

Welcome to the new class

We are pleased to announce the results of this year's pediatric resident match. We look forward to welcoming the arrival of 15 new pediatric residents in July, as the result of a very successful Match Day.

Our interns come from Washington, Ohio, Michigan, Hawaii, Nebraska, North Carolina, Texas, Arizona, Nevada, California and Taiwan. Thank you to Su-Ting Li, our residency program director, and the intern application committee who reviewed applications to our competitive residency program.

We are also proud to share that so many of our pediatricians and pediatric specialists have been included in Sacramento Magazine's Top Doctors issue this year. Those highlighted have ranged from areas in adolescent medicine to pediatric endocrinology, pediatric surgery to pediatric nephrology. These are peer-selected doctors, based on surveys conducted in partnership with the national research firm Professional Research Services. You can see the full list here: sactownmag.com/top-doctors-2024

Thank you,

Satyan, Shinjiro and Brenda



From left to right: Shinjiro Hirose, Satyan Lakshminrusimha and Brenda Chagolla

Pediatric robotic surgery now at Children's Surgery Center

Pediatric general surgeon [Payam Saadai](#) directs the pediatric robotic surgery program, which is now available at the [UC Davis Children's Surgery Center](#). For the past year, he has been collaborating with his colleagues on the adult robotic surgery side to offer this minimally invasive approach to pediatric patients in the Sacramento region. Now he is training pediatric surgeons to use the robot. We asked him some questions about the program, its potential and where he sees the future of robotic surgery.

"Robotic surgery is a widely accepted and available approach for adults who need general surgical procedures. However, it has not been widely adopted in pediatric surgery, except for the field of pediatric urology," Saadai said. "Like traditional laparoscopic surgery, robotic surgery offers the same benefits of a minimally invasive approach including reduced pain and discomfort, faster recovery time, minimal scarring and shorter hospitalization.

In addition, robotic surgery confers a degree of visualization and depth that traditional laparoscopy lacks as well as improved instrument articulation." [READ MORE »](#)



New unit helps doctors locate and diagnose seizures more effectively

Expanded monitoring unit specializes in guiding treatment for people whose epilepsy is not controlled by medication

The [UC Davis Comprehensive Epilepsy Program](#) has opened a new 11-bed epilepsy monitoring unit that specializes in diagnosing and guiding treatment for people whose seizures are not controlled by medication.

It is the largest such unit in inland Northern California that is accredited by the National Association of Epilepsy Centers as a level 4. This is the highest-level designation. It is only given to facilities equipped with the most sophisticated intensive neurodiagnostic monitoring technology and that perform the full array of treatments for epilepsy and other seizure disorders. [READ MORE »](#)



The salary problem in pediatric subspecialties



Earlier this year, [Satyan Lakshminrusimha](#), chair of pediatrics and physician-in-chief at UC Davis Children's Hospital, published a first-person piece through [Op-Med](#), a Doximity Network website that highlights the voices from the medical community in the United States.

With guidance from [David Lubarsky](#), vice chancellor and CEO of UC Davis Health, Lakshminrusimha highlighted the eight outpatient-based, non-procedural pediatric subspecialists that have assistant professor salary benchmarks below that of general pediatrics in the AAMC benchmarks.

He also covers the factors that contribute to low compensation of pediatric medical subspecialists in the U.S. and what can be done to make pediatric subspecialty pay fair. [READ MORE »](#)

Lower grades, more absences for high schoolers who use both tobacco and cannabis

Study reveals trends that may impact teen health and educational success

More and more states in the U.S. are legalizing recreational cannabis, leading to concerns that teen use will increase. Tobacco consumption among high school students, including vaping and e-cigarettes, [is a concerning 12.6%](#), although trending downward.

Researchers at UC Davis were interested in learning how the combined use of these two products — cannabis and tobacco — might impact high school students in California.

In [a new study](#) published in *The Journal of Pediatrics*, they found high school students who use both tobacco and cannabis products miss more school and have lower grades compared to students who don't use either product or who use the products individually (tobacco or cannabis) but don't combine them.

"Substance use is a main predictor of educational outcomes, including absenteeism," said [Melanie Dove](#), an assistant adjunct professor in the [Department of Public Health Sciences](#) and first author of the paper. "These results highlight the need for comprehensive efforts to prevent and reduce substance use from both cannabis and tobacco products among youth." [READ MORE »](#)



Expert consensus statement on cardiac catheterization



[Ralf Holzer](#), director of pediatric and congenital cardiac catheterization at UC Davis Children's Hospital, is lead author of the expert consensus statement on cardiac catheterization for pediatric patients

and adults with congenital heart disease, which was released last December.

It was developed by the Pediatric and Congenital Interventional Cardiovascular Society (PICCS), the Association for European Paediatric and Congenital Cardiology (AEPC), the Asia-Pacific Pediatric Cardiac Society (APPCS), the Cardiac Society of Australia and New Zealand (CSANZ), Society for Cardiovascular Angiography & Interventional Cardiology, with additional endorsement from the Congenital Cardiac Anesthesia Society (CCAS) and the American Association of Physicists in Medicine.

It is intended to provide best practices for cardiac catheterization and transcatheter management of pediatric and adult patients with congenital heart disease, with added accommodations for resource-limited environments.

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New study validates prediction rules for pediatric intra-abdominal and traumatic brain injuries

Findings from six hospitals including UC Davis may lead to decrease in inappropriate CT use in injured children

Delivering high-quality emergency care for kids may mean fewer CT scans, according to a new [study](#) from UC Davis Health's [Department of Emergency Medicine](#).

The research — published in [The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health Journal](#) — validates intra-abdominal injury (IAI) and traumatic brain injury (TBI) prediction rules established by the [Pediatric Emergency Care Applied Research Network](#) (PECARN).

The IAI and TBI prediction rules were created by co-principal investigators [Nathan Kuppermann](#), chair of Emergency Medicine, and [James Holmes](#), executive vice chair of Emergency Medicine. They sought to decrease inappropriate [computed tomography](#) (CT) use in injured children.

According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC), trauma is the leading cause of death in children in the United States. Among pediatric traumatic deaths, TBI has been the most common cause and IAI accounts for 30% of cases.

Currently, CT scanning is the standard for diagnosing IAIs and TBIs. However, the procedure is associated with lethal ionizing radiation-inducing malignancies, or cancer, at an estimated rate of one per 500 abdominal CT scans in children younger than five years of age. In adolescents, the figure is one per 600 scans.

"A CT scan can be a useful diagnostic tool for diagnosing and treating patients, but it also has risks of radiation-induced malignancy," explained Kuppermann. "By validating these evidence-based rules, we hope to decrease unnecessary CT imaging of children with head or abdominal trauma and increase patient safety by decreasing the risks of potential malignancies." [READ MORE »](#)

Director of health care quality joins international health safety board



For more than a decade, UC Davis Director of Health Care Quality [Ulfat Shaikh](#) has been a member of the [International Society for Quality in Health Care](#) (ISQua). She was appointed to the influential organization's board of directors in January.

ISQua is a global organization committed to promoting and improving the quality and safety of health care worldwide. Its extensive network of health care professionals spans over 70 countries and six continents. ISQua's work includes education, consultancy and advisory services, and quality and safety initiatives.

"Being a part of the ISQua network helped me thrive personally and professionally and enabled me to make an international impact on child health quality and safety," said Shaikh, a UC Davis Children's Hospital pediatrician who is also professor of pediatrics at the UC Davis School of Medicine. "I now want to give back to the ISQua community by serving on its board to enhance its educational initiatives, further strengthen its fellowship and advisory programs, and contribute to its mission of driving improvements in health and health care worldwide." [READ MORE >](#)



Two UC Davis Health units receive silver-level Beacon Award for Excellence



Post-anesthesia providers in adult and pediatric care honored with national award for excellence

The [American Association of Critical-Care Nurses](#) (AACN) has conferred a silver-level Beacon Award for Excellence on [UC Davis Health's](#) Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) and Children's Surgery Center PACU. It is the only PACU with this distinction on the west coast.

The award recognizes unit caregivers who successfully improve patient outcomes and align practices with AACN's [Healthy Work Environment Standards](#).

Units that achieve this three-year, three-level award with a gold, silver or bronze designation meet national criteria consistent with the ANCC Magnet Recognition Program®, the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award and the National Quality Healthcare Award. [READ MORE >](#)

NICU nurse receives DAISY Award

Here is an excerpt from her nomination: "On April 4, 2023, at 3:41 a.m. I delivered my 24-week micro preemie. At 7 a.m., Kayla started her shift and began taking care of our girl. Every day of the 107 days since, Kayla has not only taken the best care of our daughter but has also supported and advocated for our family endlessly. She quickly became our primary nurse, and in the midst of the chaos of the NICU, she was our constant and brought us so much peace.

Kayla has the biggest heart for the tiniest of babies, and in a time where we as parents didn't know where we fit into the picture, she helped us find our place. When our daughter weighed 1 pound and was unable to be moved, Kayla taught us ways to be involved with her care and reminded us that even though we weren't her primary caretakers, even the littlest ways we were involved had a big impact. She helped us find our strength, encouraged us to take care of ourselves, empowered us as parents, and celebrated every tiny victory alongside us.

We truly believe that her diligence saved our baby's life on multiple occasions, and as a new mom navigating a difficult season, her kindness and friendship helped save mine, too. Kayla is one of a kind and is beyond deserving of The DAISY Award."



Perry Initiative hosts workshop for prospective orthopedic surgeons



The Perry Initiative, sponsored by [Shriners Children's Northern California](#) and UC Davis Health, hosted a workshop at the Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing on the UC Davis Health campus in December. The day-long event gave young women the chance to explore careers in orthopedic surgery, specifically in the field of pediatrics.

Participants engaged in six hands-on mock surgical exercises, from suturing to casting, offering a rare and invaluable opportunity to experience the intricacies of orthopedic surgery and

engineering. Beyond the practical exercises, attendees had the chance to hear lectures from local women surgeons, gaining insights into their experiences and journeys in these fields.

The Perry Initiative recognizes the underrepresentation of women in pediatric orthopedic surgery and aims to address this disparity by providing hands-on experiences for high school students. The Perry Initiative, founded in 2009 by Jenni Buckley, a mechanical engineer, and Lisa Lattanza, an orthopedic surgeon, emphasizes the collaborative nature of orthopedic solutions. The program, named in honor of Jacquelin Perry, a pioneering female orthopedic surgeon, has successfully reached over 10,000 female students nationwide.

Pediatric Neurological Surgery program grows

UC Davis Children's Hospital is now home to the region's first comprehensive program.

The newly expanded pediatric neurological surgery program features experts from fetal myelomeningocele repair to complex tumor and vascular procedures. Procedures and technologies used routinely include:

- Robot assisted epilepsy surgery
- Neuronavigation guided surgery
- Minimally invasive endoscopic repair of craniosynostosis
- Laser interstitial thermal therapy
- Endoscopic treatment of hydrocephalus
- Endoscopic endonasal and eyebrow approaches for skull base tumors and craniopharyngiomas

The physician team consists of:

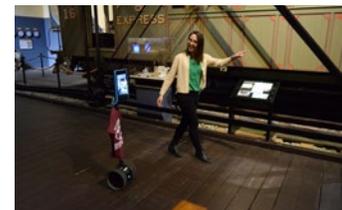
[Marike Zwienenberg](#), chief and clinical professor, specializes in craniofacial and congenital surgery. She is the lead neurosurgeon on the fetal surgery team performing intra-uterine repair of myelomeningocele and routinely uses minimally invasive endoscopic surgery to treat disorders such as craniosynostosis and hydrocephalus.

[Julia Sharma](#), chief of pediatric epilepsy and associate clinical professor, specializes in the surgical treatment of epilepsy. She also has expertise in surgical treatment of spasticity, hypertonicity and complex spinal lipomas.

[Cameron Sadegh](#) is an assistant clinical professor with expertise in treating hydrocephalus, brain tumors and moyamoya disease. He offers minimally invasive surgical options and makes use of stereotactic brain navigation, intra-operative ultrasound and flexible endoscopic surgery.

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Telerobot program launches at railroad museum



Did you know that the California State Railroad Museum is hosting a robot?

The UC Davis Health Technology and Social Connectedness (TASC) Lab believes that technology can fill an important hole by allowing people to create meaningful experiences and connections through technology. In keeping with this philosophy, the museum and the TASC Lab are working together to create a telerobot program.

"It's a significant change in the way we view access — using technology to increase human-to-human connections and [have a] physical presence in our community events and public spaces. [These are] people who traditionally have not been able, or have had difficult challenges, to accessing these resources," said Veronica Ahumada-Newhart, who works at UC Davis Health in health informatics and human-technology interaction.

This program first developed out of a desire to allow pediatric populations, who are medically restricted to hospital/home, to visit the museum via robot. Over time, it was clear that there was an interest in and need for remote visits for many different people.

Anywhere in the world — if there is reliable and strong access to the internet — someone can follow a weblink to a platform for the robot. Once there, the visitor can control the robot and drive it around the Museum, viewing displays and interacting with other people inside the Museum.

For more information about this pilot program, please visit californiarailroad.museum/visit/robot

Parent-Child Care Learning Center launches

The Parent-Child Care (PC-CARE) Learning Center, a free interactive online spot for learning about effective ways to manage children's difficult behavior, has officially launched at pccarelearningcenter.com.



Two primary developers of this resource, Brandi Hawk and Deanna Boys, exhibited the website at the 39th Annual San Diego International Conference on Child and Family Maltreatment in January.

Q&A with nurse Kimmi Gutierrez

For the past 22 years, Kimmi Gutierrez has been a labor and delivery nurse at UC Davis Health. We asked her questions about her career, delivering babies and how no two days are ever alike.



What's your average day like?

An average day here is never average or typical. It is one of the things I love about my job. I think most people think that in L&D, it's the same every day. We deliver babies. But that just is not the case. One day I may work in our triage area, which is an emergency room

for pregnant women, each coming in with very difficult complaints. Yes, contractions are on the list, but so is chest pain, shortness of breath, etc. Another day I may come in and have the amazing pleasure of helping a woman get through labor and, ultimately, deliver a baby. Love those days. Occasionally, we help a woman get through the worst time of her life, losing a baby. Those days are tough. It is never "average" though, that I can count on.

What's the most rewarding part of your job?

Having a baby is one of the most amazing and memorable moments in a person's life. It is something that people plan and have spent months preparing for. They walk through our doors and put all their hopes and dreams into our hands. To help a mother through this

process and do my best to get her the outcome she desires is extremely rewarding.

What's the experience like for a patient at a hospital-based birth center?

A labor experience in a hospital birth center involves a team of highly trained nurses and doctors. There is a preconceived idea that delivering in a hospital equates to a very interventional birth. I would like to say that while we are trained to handle high risk situations, we are also skilled in low-risk deliveries, as well. We like to talk to our patients about their personal situation, desires and formulate a plan together as a team.

What do you think sets UC Davis apart from other hospitals and birth centers?

I believe that UC Davis nurses are outstanding. I think that we are trained in and practice the most up-to-date, evidence-based medicine. Whenever I attend a regional or national conference, UC Davis is always ahead of the game. What I love is that we are constantly evolving and changing our practices as new research and evidence guides us. We want to be the best and provide the best care, and I believe that we do.

Meet our first Leap Year babies!

First up is Zoe Morales, who was born at 12:53 a.m. Feb. 29. She was 7 lbs. 5.5oz. and 19 inches.



Parker Aspen Chin was born at 2:04 a.m. Feb. 29. She was 6 lbs., 13 oz. and 20 inches.



Happy birthday to all of our Leap Year babies!

New group of volunteer doulas begin

A new group of trained volunteer doulas are now working at UC Davis Health.

Volunteer doulas provide emotional support and non-pharmacologic pain interventions to help patients achieve their labor and delivery goals. The volunteer doula program is a free service to UC Davis patients. Each doula is dedicated to one patient in labor and provides 1:1 support.



Exposure to flame retardants linked to premature birth, higher birth weight

Organophosphate ester flame retardants are found in building materials, furniture, baby products, electronics and textiles

In the largest study of its kind, researchers at UC Davis Health found that exposure to organophosphate ester flame retardants during pregnancy was associated with preterm birth, especially among females. The chemicals were also linked to higher birth weight, a concern for increased obesity risk. The major [new research study](#) was published in Environmental Health Perspectives.

"The importance of this study lies in unraveling the potential impact of exposure to environmental chemicals during pregnancy on fetal development. Our findings guide our understanding of how these chemicals may be silently seeding lasting challenges for the health of the next generation," said Jiwon Oh, first author of the study and a postdoctoral scholar in the [Department of Public Health Sciences, Division of Environmental and Occupational Health](#).



Spirit Halloween donations top the \$1 million mark for UC Davis Child Life and Creative Arts Therapy Department

Since 2011, Spirit Halloween costume stores and its Spirit of Children Foundation has annually raised funds for UC Davis Child Life and Creative Arts Therapy Department, which supports the emotional needs of pediatric patients and families. But with this month's donation of \$90,600, Spirit Halloween donations have topped the \$1 million mark and every cent goes toward the Child Life and Creative Arts Therapy Department.



The Spirit Halloween team recently visited the Child Life and Creative Arts Therapy and [Children's Miracle Network](#) teams to present the check for this year's donation and to celebrate the past 13 years of partnership.

"The mission of Spirit Halloween and our child life program align beautifully. Together, we work to make the hospital less scary for children," said Diana Sundberg, Child Life and Creative Arts Therapy Department manager. "The Spirit team has been our partner for years now and our child life department, especially our fellowship program, would not be what it is without their support. They are definitely one in a million. We are lucky to have them as a part of our work family!" [READ MORE »](#)

Children's Miracle Network at UC Davis awards 19 grants totaling more than \$509,000

Nineteen grants, totaling \$509,872.70, have been awarded by [Children's Miracle Network \(CMN\) at UC Davis](#) to clinicians and researchers at UC Davis Children's Hospital. [Grants](#) in the amount of \$441,895.70 will enhance the clinical care of children, while \$67,977 was awarded for research directly improving the health and welfare of children.

Each fiscal year, CMN accepts applications for both clinical services and research grants. Each application must demonstrate how the project or research contributes to [UC Davis Health Strategic Goals](#) or UC Davis Medical Center institutional goals. The amount of funds awarded each year is determined by the CMN Executive Committee and chief executive office of UC Davis Medical Center. [READ MORE »](#)

Colusa boy named 2024 Children's Miracle Network champion

Isaac Franco battled leukemia and won. Now, he wants to give back.

Each year, [Children's Miracle Network \(CMN\)](#) Hospitals across the U.S. and Canada identify a "[champion](#)" in their community to represent kids treated at the local children's hospital. This year, Colusa resident [Isaac Franco](#), 9, has been named the CMN champion for [UC Davis Children's Hospital](#).

As the face of CMN at UC Davis for 2024, Isaac and his family will support campaigns that benefit UC Davis Children's Hospital, the only CMN Hospital in the area.

Isaac was a toddler when he was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia, a common childhood cancer that starts in the bone marrow. He was hospitalized at UC Davis Children's Hospital and then began chemotherapy treatment at [UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center](#).

"It was hard when we got the news Isaac had cancer. He was so little," said Daisy Franco, Isaac's mom. "But he fought every step of the way. He was really strong." [READ MORE »](#)



Hospital playroom named after local Donut Dash fundraiser

The [unveiling of the “Powered by Donut Dash” sign](#) at the [UC Davis Children’s Hospital](#) playroom was met with cheers during a recent ceremony. The new name is a testament to the work and dedication of [Donut Dash](#) founder, Zack Wandell.

When Wandell contacted UC Davis Children’s Hospital in 2016 with a fundraising opportunity, the child life and creative arts therapy team was excited. Now, eight years later, the team is honoring Wandell by naming the playroom after the race he created.

“What we didn’t realize at the time was the impact Donut Dash was going to have,” said Diana Sundberg, manager of the [UC Davis Child Life and Creative Arts Therapy Department](#). “Without it, we would not have had the resources needed to run the department.”

The annual fun run celebrated its 16th year. Participants walk or run through Land Park while enjoying donuts from Marie’s Donuts. Proceeds from the run, and its companion events, [Duck Dash](#) and [Scoop Scoot](#), provide much needed funding for a department solely financed by donations. [READ MORE »](#)



PATIENT MILESTONES

‘Nothing holds him back’: Child born with 2 very rare conditions gets lifesaving care



17 surgeries later, 6-year-old boy runs on prosthetic legs and Paralympic dreams

Jamie Duby’s son Shine arrived five weeks early, weighing just 4.5 pounds. But his early delivery and low birthweight were not the only surprises. The baby, just like in a dream she had months’ before, had one finger on each hand and other complications, too.

“It was a huge shock. We had no idea he was going to be born this way,” said Duby, who gave birth at a local hospital near her home in El Dorado County. “He was rushed by ambulance to [UC Davis Children’s Hospital](#) within hours of being born.”

UC Davis doctors noticed that Shine’s jaws and eyes couldn’t open, his knees wouldn’t extend completely, and his fingers and toes were joined together, so they called for a genetics consultation.

“Given his overall clinical appearance, a diagnosis of [Popliteal Pterygium Syndrome](#) (PPS) Bartsocas-Papas type was made,” said [Suma Shankar](#), chief of genomic medicine at the [UC Davis MIND Institute](#) and in the [Department of Pediatrics](#). “This is a rare condition caused by alterations in the [RIPK4 gene](#).”

Children with Popliteal Pterygium Syndrome may have webbing or fusion of the fingers or toes and tissue connecting the upper and lower eyelids or the upper and lower jaws. They may also have a cleft palate and webs of skin on the backs of the legs across the knee joint. [READ MORE »](#)



World Hearing Day at the Zoo

Children and their families were invited to the Sacramento Zoo on March 3 to mark World Hearing Day. UC Davis pediatric otolaryngologist Jamie Funamura and team had a booth at the event.

Father, daughter treated for diabetes by same UC Davis team

Elena and her father Erik have much to celebrate, thanks to the stellar Type 1 diabetes care they have received at UC Davis.

Elena was diagnosed one year ago and met Dennis Styne and Sultanna Iden, the same pediatric diabetes doctor and nurse that cared for her father when he was first diagnosed with [#T1D](#) as a child. [READ MORE »](#)



UC Davis patient photo included in Children’s Hospital Association photo collection

They say a picture is worth a thousand words.

Any doubters can take a look at the photo of beaming 2-year-old Ellie Hipwell running into the arms of her father, Mathew Hipwell, a pediatric nurse at the [UC Davis Children’s Surgery Center](#). The moment was captured by UC Davis Health photographer Wayne Tilcock. Hipwell’s co-workers [saved Ellie’s life](#) after RSV exposed a life-threatening heart defect, which required heart surgery.

This photo titled “In Good Hands” is part of the [Children’s Hospital Association’s](#) new photo collection, which was unveiled in January. The photo was highlighted on the CHA.org home page and on its social media channels.

The Children’s Hospital Association asked for photo submissions from its 222 member children’s hospitals last fall to help them tell the story of children’s hospitals and health systems nationwide. [READ MORE »](#)



Virtual Toy Drive raised more than \$21K

The holidays were merry and bright for hospitalized kids, thanks to the \$21,550 raised during the 2023 Virtual Toy Drive. This exceeded the event’s funding goal of \$20,000.

“Every year, the generosity and giving continue to amaze me. Without the support, our department would not have the resources to provide a fun-filled holiday season with gifts and activities for all,” said Diana Sundberg, UC Davis Child Life and Creative Arts Therapy Department manager.



For those who did not have a chance to donate and would like to contribute, the child life team also has a year-round Amazon wish list.

ucdavis.health/toy-drive



Photo by UC Davis Health photographer Wayne Tilcock

Get social — like us, follow us, share with your networks!

 facebook.com/ucdavischildrenshospital has **15,088** likes!

 instagram.com/ucdavischildren has **5,163** followers!



Share your patient story!