The holidays are upon us and we have many things to look back and be thankful for in 2017. Our fall issue reflects on these numerous events during the last few months; The Richard P. and Dorothy P. Simmons Center for Interstitial Lung Disease has had several patient-related events, our researchers have received promising scores on many grants, our clinical team continues to go above and beyond in patient care, and our Division is constantly in the spotlight with publications and participation in local and international conferences. Our clinical faculty and clinical services also continue to grow with addition of a pulmonary consultation service at UPMC Mercy and Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine consults at UPMC Horizon via telemedicine.

A Note from the Chief...

Congratulations to all on another year of accomplishments! Here’s to a successful new year to come!

In the new year ahead, be sure to continue to send us information on new achievements, recognitions, pictures of celebrations and milestones.

We hope you enjoy this issue of the PACCM Insider.
—Rama Mallampalli, MD

Faculty Spotlight

*Contributed by Joseph Pilewski, MD*

**Dr. Meghan Fitzpatrick** is a compassionate and highly skilled critical care physician, clinical investigator, and ICU leader in the Pulmonary, Allergy, and Critical Care Medicine Division. Dr. Fitzpatrick is a Clinical Instructor and Director of Critical Care Medicine at UPMC East and Director of the Critical Care Unit at UPMC McKeensport. She completed her medical education at the Temple University School of Medicine, and an internal medicine residency at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. PACCM was fortunate to have her remain at PACCM for fellowship training in Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine. During her fellowship, she completed the Certificate program in Clinical Research in the University of Pittsburgh Institute for Clinical Research Education, and was awarded an Individual Training Grant for studies in Alison Morris’ lab on the role of systemic and pulmonary aging in HIV-associated COPD. Her research was highly productive and included publications in the journals AIDS, Microbial Immunology, and BMC Pulmonary Medicine.

Dr. Fitzpatrick joined the faculty in PACCM in 2014 and based on her outstanding clinical and leadership skills, was appointed the ICU Director at UPMC East, leading the 24/7 care of ICU patients at that facility. In 2016 she was appointed Chief of Critical Care Medicine at East, and this year was appointed the Critical Care Unit director at UPMC McKeensport. She has been successful in establishing clinical pathways and improving ICU care, as well as working with nursing and administrative leadership to establish a patient and family centered environment for ICU care. She remains active as a collaborator in the HIV research center, is a highly effective educator for medical students in didactic and clinical settings, and for residents, fellows and advanced care nursing students. Dr. Fitzpatrick is revered by her patients and colleagues for her ‘can do’ attitude, problem solving and teaching skills. She is an invaluable provider for UPMC, a role model for faculty and fellows, and leader in PACCM. Remarkably, she balances her work demands with being the mother of infant twins!
Clinical Educator Retreat

Over 40 clinical educators gathered at the Wyndham Pittsburgh University Center on Friday, September 15 for a mini-retreat.

Discussions included clinical needs and opportunities, strategies for academic promotion, and teaching opportunities and resources.

Afternoon workshops focused on how to deliver practical feedback to students and trainees, tips for effective teaching in the clinic and at the bedside, and strategies for dynamic larger group teaching.

Thank you to Dr. Phil Lamberty for organizing this event and to all the faculty to presented and participated in the day!

Microbiome Bootcamp

The Center for Medicine and the Microbiome (CMM), led by Dr. Alison Morris and Dr. Barbara Methé, just celebrated its first year!

Part of this inaugural year included the first Microbiome Bootcamp, held on Friday, September 20 at the University Club. Over 100 registrants joined in the discussions on a wide range of topics including sequencing, human and animal microbiome sample collection and study design, sample processing, evaluation of organisms other than bacteria, analytics, and applications of these techniques to real studies.

You can find out more about CMM and upcoming events through their website: www.microbiome.pitt.edu
Simmons Center Events

The Richard P. and Dorothy P. Simmons Center for Interstitial Lung Disease is always heavily involved in patient support and care throughout the community. We caught up with a few of these events below.

VIOLET RIPPY 5K
This annual event took place on Saturday, July 15th on Pittsburgh’s North Shore. It was a record-breaking year with over 500 participants! All proceeds of this event go to the Simmons Center.

FORE IPF GOLF OUTING
On Aug 21, 88 golfers convened at the Wildwood Golf Club to enjoy an afternoon on the course, the solar eclipse, and lots of fun. Later, 150 attendees gathered for the banquet dinner.

SIMMONS PATIENT CRUISE
The annual Simmons Patient Gateway Clipper Cruise set sail on Monday, October 6. The 90 attendees included patients and their guests, and faculty and staff from the Simmons Center.

September is marked as Global Pulmonary Fibrosis Awareness Month – and once again, the Simmons Center for Interstitial Lung Disease rose to the challenge by wearing blue to support patients and increase awareness of pulmonary fibrosis.
Clinical Educators Shine!

Thank you to all the presenters/workshop facilitators for this year’s Body Fluid Homeostasis (Pulmonary Section) course that ran for several weeks from October into November!

John Kreit
Stephanie Maximous
Charlie Atwood
Phil Lamberty
David Kristo
Erin Nuzzo
Craig Riley
Burton Lee
Chris Faber
Mike Donahoe
Rachel Givelber
Jessica Bon
Anna Zemke
Eric Nolley
Jared Chiarchiaro
Matt Morrell
Joe Pilewski
Bryan McVerry
Jason Rose
Ian Barbash
Will Bain
Stephanie Maximous
Dan Zank
Jared Chiarchiaro
Matt Morrell
Joe Pilewski
Bryan McVerry
Jason Rose
Ian Barbash
Will Bain
Stephanie Maximous
Dan Zank
Jared Chiarchiaro
Matt Morrell
Joe Pilewski
Bryan McVerry
Jason Rose
Ian Barbash
Will Bain
Stephanie Maximous
Dan Zank
Jared Chiarchiaro
Matt Morrell
Joe Pilewski
Bryan McVerry
Jason Rose
Ian Barbash
Will Bain

And a shout out to those who assisted in teaching the important skill of central venous catheter insertion to the MICU/CCU residents and medical students in July!

Phil Lamberty
Stephanie Maximous
Dan Zank
Brian Rosborough

Invasive Cardiopulmonary Exercise Testing Program

Contributed by Michael Risbano, MD, MA

The invasive Cardiopulmonary Exercise Testing Program (iCPET) at UPMC utilizes a comprehensive study to diagnose all forms exercise limitation for clinical and research purposes. The iCPET program is directed by Michael G. Risbano, MD, MA.

iCPET utilizes breath-by-breath analysis of ventilatory gas exchange with simultaneous invasive measurement of pulmonary vascular and cardiac function performed during upright cycle ergometry. Patients undergoing iCPET have both a pulmonary artery and radial artery catheter placed and the measurements collected include cardiac output, pulmonary artery pressures, multiple ventilatory indices, systemic pressures and ECG variables during progressive intensity exercise provocation. In particular iCPET testing can delineate disease states related to pulmonary arterial, pulmonary venous, cardiac valvular, loading dynamics, autonomic, and skeletal muscle pathophysiologies that limit exercise capacity.

Patients referred for iCPET include those with complaints of dyspnea on exertion or exercise fatigue not fully been explained and may include patients with connective tissue disease (scleroderma), diastolic dysfunction (HFpEF), congenital/valvular heart disease, post-pulmonary embolism, parenchymal lung disease (ILD, COPD, cystic fibrosis), and pulmonary arterial hypertension.

From the iCPET study we develop a plan for intervention that may include pharmacologic or surgical therapies, or cardiopulmonary rehabilitation, and we can identify patients who may be eligible for participation in investigational research or clinical treatment trials. The program has successfully evaluated over 20 patients since May and we look forward to referral of additional cases for diagnostic intervention.

Update in Internal Medicine Conference

Several PACCM faculty were involved in the planning and presentations during the recent Update in Internal Medicine Conference on October 19-20.

Dr. Michael Donahoe and Dr. Patrick Strollo served as course director members.

Dr. Jessica Bon led a workshop, Dr. Andrej Petrov participated during “Lunch with the Professor”.

Dr. Burton Lee and Dr. Roy Semaan presented lectures during this two day event.
ERS Presidential Award 2017

Congratulations to Sally Wenzel, MD, who recently received the 2017 European Respiratory Society (ERS) Presidential Award during the annual meeting in Milan, Italy this September. The Presidential Award is presented by ERS to recognize an outstanding contribution to the strengthening of respiratory medicine worldwide.

In the News

Dr. Sally Wenzel lead a study in which tracing cell death pathway can point to drug targets for asthma and kidney disease, among other preventable health problems. You can read more on the story in this Pittsburgh Post-Gazette article.

Dr. Roy Semaan was included in an article in The Incline as one of sixteen young professionals who are working to make Pittsburgh healthier. Read this full article here.

Dr. Belinda Rivera Lebron was invited for an interview with the Tribune Review, regarding medical assistance of victims in hurricane relief efforts in Puerto Rico. Read the full article here. UPMC has partnered with the Pittsburgh Pirates and Brothers Brothers Foundation in sending medical supplies and first aid kits.

Host to the Air Force

Ron Poropatich, MD, with the Center for Military Medicine Research, hosted several Air Force senior scientists and officers at Pitt. The goal was to seek Air Force support for PACCM investigators, including a carbon monoxide antidote program spearheaded by Drs. Mark Gladwin and Jason Rose.

Holiday Fun

Around-the-world Holiday Luncheon:
Our PACCM Family is rich in cultural backgrounds that extend around the world!
Share your ethnic history and holiday traditions by bringing a traditional covered dish or dessert if you would like to participate in our Annual Potluck Around-the-World Holiday Luncheon.

Misfit Gift Exchange:
The fun way to “REGIFT”...
Did you receive 2 copies of the same DVD movie last year? Or would you like to conveniently “lose” last year’s gift from your in-laws?
Rewrap it in pretty paper (without a gift tag) and see who will bargain for your mystery gift in this playfully competitive tradition.
Appointments and Promotions

John McDyer, MD  
Associate Professor of Medicine  
Conferral of Tenure

Ana Mora, MD  
Associate Professor of Medicine  
Tenure Stream

Aisha Walker, PhD  
Assistant Professor of Medicine

New Hires

Welcome to all the new members of our PACCM Family!

Seong Chul Kim – Senior Lab Specialist in Raju Reddy’s Lab  
Shaun Alexander – Lab Technician for Divay Chandra  
Courtney Elvin – Communication I for the Asthma Institute  
Mark J. Brown – Technician for John McDyer

Bingxian Xie – Visiting Scholar in Bill Chen’s Lab  
Jing Ma – Lab Specialist in Bill Chen’s Lab  
Emily Broderick – Lab Technician for Yingze Zhang

Media Links

Online editions of the Respiratory Reader newsletter are available by clicking here.

Keep up with weekly divisional conferences by visiting the PACCM Web Calendar!  
Clicking on an event will expand to show speaker information.

Online CME available!  
Be sure to visit  
www.upmcphysicianresources.com/cme for online CME resources

Keep in touch with UPMC pulmonary news by visiting:  
www.upmcphysicianresources.com/respiratory
Grants, Awards, & Notable Mentions

**Frank Sciurba, MD** presented a late breaking abstract "Mepolizumab reduces exacerbations in eosinophilic COPD" at the European Respiratory Society meetings. This coordinated with the publication of the recently accepted manuscript to the New England Journal, on which Dr. Sciurba is the senior and corresponding author.

**Rachael Huff**, who has been a Research Specialist with the Ray Lab for over 8 years, has graduated from the UPMC Shadyside School of Nursing with Honors and will soon be a staff nurse in PACCM (10th floor)!

**Krishnendu Chakraborty, PhD**, a senior postdoc in Prabir Ray’s lab, has received the highly competitive and prestigious Ramanujan Fellowship award from the Government of India, which has enabled him to start his own independent research with a faculty position at the Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology in New Delhi, India.

Janet Lee’s medical student **Minting Yu**’s summer research program abstract was selected to receive the Stephen Phillips Award for basic science. She is a first year medical student who was engaged in the Dean’s Summer Research Program.

**Nate Weathington, MD, PhD** has received notes of positive feedback from UPMC Horizon due to his participation and outstanding care during several telemedicine service consultations.

**Betsy Ellenberger, CRNP** received a well-deserved Above and Beyond nomination. A patient’s family sent a detailed letter of appreciation for her outstanding patient care.

**Joy de Luna, MD** also received an Above and Beyond nomination for her superb care and assistance with her patient in optimizing medication education.

**Paula Consolaro, CCRC** recently celebrated 10 years as a certified clinical research coordinator.

**Keven Robinson, MD** was a guest speaker for the Department of Microbiology & Immunology Seminar Series at Montana State University this October.

**Burton Lee, MD** was invited as a visiting professor to Johns Hopkins University by the internal medicine residency program.

**Jessica Bon Field, MD** and **Nate Weathington, MD** gave lectures at Johns Hopkins University and Brigham Women’s Hospital as visiting professors, respectively.

**Toru Nyunoya, MD** received a UPP Academic Foundation Award.

**Elizabeth Hartigan, RN, MPH** received the University of Pittsburgh Staff Award for Research Service for her many contributions to clinical research in Cystic Fibrosis and other respiratory diseases.

**Melody Porter**, Administrator in the Comprehensive Lung Center, received an Award for Commitment and Excellence in Service (ACES) from UPMC.

**Joseph Pilewski, MD** presented a plenary, Lung Transplantation: Challenges and Opportunities for Advanced Lung Disease, at the 2017 North American Cystic Fibrosis Conference. The Adult Cystic Fibrosis program also received a Quality Improvement Award from the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation during this annual meeting.

**Daniel Kass, MD** was invited as an ad hoc reviewer for the NIH CSR Lung Injury Repair and Remodeling Study Section (LIRR)

**The Division also received news of promising scores for the following grant submissions:**

- **Alison Morris, MD, MS** and **Barbara Methé, PhD** - R01: Dysbiosis Impact on Lung Disease in HIV Study.

- **Jonathan Alder, PhD** - R01: Telomeres, DNA Damage, and Lung Disease.

- **Jason Rose, MD** – K08: Discovering and Developing Recombinant Molecular Scavenging Agents for the Treatment of Carbon Monoxide Induced Cardiovascular Dysfunction.

- **Janet Lee, MD** – R01: Host Control Mechanisms Against K. Pneumoniae Infection in the Lungs.

- **Kong Chen, PhD** – R56: Epigenetic Regulation of Chemokines in Lung Inflammation.

- **Elena Goncharova, PhD** - R01: TSC2 Signaling in Pulmonary Hypertension.
Publications


Londino JD, Guillick DL, Lear TB, Suber TL, Weathington NM. Masa LS, Chen BB, Mallampalli RK. Post-translational modification of the interferon gamma receptor alters its stability and signaling, Biochem J. 2017 Sep 7. [Epub ahead of print]


Fellows

John Evankovich, MD and Tomeka Suber, MD have both been approved for NIH Loan Repayment Funding.

Andrea Levine, MD—was selected to give the presentation, “Drug Discovery for PH-HFpEF: High Throughput Screening in Identification of SIRT3 Activators” at the Thirteenth Annual Respiratory Disease Young Investigators’ Forum on October 12-15 in Denver, Co.

Will Bain, MD - received a promising score on his recent F32 grant submission: "Mechanisms of Platelet Protection in Pathogen-triggered Lung Injury."

Alison Lennox, MD was selected to give the presentation "ATP12A promotes mucus dysfunction during type 2 inflammation" at the 2017 North American Cystic Fibrosis Conference in Indianapolis, Indiana in November 2017. In addition, she was selected as a top 5 finalist for the “Junior Investigator Best Abstract in Basic Science Award”.

Marc Gauthier, MD was selected to give the presentation "CXCL10 and Severe Asthma, a Possible Agent for Steroid Insensitivity " at the 2017 Nemacolin Asthma Conference and also to present his work at the Asthma and Allergic Diseases Cooperative Research Centers program meeting at the NIH.

Bryan McVerry hosted a party this summer to welcome to all of our new fellows! Faculty and fellows alike had a wonderful time!

Save the Date—Fellows Research Retreat

Annual Fellows Research Retreat

- Presentations by Fellows
- Special Guest Speaker, Lynn M. Schnapp, MD
- Center / Institute Highlights
- Research Faculty Presentations
- Traditional Bowling Competition
Celebrations

BIRTHS

Congratulations to our growing PACCM family!

Sudipta and Tanay Das welcomed son, Hrehaan Advik, on November 27.

Jessica and Mark Stanard welcomed son, Elijah Nathaniel, on November 22.

Dan and Jenny Zank welcomed daughter, Philippa Therese, on November 1.

Carl and Lindsey Koch welcomed son, Otis Paul, on October 12.

Craig and Sarah Riley welcomed daughter, Elodie Claire, born October 9.

Eric and Kristin Nolley welcomed son, Garris, on September 25.

Alyssa and Mike Gregory welcomed son, Edward Dominick, on September 12.

Kaylee and Jeremy Klingensmith welcomed daughter, Rylee Nicole, on September 5.

Anna Marie and Greg Chekan welcomed grandson, Julian Alexander, on August 9.

Be sure to notify us of all newsworthy items!

- New Grants
- Honors & Awards
- Promotions & New Appointments
- Special Presentations/Seminars
- Engagements/Marriages/Births
- Share photos of your colleagues!

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www.dom.pitt.edu/PACCM

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