research across the lifespan.



Diz

Congratulations to the 2026 CVSC Pilot Awardees:



Visker

Joseph R. Visker, PhD —Cardiothoracic Surgery & Molecular Medicine, \$20,000 for “Microplastics as Emerging Cardiotoxins:

Uncovering Mitochondrial Mechanisms of Energetic Failure.”



Zhang

Yuanyuan Zhang, MD, PhD — Wake Forest Institute for Regenerative Medicine, \$20,000 for “PEDF-Enriched

Urine-Derived Stem Cell Exosomes as a Novel Cell-Free Strategy for Hypertension-Induced Renal Injury.”



Melendez

Giselle C. Melendez, MD —Cardiovascular Medicine, \$20,000 for “Psychosocial Stress and Diet Interactions in Cardiovascular Aging: Western vs. Mediterranean Diet Effects on Premature Cellular Senescence.”

ENVISION FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

ENVISION – Employing Novel Virtual and In-person Strategies to Increase the Number Of Students Pursuing Healthcare and Biomedical Research Careers

In this CSVC ENVISION portfolio feature we showcase [Dr. Maria Octavia Rangel](#). Follow these links to access [Octavia's brochure](#), [animation](#), and [podcast](#). A survey link is provided with all materials to gather feedback from those accessing the portfolios. All materials are free to download and use without copyright restraints.

The target audience for the portfolios includes high school/early college level students and their teachers, with resources for educators to implement within their curriculum or share with their students directly, including [Lesson Plans/Activity Sheets](#), [Journal Articles](#), [Brochures](#), [Careers-focused PowerPoints](#), and [Podcasts](#) with [transcripts](#) and [PowerPoints](#). Materials are produced in English and Spanish.

Please visit the [ENVISION website](#) to access other materials published so far and feel free to share this information with your networks, particularly with high school and early college students, and science teachers. The ENVISION team (Drs. Debra Diz, David Herrington, Indra Newman and Shea Gilliam-Davis)



partners with [Futurum](#), a publishing company specializing in profiling scientists, to produce these portfolios of our amazing colleagues as relatable role models.

If anyone wishes to participate as a featured individual or team or has suggestions for those to feature, please reach out to: Shea.Gilliamdavis@Advocatehealth.org



AUSTIN'S DATA TIPS & TOOLS

What a P-Value Doesn't Tell You

Imagine you are testing a new blood pressure medication. After the trial, your statistician delivers the good news: the results are statistically significant, with a P-value of less than 0.05. It is easy to celebrate and assume the drug is a major breakthrough. But what does that number actually mean?

Think of a P-value as a “surprise index.” It tells you how incredibly unlikely it is that you would see a difference this large purely by random luck, assuming the drug does absolutely nothing. A tiny P-value means, “Wow, that is surprising if the drug is just a sugar pill!”

What it doesn't tell you is the clinical impact.

If your study is large enough, a drug that lowers systolic blood pressure by a mere 0.5 mmHg can yield

a highly significant P-value (e.g., $P < 0.001$). The math proves that the drop is real and not a fluke. However, clinically speaking, a 0.5 mmHg drop doesn't save lives or change patient outcomes. The effect size is too small to matter.

The takeaway: A P-value only clears the hurdle of proving an effect exists. To know if a treatment is a true clinical game-changer, look past the P-value and focus on the effect size and confidence intervals. Those tell you the magnitude of the benefit—which is what your patients care about.

Thanks for reading this edition of Data Tools & Tips.

Austin Seals, MSA

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PUBLICATIONS

During the months of January to April, Cardiovascular Sciences Center members published 135 manuscripts. Of these, 17 were CVSC first author publications. Below we highlight several publications.

Kadam A, Kashyap S, Samantaray K, Jaiswal N, Goyani S, Kramer PA, Hadi P, Lee J, **Furdui CM, Jadiya P, Tomar D**. Lactylation landscape of mitochondrial proteins in myocardial infarction. *Redox Biol.* 2026 May 18;94:104226. doi: 10.1016/j.redox.2026.104226. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 42176504; PMCID: PMC13224027.

Chappell MC. Alamandine-(1-5): The New Peptide of the Alternative Renin-Angiotensin System? *Circ Res.* 2026 Jan 2;138(1):e327777. doi: 10.1161/CIRCRESAHA.125.327777. Epub 2026 Jan 2. PMID: 41481690.

Chevli PA, Mirzai S, Kazibwe R, Kingsley J, Wood AC, **Yeboah J**, Slipczuk L, Mehta A, Bhatia HS, Pandey A, **Shapiro MD**. Circulating Ketone Bodies and Incident Cardiovascular Outcomes and Mortality: Insights From the UK Biobank. *J Am Heart Assoc.* 2026 Mar 3;15(5):e042582. doi: 10.1161/JAHA.125.042582. Epub 2026 Feb 20. PMID: 41717916; PMCID: PMC13055806.

Kazibwe R, **Schaich CL**, Kingsley JA, Chevli P, Mirzai S, Rikhi R, **Shapiro MD**. Lipoprotein(a), remnant cholesterol, and high-sensitivity C-reactive protein as complementary biomarkers for myocardial infarction risk assessment. *Prog Cardiovasc Dis.* 2026 Apr 30:S0033-0620(26)00041-1. doi: 10.1016/j.pcad.2026.04.011. Online ahead of print.

Schaich CL, Khanna AK, Chappell MC. Novel Aspects of the Renin-Angiotensin-Aldosterone System in Septic Shock. *Current Opinion in Physiology.* 2026; 47:100894. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cophys.2025.100894> (Invited Review)

Qadri N, Kwok E, Stanberry L, Thomas C, Irausquin SJ, Gupta D, Ebinger JE, Gluckman TJ, Mutharasan RK, Goyal A, Brownell NK, Scirica BM, Ho PM, Das SR, **Downey W**, Bradley SM. Cohort Study of Initial Diuretic Dosing and Outcomes Among Patients Hospitalized for Congestive Heart Failure: Insights From the Cardiovascular Quality Improvement and Care Innovation Consortium. *J Am Heart Assoc.* 2026 Mar 17;15(6):e038783. doi: 10.1161/JAHA.124.038783. Epub 2026 Feb 27. PMID: 41757434; PMCID: PMC13055810.

Visker JR, Tseliou E, Drosatos K, Wever-Pinzon O, Holland W, Drakos SG. International Utah cardiac recovery symposium (U-CARS) 2025:translational and basic science proceedings. *Heart Fail Rev.* 2026 Apr 14;31(1):55. doi: 10.1007/s10741-026-10626-2. PMID: 41979704; PMCID: PMC13202620.

Schwartz MC, Herbert C, **Alegria J**. Complex Management of Adults With Congenital Heart Disease During Pregnancy. *JACC Case Rep.* 2026 Apr 22;31(16):107714. doi: 10.1016/j.jaccas.2026.107714. PMID: 42023806; PMCID: PMC13112579.

AWARDS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Bhave

Dr. Prashant Bhave performed the first WISE CRT implant in North Carolina. This is a wireless, leadless device designed to provide cardiac resynchronization therapy (CRT) for patients with heart failure who are not suitable for conventional lead-based CRT devices.

Dr. Ibrahim Karabayir and team have been selected as one of four finalists in the inaugural LAUNCH: Healthy Aging & Alzheimer's Prevention Innovation Challenge.



Tomar

Dr. Dhanendra Tomar has been promoted to Associate Professor with tenure, effective June 1st, 2026.

Dr. Tomar received the 2025 Wake Forest University School of Medicine Emerging Leader Award.

Dr. Tomar was recently elected a Fellow of the American Heart Association (FAHA) by the Council on Basic Cardiovascular Sciences (BCVS).

Dr. Kunal Samantaray (Postdoctoral Fellow, **Jadiya/Tomar** Lab) received First Place in the Basic Science – Postdoctoral Fellow category for Best Poster Presentation at the Internal Medicine Research Day, Wake Forest University School of Medicine.

Dr. Shatakshi Shukla (Visiting Research Fellow, **Jadiya/Tomar** Lab) received First Place in the Basic Science – Graduate Student category at the Internal Medicine Research Day held on May 13, 2025.

The Atrium Health Sanger Heart & Vascular Institute has been selected as one of just 10 sites nationwide to participate in the American Heart Association's ATTR-CM Discovery Initiative! This 3-year collaborative program brings together leading centers committed to advancing care pathways and transforming outcomes for patients with ATTR-CM.



Jadiya

Dr. Pooja Jadiya has been promoted to Associate Professor with tenure, effective October 2026. This milestone recognizes exceptional contributions to research, teaching, and service in basic and translational science.

Dr. Jadiya received the 2025 Wake Forest University School of Medicine Early Career Investigator Award in Basic/Translational Science.

Dr. Monique Ebidoye Oye was accepted into the CTSI 2026 Translational Research Academy (TRA).



Kim

Esther S.H. Kim, MD, MPH, FSVM was appointed as the Inaugural Chair of the Department of Cardiovascular Medicine for the Charlotte campus of Wake Forest University School of Medicine and Advocate Health.

Dr. Kylie Kavanagh was inducted as a Fellow in the Obesity Society.

During the 10th anniversary meeting of Africa STEMI Live 2026, which was the largest ever with over 1,000 registered and multiple representatives from across Africa, Europe, and the US, **Dr. B. Hadley Wilson** gave four speaking presentations and highlighted the strengths of Advocate Health and the willingness to collaborate on developing heart care in Africa. They finished with a heart failure session, "Heart transplant in Africa – is it possible?"

Dr. S. Patrick Whalen and team have established a process for patients to donate pacemakers and ICD generators that are removed as part of an upgrade or other reasons to Project My Heart, Your Heart (MHYH) which is a nonprofit that sterilizes these devices for use in underserved countries. They have a team going to Honduras in September, which includes electrophysiologists, nurses, technicians from both Charlotte and Winston as part of a recurring EP medical mission. Advocate team members include Drs. S. Patrick Whalen and Eli Beaty (EP MDs) as well as Oliver Gibson and Mariel Gonzales (EP lab team members).

AWARDS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS *continued*



Howlett

Dr. Allyn Howlett was elected by the American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics as the organization's Secretary/Treasurer elect and member of the ASPET Council. She begins July 1, 2026, and will assume the full position the following year. As members of the ASPET Division of Cardiovascular Pharmacology, you are welcome to provide her with your advice and expectations for the future of pharmacology research, education, and professional development to take back to the ASPET Council.

Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist, in collaboration with Sanger Heart and Vascular Institute, launched a new clinical program for chronic thromboembolic pulmonary hypertension (CTEPH). Dr. Scott Rose alongside Dr. Hassan Khan successfully completed the first balloon pulmonary angioplasty (BPA) procedures as part of the CTEPH program on May 21, 2026. This is the first in Advocate Health SE Market (NC and GA). The team plans to perform BPAs twice a month at WFB and is looking forward to growing the program. Other physician collaborators who make up the CTEPH program at WFB include Dr. Bart Imielski (CT Surgery), Dr.

A multidisciplinary team led by **Drs. Ashish K. Khanna** and **Mark C. Chappell** along with team members **Drs. Christopher L. Schaich**, **Clark Files**, Lane Smith, **Simon A. Mahler** and Bartolomej Imielski received the new team research award for their work on the Renin-Angiotensin-Aldosterone System in critical illness in April.

Suman Wasan (Vascular Medicine), Dr. Olivia Gilbert (Advanced Heart Failure), Dr. Heather Clark (Pulmonology), Dr. Rudy Pascual (Pulmonology), Dr. Shambo Roy (Radiology).

Pamela Burgess, ACS, BS, RDCS, RDMS, RVT, FASE, Cardiac Sonographer Educator, was published as co-author for the upcoming Adult Congenital Heart Disease ASE Guideline.

In March, the Central North Carolina EP Society meeting was in Charlotte with presentations from both the Winston and Charlotte campus as well as the North Carolina EP Society meeting at IRCAD with 30 fellows attending from the southeast and 20 EP faculty that attended and participated.



Kitzman

Dr. Dalane W. Kitzman, Professor in Cardiovascular Medicine and Geriatrics /Gerontology, was appointed to the National Advisory Council on Aging. He was nominated by the Director of the National Institute on Aging, and the appointment was approved by the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

Advancing Research of RAAS Dysfunction in Critical Illness Team



Chappell



Khanna



Files



Schaich



Imielski



Mahler



Smith



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