

Spring 2019

# DEPARTMENT OF SURGERY NEWSLETTER

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Each year thousands of patients come through the doors of UC Davis Health and are seen by our amazing surgeons, nurses and staff within the Department of Surgery. They put their trust and confidence in our level of care and professionalism and understand they are being cared for by the number one hospital in the region. This spring has proven to be full of excitement and optimism. Our department has moved to the new North Addition Building which is now connected to the main hospital, we welcomed our newest residents on Match Day, were also able to celebrate our doctors at National Doctors' Day and participated in our 30th annual Research Day. We're moving forward to continue our level of excellent care and look forward to ensuring that the latest surgical advances are available to help patients in our region—and beyond.

With pride,



Diana L. Farmer, M.D., F.A.C.S., F.R.C.S.  
Distinguished Professor and Pearl Stamps Stewart Chair  
Chair, Department of Surgery, UC Davis School of Medicine  
Surgeon-in-Chief, UC Davis Children's Hospital

The Department of Surgery encompasses a wide variety of surgical specialties. These include bariatric surgery, burn surgery, colorectal surgery, cardiothoracic surgery, foregut surgery, hepatobiliary surgery, endocrine surgery, pediatric and fetal surgery, plastic surgery, transplant surgery, trauma, acute care and surgical critical care surgery, vascular surgery, and oncologic surgery. The department's extensive surgical expertise, in combination with ongoing teaching and research activities, provide ample resources and advanced surgical techniques for patient



# MATCH DAY 2019

Congratulations to our New Interns!



John Arriola  
General Surgery  
University of Oklahoma



Alyssa Bellini  
General Surgery  
Florida Atlantic University



Kathleen Doyle  
General Surgery  
Emory University



Rachel Ekaireb  
General Surgery  
University of California,  
San Francisco



Megan Gilbert  
General Surgery  
University of California, Davis



Leslie Hopper  
General Surgery  
East Carolina University



Alexis Woods  
General Surgery  
University of California,  
Los Angeles



Samy Ramadan  
General Surgery  
University of Vermont



Kevin Lee  
General Surgery  
University of Colorado



Dattesh Dave  
Plastic Surgery  
University of California, Irvine



Matthew Vuoncino  
Vascular Surgery  
Uniformed Services  
University of the Health  
Sciences



Kathryn DiLosa  
Vascular Surgery  
Louisiana State University



Sarah Chen  
Cardiothoracic Surgery  
University of California, Davis

*What those that  
were accepted  
had to say....*



Residency Application Numbers for 2019:  
General Surgery residency= 1,408  
Vascular Surgery residency = 52  
Cardiothoracic Surgery residency = 98  
Plastic Surgery residency= 197  
Total number of applications received = 1,755

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## NEW HOME SAME DEPARTMENT

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### UC DAVIS HEALTH NORTH ADDITION BUILDING

The Department of Surgery has a new home. The new building located at 2335 Stockton Blvd started construction in 2016 and the Department of Surgery became it's newest residents in late March 2019. The department along with the trauma program now encompasses the entire 5th and 6th floors. Also in the building on the 2 - 4th floors will be UC Davis Hospital Executive Leadership along with Performance Excellence, Clinical Affairs and Patients Care Services to name a few.

At 130,000 square feet the North Addition features high efficiency fixtures and minimal valley-wise landscaping to improve water conservation. LED lighting and enhanced electrical system performance to save on energy costs; efficient glazing systems, shading and harvest daylighting in interior spaces. The building is also certified LEED Gold. The North Addition will include 17 conference rooms, 5 breakrooms, gender neutral and accessible restrooms on all floors, a lactation room and a large conference center ballroom for campus events. On the first floor there is also a pathway connecting the main hospital for easier access for physicians and staff.

This will be the first time that almost all of our department will be housed within the same building. The department is excited that the move will strengthen collaboration within our specialties and create more cohesive sharing of ideas to streamline processes.

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### CONCEPTUAL RENDERING



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## LECTURESHIPS AND INVITED SPEAKERS

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### FREY LECTURESHIP

In January, we were privileged to have **Dr. Nicholas Zyromski**, Professor of Surgery at the Indiana University School of Medicine present on *Evolving Treatment of Necrotizing Pancreatitis* at our featured Frey Lectureship this year. You can also read more about Dr. Frey (pictured left) and his signature Frey procedure at our website: [health.ucdavis.edu/surgery/education/charles\\_frey\\_lectureship.html](http://health.ucdavis.edu/surgery/education/charles_frey_lectureship.html).



### GOODNIGHT LECTURE

On February 19 **Dr. Karl Bilimoria**, Professor of Surgery at Northwestern University presented *Moving from FIRST TO SECOND: A Proposal for Another National Trial to Improve Surgical Training*. His exciting grand rounds presentation can be found on our YouTube page.



### REINSCH LECTURESHIP

**Dr. John Alverdy**, Executive Vice Chair and Professor of Surgery from the University of Chicago joined us on March 19 to present *Applying Microbiome Sciences to Surgical Thinking and Practice: Leaks, Infections and Cancer*.

## UPCOMING LECTURESHIPS

Donald P. Hause Lectureship - June 11, 2019

J. Gregory A. Dumanian, M.D.

Orion H. and Lucille W. Stuteville Professor of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, Chief Division of Plastic Surgery. Northwestern University

John M. Mott, Jr. Lectureship - June 18, 2019

Thomas Varghese Jr., M.D., M.S., F.A.C.S

Chief Value Officer at the Huntsman Cancer Institute, Head of the Section of General Thoracic Surgery, and Program Director of the Cardiothoracic Surgery Fellowship, University of Utah. *Journey to Optimizing Peri-Operative Outcomes and Population Health.*

Reinsch Lectureship - July 23, 2019

Fred Weaver, M.D., MMM

Professor of Surgery, Division Chief, Vascular Surgery, Keck School of Medicine, University of Southern California

## FACULTY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

New this year is a series of informative presentations by fellow colleagues. This didactic series was created by Dr. David Tom Cooke, Vice Chair for Faculty Development and Wellness and head of the Department of Surgery's Section of General Thoracic Surgery. All presentations are eligible to receive up to one hour of AMA PRA Category 1 credit.

### May 23 - Negotiations in Academic Healthcare

Presented by: Charles "Gene" Crumley, M.Div., Director, Leadership Programs, Faculty Development and Diversity

### June 6 - Dealing with Challenging Faculty and Residents

Presented by: Susan Guralnick, M.D. Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education and Professor of Pediatrics and Gregory Jurkovich, M.D. Professor of Surgery, Vice-Chair, Department of Surgery, Vice-Chair for Clinical Affairs and Quality



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# HIGHLIGHTS

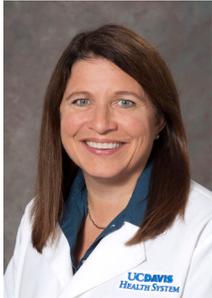
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Accredited by



Commission on Cancer®  
National Accreditation  
Program for  
Rectal Cancer

A QUALITY PROGRAM  
of the AMERICAN COLLEGE  
OF SURGEONS



Linda M. Farkas, M.D.,  
F.A.C.S., F.A.S.C.R.S.



Wissam J. Halabi, M.D.,  
F.A.C.S.



Emilie Beardsley, R.N.



David Greenhalgh, M.D., F.A.C.S.

## RECTAL CANCER PROGRAM ACCREDITED BY THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

The rectal cancer surgery program at UC Davis Health has been accredited by the National Accreditation Program for Rectal Cancer of the American College of Surgeons (ACS), making it **one of just nine programs** in the nation to achieve this recognition.

Accreditation is for three years and based on 19 standards, including having a multidisciplinary rectal cancer care team with representatives from surgery, pathology, radiology, radiation oncology and medical oncology. Additional standards address required clinical services, treatment timelines and performance measures.

The program at UC Davis Health met all of the standards.

“Providing complete, patient-focused care for colorectal diseases is a priority at UC Davis Health,” said Diana Farmer, chair of the UC Davis Health Department of Surgery. “This accreditation is a testament to surgeon Linda Farkas, nurse Emilie Beardsley and the entire rectal surgery team, who make sure all of their patients are provided the latest and most effective treatment options and are actively included in the treatment decision process.

“The accreditation program was developed through a collaboration of the ACS Commission on Cancer, Optimizing the Surgical Treatment of Rectal Cancer Consortium, American College of Radiology, American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons and College of American Pathologists. The goal is to ensure that rectal cancer patients receive appropriate, multidisciplinary care. “When a program achieves this type of specialized accreditation, it means that their rectal cancer patients will receive streamlined, modern evaluation and treatment for the disease. Compliance with our standards will assure optimal care for these patients,” said David P. Winchester, medical director of ACS cancer programs.

## GREENHALGH TO RECEIVE \$3 MILLION FOR ABRUPT GRANT

Dr. David Greenhalgh, Chief of Burn Surgery and Helen Marian Bart Endowed Chair and Professorship in Burn Care and also Chief of Burns at Shriners Hospitals for Children, Northern California recently received a \$3 million grant from the U.S. Department of Defense to continue his study on how to improve outcomes in burn patients.

Dr. Greenhalgh received funding four years ago for a study titled Acute Burn Resuscitation Observational Trial (ABRUPT) which was the multi-center study that evaluated resuscitation practices for burn patients. ABRUPT will obtain descriptive information on burn resuscitation practices, specifically the use of albumin, a serum of proteins commonly found in blood plasma. The study will provide comparative data on the proper timing and dosage of albumin administration. In the continuation of his grant, he'll be studying a randomized trial to compare albumin to crystalloid in burn patients.

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## HIGHLIGHTS

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### PROMISING APPROACH TO CURING SPINA BIFIDA GETS \$5.6 MILLION

Diana L. Farmer, M.D., F.A.C.S. & Aijun Wang, Ph.D.

The California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM) has awarded a \$5.66 million grant to UC Davis Health researchers who are pursuing a new approach to repairing the birth defect that causes spina bifida. Led by Diana Farmer, professor and chair of surgery, and Aijun Wang, associate professor of surgery and biomedical engineering, a UC Davis research team will have the funding to continue its work with mesenchymal stem cells, taken from a donor placenta, and a form of biomaterial scaffold that is placed over the fetus's spinal cord in the womb. Animal modeling has shown this approach capable of repairing the defect caused by spina bifida and preventing the paralysis associated with it.



**“** We are so grateful. CIRM has been a perfect partner in helping bring this approach, blending stem cell therapy and tissue engineering together. But it's the patients—*seeing them*—that keeps me motivated to do the science, to keep persevering.

RELENTLESS  
DRIVE

**Diana L. Farmer, M.D.**

*Fetal and neonatal surgeon and chair of the Department of Surgery at UC Davis Health*

Spina bifida, a birth defect where the spine does not form properly (often before a woman even knows she is pregnant), occurs in up to 2,000 children a year in the United States. The condition is the most common cause of lifelong paralysis and frequently leads to other serious health problems affecting the bowel and bladder. There is no cure.

Since 2008, University of California Davis physician Diana Farmer, an internationally renowned fetal and neonatal surgeon, has been working to help children with spina bifida walk. But now her sights are set on using stem cells transplanted into the fetus to correct the problem even before the baby is born. Dr. Farmer has successfully cured spina bifida in sheep and bulldogs as a proof of concept and, with CIRM's help, she is on the way to bringing this to human clinical trials.

Though still in the development stage, there may be a potential cure within our lifetime for a devastating condition that has plagued us for most of human history.

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## FEATURED FACULTY

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### **Q&A with Dr. Rodriguez and the Complex Aortic Program**

Dr. Victor Rodriguez is a double board certified, Vascular and Cardiac Surgeon specializing in diseases of the aorta. He joined the Department of Surgery in October 2017 and is the Director of the Aortic Program here at UC Davis, a multidisciplinary program of the Vascular and Cardiac Surgery divisions, housed in the UC Davis Vascular Center.

#### **Q. How did the treatment of aortic disease become your passion and your career path?**

A. I trained under the preeminent physician, Dr. C.W. Acher, at the University of Wisconsin, Madison on complex thoraco abdominal aneurysms and complex endovascular repairs. Following my fellowship, I obtained a position at Kaiser and during this time I realized they were sending many of their patients to Stanford. Looking to compartmentalize and keep patients within our own system I worked to help establish an aortic center at Kaiser. Our center quickly grew and started receiving referrals from around the region. Because of our rapid growth I helped set up endovascular aortic centers as far north as Redding down to Fresno and would proctor all the physicians working in these areas with establishing and maintaining their endovascular programs. The aorta starts at the root of the heart ascending across the arch and down the descending aorta to the bifurcation, and as vascular surgeon I felt I was only trained to work primarily with the aorta, distal to the left subclavian artery in the chest. From my experience with training and establishing these aortic programs I felt like it was my calling to make sure I was able to take care of the aorta in a complete sense. After eight years working at Kaiser doing aortic surgery I decided I needed to return to school to learn and develop new skills and strategies to be able to fully take care of the aorta from the root to the bifurcation. I was fortunate enough to be accepted into a program at Baylor at their Texas Heart Institute, where I trained under one of the most esteemed aortic surgeons in the world, Dr. Joseph Coselli. From my trainings under Dr. Acher and Dr. Coselli and my passion for the complexities of the aorta, I feel that I became a more complete aortic surgeon.



Victor M. Rodriguez, M.D.

#### **Q. As the Director of the Aortic Center, how is our UC Davis Health Aortic Center Program unique?**

A. Our program is unique because it's a multidisciplinary program in an academic center and has the support and resources of a major university, and a team that includes Dr. William Yoon and Dr. Matthew Mell, Division Chief of Vascular Surgery and Medical Director of the Vascular Center. With this multidisciplinary approach patient cases are reviewed with all members of our team so that an optimal individual plan can be implemented. Cardiac anesthesiology is an integral component of the program to address various anesthetic challenges for these complex cases, and cardiac radiology provides state-of-the-art imaging to help guide us through the decision-making process. Additionally, because of the expertise of our faculty we can provide complete care of the aorta in different modalities from open aortic replacement as well as endovascular surgery, meaning both ascending aorta across the arch and down the descending part and the infrarenal aorta.

#### **Q. What does the treatment of aortic disease look like in 5 – 10 years?**

A. We are poised here at UC Davis to become the referral center for complex aortic reconstructions for all of Northern California. We have the ability to offer just about any type of treatment strategy for patients. No one else in the region is currently able to tackle these difficult cases and in 5-10 years will we become a magnet program and a center of excellence for the treatment of aortic disease.



Richard Bold, M.D., F.A.C.S

### **Bold Named as Physician-in-Chief for Comprehensive Cancer Center**

Richard Bold, M.D., Chief of the Division of Surgical Oncology and clinic Medical Director, has been named Physician-in-Chief of the UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center, effective May 15, 2019.

Bold's new role is part of a broader effort to further integrate the Cancer Center's research, clinical trials, education, training and outreach into clinical oncology services. This new position will give Bold clinical oversight of outpatient and inpatient services as well as the cancer center's affiliated UC Davis Health Cancer Care Network sites throughout Northern California. He will provide leadership in aligning physicians and physician services outlined in the strategic plans of both the health system and Cancer Center as it relates to clinical program priorities. The physician-in-chief will lead in the development and oversight of the Center's performance targets and metrics, setting a standard of care, measuring and improving clinical outcomes and disseminating best practices. Bold's direct reports will include the medical directors of the inpatient oncology units and outpatient clinics, as well as the Cancer Center's disease groups, physicians and clinician leaders.

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## NEW FACULTY

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**Division of Pediatric General, Thoracic and Fetal Surgery**

**Erin G. Brown, M.D.**

The Department of Surgery is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Erin G. Brown as Assistant Professor of Clinical Surgery within the Division of Pediatric General, Thoracic and Fetal Surgery. We would like to welcome back Dr. Brown to UC Davis Medical Center after her fellowship at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. She received her undergraduate degree in Human Biology from Stanford University and medical degree from the UC Davis School of Medicine in 2009. Dr. Brown held several leadership positions within her residency program including Chair of the Resident Medical Staff Committee and Administrative Chief Resident in 2016. She completed her pediatric surgery fellowship at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) and the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Brown will practice as a pediatric and fetal surgeon. Dr. Brown's current research interests include developing better systems for improving quality and value of care for pediatric patients, both in terms of better metrics for assessment of quality as well as developing processes to improve outcomes.



**Division of Foregut, Metabolic and General Surgery.**

**Hazem Shamseddeen, M.D. F.A.C.S., F.A.S.M.B.S.**

Dr. Shamseddeen joined the Department of Surgery On August 1 as an Associate Professor. Dr. Shamseddeen received his medical degree from Beirut Arab University, Beirut, Lebanon in 2003 and completed his general surgery residency at Beirut Arab University and North Shore-LIJ Health System in Long Island, NY. He completed his Fellowship in Minimally Invasive Surgery and Bariatric Surgery at UC Davis School of Medicine in 2011. Following his fellowship, Dr. Shamseddeen has been a general and bariatric surgeon as well as Co-Medical Director of Bariatric Surgery at St. Francis Medical Group in Indianapolis, IN. Dr. Shamseddeen is highly experienced having performed over 6,500 cases as a primary or first assistant surgeon. His proficiencies include advanced laparoscopic bariatric procedures/ revisions (gastric bypass, sleeve gastrectomy, lap band, and complex bariatric revisions), complex foregut surgery, complex abdominal wall reconstructions, and robotic surgery. Dr. Shamseddeen will be involved in clinical activities of the adult Foregut, Metabolic, and General Surgery Division.



**Division of Vascular Surgery**

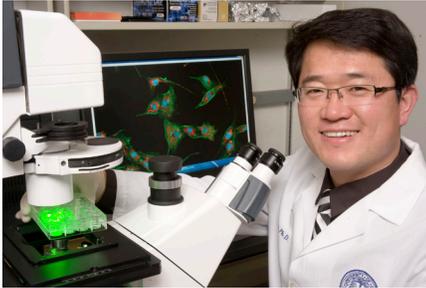
**William J. Yoon, M.D.**

The Vascular team and Department of Surgery was excited to announce the appointment of Dr. Yoon as Assistant Clinical Professor within the Division of Vascular Surgery. Dr. Yoon graduated Magna Cum Laude in Molecular and Cell Biology from the University of Connecticut. He received his medical degree from Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine, Richmond, VA in 2011 and went on to complete his general surgery residency at St. John's Hospital and Medical Center in Detroit, MI. Dr. Yoon then completed a Fellowship in Vascular Surgery at Loyola University, Stritch School of Medicine, Maywood, IL. He has substantial training in vascular and advanced aortic surgery and will support the Vascular Center through academic and clinical responsibilities. He completed Advanced Aortic Visiting Fellowships at the Paracelsus Medical University, Nuremberg Germany and Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden. Dr. Yoon is board certified by the American Board of Surgery in General Surgery and is board eligible in Vascular and Endovascular Surgery.

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## RESEARCH

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### POTENTIAL LONG TERM TREATMENT OF HEMOPHILIA WITH STEM CELL-MEDIATED GENE THERAPY

[Aijun Wang, Ph.D.](#)

Congratulations to Aijun Wang, the inaugural Dean's fellow in Entrepreneurship and the Surgical Bioengineering Laboratory's hemophilia team for their recent paper published in *Stem Cell Research & Therapy* titled Potential long term treatment of hemophilia with stem cell-mediated gene therapy. This paper is one of the ongoing studies in the Surgical Bioengineering Lab using stem cells to mediate gene therapy for genetic diseases, such as hemophilia. Long-term engraftment of transplanted stem cells has been a long-lasting problem for stem cell-based treatments.



### ONE-STOP RELIEF FROM ACID REFLUX - UC DAVIS HEALTH CLINIC OFFERS UNIQUE, ALL-IN-ONE TREATMENT PROGRAM

[Dr. Hazem Shamseddeen, M.D., F.A.C.S., F.A.S.M.B.S.](#)

"Patients typically have found themselves getting passed around all the different specialists. We wanted a team approach that enabled patients to be seen in one clinic, get the diagnosis, and leave with a treatment plan."  
- Peter Belafsky, M.D., Ph.D. Medical Director of the Voice and Swallowing Center and co-director of the Reflux Clinic with Dr. Hazem Shamseddeen.



### NCI-FUNDED CANINE IMMUNOTHERAPY TRIALS NETWORK TREATS PET DOGS TO STUDY CANCERS COMMON TO HUMANS

[Robert J. Canter, M.D., F.A.C.S.](#)

In 2017, NCI provided funding in precision medicine oncology to six U.S. veterinary schools of medicine (RFA-CA-17-001 and RFA-CA-17-002). These grants, which are part of the Cancer Moonshot™, fund a network of veterinary oncologists and surgeons to enroll pet dogs as patients in immunotherapy clinical trials of cancer. Dr. Robert Canter with the division of Surgical Oncology leads these trials as the principal investigator. The goal is to promote the development of cancer immunotherapies for several common human cancers — glioma, osteosarcoma, melanoma, and lymphoma — through comparative oncology via a collaborative immunotherapy network.



### MENTORED PATIENT-ORIENTED RESEARCH CAREER DEVELOPMENT AWARD

[Misty Humphries, M.D., F.A.C.S.](#)

Congratulations to Dr. Misty Humphries, who recently received a grant from the NIH — National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute under the program "Mentored Patient-Oriented Research Career Development Award" for her project Evaluating Implementation of Comprehensive Assessment and Telemedicine Consultation to Prevent Amputations for Patients with Lower Extremity Ulcers in Rural Health Clinics.



### UC DAVIS CENTER FOR VIRTUAL CARE EARNS REACCREDITATION FROM AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

[Edgardo Salcedo, M.D., F.A.C.S.](#)

The UC Davis Center for Virtual Care, an innovative health care and patient simulation facility, has been reaccredited as a Comprehensive Education Institute by the American College of Surgeons — an honor bestowed on only about 90 simulation centers worldwide. "Accreditation as a Comprehensive Education Institute requires a proven record of education, a commitment to quality and promise for future innovation," Salcedo said. "We are proud to have achieved the American College of Surgeons' benchmark criteria and to be counted among other prestigious institutions bearing the same seal of accreditation."

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## SUPPORT

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The Department of Surgery at UC Davis Health is one of the most extensive and experienced surgical practices in California. Your gift supports research-based, multi-disciplinary surgical approaches, outstanding patient care and a training program that ensures superb care for future generations.

As a leading referral center for many of the region's most challenging adult and pediatric cases, our patients and referring physicians have access to the broadest possible range of experts and treatments in Northern California. Consider making a gift and helping support the UC Davis Health Department of Surgery. Give now by visiting our website [give.ucdavis.edu/MERM/SURGIFT](http://give.ucdavis.edu/MERM/SURGIFT) or by contacting Development Director, Lisa Schaffer at 916-734-9457, [laschaffer@ucdavis.edu](mailto:laschaffer@ucdavis.edu)



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## RESEARCH DAY

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The 30th Annual Department of Surgery Research Symposium led by Vice Chair for Research, Dr. Tina Palmieri, brought together faculty, residents, fellows, students and laboratory researchers to share the diverse innovative research being done in the Department of Surgery. The symposium provided an opportunity for trainees to hone their research presentation skills as they share their work and help fulfill one of the department's core values. We were excited to feature visiting speaker, *Robert Ward O'Rouke, Chief of the Division of General Surgery and Director of the Bariatric Surgery Program at the University of Michigan* who presented: **Extracellular Matrix-adipocyte Crosstalk and Metabolic Disease.**

Congratulations to our residents for their award winning presentations:

Best Poster - Carl Beyer, M.D.

Best Clinical Research - James Clark, M.D.

Best Basic Science Research - Laura Galganski, M.D.



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## ALUMNI SURGICAL SOCIETY

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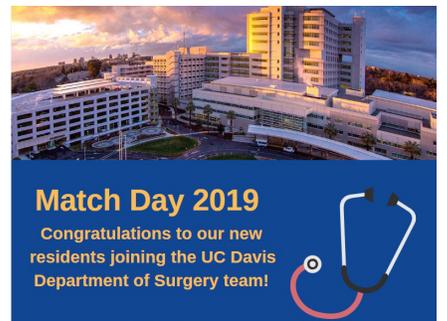
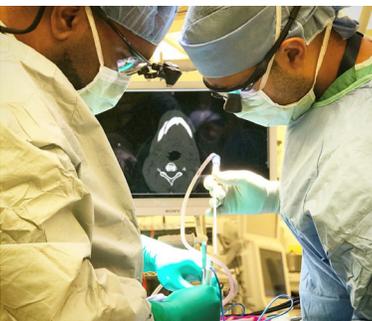
Our mission of the UC Davis Surgical Society is to stay connected to UC Davis Surgery Residency Alumni by celebrating their accomplishments, keeping them engaged, encouraging fellowship and developing lifelong connection with UC Davis. We want to be able to:

- Provide a platform for alumni to exchange ideas and engage with each other.
- Provide an opportunity for medical education by encouraging enduring relationships between alumni, residents, and faculty of the UC Davis School of Medicine Department of Surgery.
- Enhance the prestige of UC Davis Health and our resident alumni.
- Sustain meaningful engagement with UC Davis Health and the Department of Surgery.

Our new website is currently being developed but be sure to visit [www.ucdavissurgicalsociety.org](http://www.ucdavissurgicalsociety.org) later this summer for more information or contact us at [hs-surgerynewsletter@ucdavis.edu](mailto:hs-surgerynewsletter@ucdavis.edu).



INSTAGRAM WORTHY @UCDAVISSURGERY



185X  
2335 Stockton Blvd, 6th Floor  
Sacramento, California 95817

**Address Service Requested**

**Email**

hs-surgerynewsletter@ucdavis.edu

**Phone**

(916) 734-3528

**Fax**

(916) 703-4452

**Website**

health.ucdavis.edu/surgery

**Social**

Facebook @ucdavissurgery

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**National Doctors' Day**

National Doctors' Day was celebrated at Grand Rounds on April 2 with a festive thank you gift for all our doctors. Thank you!



The Department of Surgery Newsletter is published quarterly through the year. If you'd like to be added to our distribution list, or for questions, email us.