

VOL. 1 ISSUE 1 · JULY 2022

# UVA PM&R

Official Newsletter of the University of Virginia's  
Department of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

## Update from the Chair:

BY DR. ROBERT WILDER

Welcome to our UVA PM&R Alumni family. I am excited to be kicking off what we intend to be a biannual departmental newsletter keeping us updated on the goings on within the department and our residency program. I am in my 24th year in the department, but I am not the longest standing faculty member; Alan Alfano has been here 25 years (all but one as medical director of our inpatient rehab hospital). Our faculty is now 17 strong and we mentor a residency with 4 residents per class year. I'd like to start this first newsletter by reintroducing our faculty, reviewing some recent on-goings and discussing some new initiatives that are on the horizon.

Our inpatient division is made up of 4 physicians: Alan Alfano, Geoff Smith, Regan Royer and Michael Sheppard. Alan serves as medical director and oversees the neuro rehab service. Geoff is director of the Spinal Cord Injury Service, Regan directs the general medical service, and Michael just completed his first year on faculty, attending the orthopedic service. Our inpatient Consultation Service is directed by Heather Asthagiri, assisted by Alyssa Mixon.

On the outpatient front, Dave Rubendall directs our WorkMed program, assisted by Dolly Grice. Preston Grice, Susan Miller and Joe Amalfitano make up our Spine division. Jeff Jenkins directs our Electrodiagnostic Service and will be joined this year by new grad Michael Warwick. Michael will also develop an outpatient neurorehab initiative.

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"We continue to enjoy teaching our residents and sharing in their successes, led by Program Director, Jeff Jenkins and Associate Program Director, Regan Royer."

DR. ROBERT WILDER

Ward Gypson, our director of outpatient clinical services is a utility man, seeing ANYONE, including a robust acupuncture practice and directing our P&O clinic. Siobhan Statuta, Dave Hryvniak and I continue to practice sports medicine including the Runner's Clinic. And yes, we still cover LOTS of races...

Regan Royer and Alyssa Mixon have developed an important Cancer Rehabilitation Program based at the Emily Couric Cancer Center and the Pantops Outpatient Clinics. They have developed a lymphedema management program and provide general rehabilitation and musculoskeletal services to patients with all types of cancer. They consult on patients admitted for Stem Cell treatment. A focus on Neuro Oncology and Head and Neck Cancer is next.

Some recent changes: After 24 years at Fontaine, our musculoskeletal services relocated to the new Ivy Road Orthopaedic Center, allowing for closer collaboration with the department of Orthopaedic Surgery. We welcomed a new CEO of UVA Encompass Rehabilitation, Vivian White. Vivian will also help lead our CARF accreditation efforts. Geoff Smith has worked tirelessly to develop a comprehensive, multidisciplinary care program for patients with Spinal Cord Injury and has led measures to eradicate disparities in health care for persons with disabilities.

On the horizon: We are currently recruiting for a director of our pediatric rehabilitation services. I am excited by the commitment of so many departments including pediatrics, neurology, and orthopedics to collaborate in this venture. After a one year hiatus due to pandemic related issues, our annual conference, Running Medicine, will return now in its 20th year.

We continue to enjoy teaching our residents and sharing in their successes, led by Program Director, Jeff Jenkins and Associate Program Director, Regan Royer. This past year several residents had presentations accepted at national assemblies. Our residents had an exceptional performance on the annual SAE this year as well.

Enough from me. Others have things to say. You are all family. Keep in touch and let us know when your travels bring you to Cville!

Bob Wilder  
Professor & Chair  
Medical Director, The Runner's Clinic at UVA

# Update from the Residency Program Director

BY DR. JEFF JENKINS

As another academic year draws to a close, we can't help but feel proud of our UVA PM&R residents. Our four graduates this year will soon be off to the next phase of their careers: one in private practice in Nashville, TN, one staying on here as a faculty physiatrist at UVA, one pursuing a Neuromuscular Medicine Fellowship at UVA, and one off to interventional spine fellowship in New Jersey.

Meanwhile, the scholarly achievements and academic success of our residents attest to the quality of residency training at UVA. Six residents presented abstracts and/or posters at national meetings this past year. On the AAPM&R's annual Self-Assessment Examination for residents, eleven of our twelve trainees scored above the national mean, four ranked within the top ten percent of test takers nationally in their training year, and three of our residents ranked in the top two percent nationally.



These achievements reflect our continued ability as a training program to attract top candidates. Despite the difficulties of the last residency application cycle, when all interviews were again held virtually due to the COVID pandemic, UVA PM&R had one of our most successful match results ever. All of our matched applicants were ranked in the top ten on our rank order list, and three of our top four ranked candidates matched with us.

Our program continues to attract top applicants by catering to self-directed learners who participate in setting their own goals and objectives for their graduate medical education. The generous amount of elective time built into the curriculum allows our residents to chart their own academic course within the broad specialty of PM&R. We are also among the leading programs in the nation in terms of office-based procedure experience for trainees. Our residents typically graduate with spine and MSK ultrasound procedure numbers in the top quartile nationally, and our residents' EMG numbers lead the nation. Of course, the quality of life in Charlottesville doesn't hurt our recruitment efforts either.



## Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Alyssa Mixon, DO, MBA



**Title:** Assistant Professor

**Research Interests:** Cancer rehabilitation, breast cancer and racial disparities, radiation-induced lumbosacral plexopathy

**Clinical Practice:** Lymphedema, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Cancer Rehab

**Department:** Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

As a cancer rehabilitation doctor, Alyssa Mixon, DO, cares for patients before, during, and after their cancer treatment. She helps her patients manage a variety of neurologic, musculoskeletal, and lymphatic conditions and side effects that can result from cancer treatment. With each patient, Dr. Mixon strives to optimize their functional capacity and quality of life. She offers interventions, including:

- Botulinum toxin injections for migraines and spasticity
- Steroid and trigger point injections
- Osteopathic manipulative treatments

She has expertise in conditions related to cancer treatment, including:

- Nerve, muscle, skeletal & functional disorders
- Lymphedema
- Chemotherapy-induced neuropathies
- Radiation-induced neuropathies/plexopathies

Dr. Mixon was born and raised in New England. She attended the University of New Hampshire, where she earned a dual degree in biology and classics. She then attended University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine, where she focused on learning about the cancer patient population and rehabilitation. After graduating from medical school in 2016, Dr. Mixon moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, for her physical medicine and rehabilitation residency training at Thomas Jefferson University. She became the first cancer rehabilitation fellow physician in Philadelphia, pioneering the program at the University of Pennsylvania.

Dr. Mixon joined the UVA faculty in 2021. She enjoys spending her free time with family, friends, and her dog. She also enjoys traveling, yoga, and photography.

"During my time in residency, I was drawn to working with the cancer population. I found myself surrounded by patients who demonstrated determination, resilience, and enthusiasm. I wanted to help make a positive difference in their lives. This led me to pioneer the cancer rehabilitation fellowship program at the University of Pennsylvania."

- ALYSSA MIXON, DO,  
MBA

# Resident & Faculty Presentations: Q.I. Projects & Research

## Q. I. Projects

- *Improving Resident Sign-out.* **Jacob Boomgaardt, DO and Stephen Tan, MD**
- *Increasing Co-prescription of narcan with opioids at discharge from acute rehab hospital.* **Kovosh Dastan MD, Michael Warwick MD, Geoffrey Smith MD**
- *VTE Advisor Compliance Quality Improvement Initiative.* UVA Encompass Health Rehabilitation Hospital. **Michael Warwick, MD, Geoff Smith, MD.** May-December 2021.

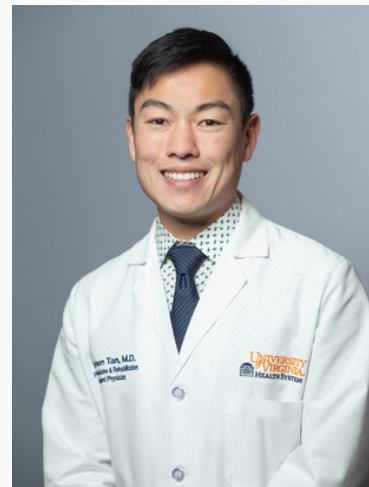
## Research Presentations

- **Boomgardt J, Tu J, Jenkins J**, "A case of Neuralgic Amyotrophy following COVID-19 Vaccination"; Presented at AAPM&R annual meeting November 2021
- **Boomgardt J, Tu J, Jenkins J**, "A case of Post-Median Sternotomy Plexopathy Following Coronary Artery Bypass Graft"; Presented at AAPM&R annual meeting November 2021
- **Hillaker E, Boomgaardt J, Weppner J**, "Regaining Function After Metronidazole-induced Cerebellar Toxicity"; Presented at AAPM&R annual meeting November 2021
- **Warwick, M, Sheppard, M, Jenkins, J**, Trigger Finger Palsy in a Police Officer as Initial Manifestation of Myotonic Dystrophy, Type 1. November 2021. AAPM&R Annual Assembly

# Resident Graduation Plans



**Jacob Boomgaardt, DO**  
**UVA Fellowship:  
Neuromuscular Medicine.**  
*University of Virginia  
Charlottesville, VA*



**Stephen Tan, MD**  
**Inpatient Rehabilitation**  
*Tristar Skyline Medical  
Center  
Nashville, TN*



**Kovosh Dastan, MD**  
**Fellowship:  
Interventional Spine & Pain  
Medicine**  
*North American Spine and  
Pain  
Hainesport, NJ*



**Michael Warwick, MD**  
**Joining UVA PM&R Faculty in an  
outpatient role. UVA Encompass inpatient  
follow-up, neurorehabilitation, spasticity  
management, and EMG studies.**  
*University of Virginia  
Charlottesville, VA*

# New Residents

## Meet the UVA PM&R Class of 2026!

From the Advanced match - joining us as PGY2 in July 2023

**Reid Collis**  
Washington University  
in St. Louis School of Medicine



**Angela Ryck**  
Tufts University  
School of Medicine



From the Categorical match - joining us as PGY1 in July 2022

**Abigail Bideaux**  
SUNY Upstate  
Medical University



**Joseph Levinson**  
University of Virginia  
School of Medicine



## Joining in July 2022 as PGY-2



**Jacqueline Maier, MD**

**Medical School:**  
Upstate Medical University

**Undergraduate:** Dartmouth  
College



**Kevin Mesina, MD**

**Medical School:** Rutgers  
New Jersey Medical School

**Undergraduate:** The College  
of New Jersey

## Upcoming Projects & Support

The “pandemic years” have been very difficult for our department, which has translated into funding problems for our residency program. The two major impacted areas have been the decrease in book money and the increase of travel expenses, which has resulted in residents spending more of their own money. In an effort to alleviate these concerns, we would like to establish a fund that will support the residency program by funding the purchase of books and travel costs. Our hope and vision has always been to provide as much institutional support to our residents as possible. This is your chance to help make that goal a reality.

The link below will take you to the UVA Medical Alumni Association and Medical School Foundation page where you can make a donation to PM&R’s residency program. All gifts, no matter the amount, will used to support the growth and development of our program.

