The Tulane Department of Pediatrics has world class clinicians and many of our faculty are engaged in cutting edge basic, translational and clinical research and clinical trials. With over $4 million dollars in federal funding and additional research funding from foundations, pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, Tulane Pediatrics is truly improving the health of children locally and around the world.
International Reach
Many Tulane Pediatric faculty have on-going research projects around the world including Sierra Leone, Nigeria, South Africa, Romania, Suriname and Peru. These projects span a wide range of conditions and methodologies with projects focused on new ways to detect tuberculosis, prevention of diarrhea with probiotics, early identification of neonatal sepsis in developing countries, the lasting impact of Ebola survivorship, transgenerational transmission of HIV and long-term outcomes of retroviral treatment, maternal-child health in relation to pesticides and trauma exposure and the lasting impact of early care in orphanages. Many of these projects have been ongoing for several years and our faculty travel regularly to grow and strengthen both the research and the public health impact of our international programs. In addition to these existing international programs, Pediatrics faculty member Dr. Richard Oberhelman is beginning one of the first NIH funded studies in Cuba. Coupled with strong collaborative partnerships with the School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, Tulane Pediatrics is truly making a difference around the world.

Clinical Research
In addition to our international research there is a variety of cutting edge clinical and translational research occurring here in New Orleans. Dr. Eva Morava-Kozicz, a clinical biochemical genetist, studies mitochondrial disease and a set of very rare diseases related to congenital disorders of glycosylation (CDGs). Her research group has discovered several subtypes of CDGs and they are currently focusing on novel therapies in children with these disorders including a group of patients with PGM1-CDG. In the study, they use a mono sugar diet supplement to prevent the negative impacts of the disease and help these children live healthier lives. Her lab is also working on developing novel ways to determine if a child has CDG and innovative approaches to better understand the regulation of protein glycosylation in vitro. Dr. Morava-Kozicz is a true example of a clinician who is able to go from the bedside to the lab and back again. She is a key researcher within the Hayward Center of Human Genetics directed by Pediatrics Faculty Member Dr. Hans Andersson.

Dr. Tami Singleton, Section Chief of Pediatric Hematology Oncology, directs several clinical trials focused on hemophilia and other bleeding disorders. Dr. Singleton also has an ongoing clinical work with our pediatric oncology and sickle cell patients. Pediatrics Gastroenterology Section Chief Dr. Uwe Blecker is also engaged in cutting edge clinical research. He is currently recruiting subjects for a combined study with adult patients on the mechanisms underlying Eosinophilic Esophagitis (EoE), a recently recognized allergic/immune condition that is associated with poor growth, abdominal pain and other symptoms in both adults and children. In addition to enrolling our patients in the studies examining how the immune system is dysregulated in EoE, Dr. Blecker has partnered with other Tulane Pediatricians to create a multi-disciplinary treatment program for children with EoE. His work continues to demonstrate the unique ability of Tulane Pediatrics to conduct translational research while establishing the highest level of care for our patients. Additionally, Dr. Blecker is leading two more gastrointestinal studies. One is a unique phase one clinical trial for sepsis, examining the safety profile of a new treatment that is expected to get children with sepsis better faster and with less time in the hospital. The other, examines the effectiveness and safety of cutting edge medications for Crohn’s disease.

Our Infectious Disease Section has one of the longest running projects that studies outcomes of children born to mothers living with HIV, studying whether the children are infected or uninfected. The section partners with sites around the globe to better understand how to improve the health of these children. Dr. Sue Ellen Abdalian, Chief of the Section of Adolescent Medicine, serves as the site director for some of Tulane’s on-going adolescent and young adult trials. The clinical research with HIV infected youths includes not only medical treatment and adherence, but also HIV prevention and work that increases the understanding of the psychosocial and neurocognitive consequences facing youth living with HIV infection. Working closely with Dr. Russ Van Dyke, Dr. Abdalian and her colleagues are connected to one of the largest multi-center programs treating and monitoring the health of youth with HIV. The section is preparing to assist the HIV Prevention Network (HPTN) by offering youth and young adults the opportunity to volunteer for a medical HIV prevention trial. The aim is to test the efficacy of a long-lasting injectable method of HIV prevent or PrEP (Pre-exposure Prophylaxis). The Section is also working closely with sites around the United States newly funded by the Adolescent Trials Network (ATIN) for HIV prevention and intervention studies.

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Basic Science
In addition to our clinical and translational research, Tulane Pediatrics also has a strong basic science research component. One component of our basic science research focuses on understanding how early developmental differences in nephron progenitor cells lead to increased risk for renal failure and cardiovascular disease in adult life. Dr. Zubaida Saifudeen has an NIH funded grant to continue her work understanding how changes in early cellular metabolism result in alterations in the balance between the formation of additional nephron progenitor cells (NPC) and the differentiation of these cells to create mature nephrons. NPC availability during kidney development is a major determinant of nephron number at birth. Low nephron endowment results in hypertension and chronic kidney disease in adults, both clinically significant diseases without a cure. Maternal nutrition and other factors during pregnancy are known to influence the number of initial nephrons. As such, Dr. Saifudeen’s basic research is critical to understand what happens to these NPCs and how to protect them from differentiating too early as an important first step in protecting children from the negative effects of prenatal nutritional problems including maternal diabetes and obesity. Hongbing Liu, PhD has a Pilot grant from the NIDDK to study the role of Histone Deacytelases in nephrogenesis. Pediatrics Chairman Samir El-Daher, MD shares a program project/Center of Excellence from the NIDDK to investigate the epigenetic mechanisms of nephron progenitor fate during kidney development.

PEDS NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2016
Beyond clinical, translational and basic science research, many Tulane faculty and residents are involved in community based research, epidemiologic studies and quality improvement. Tulane pediatric residents examined the physical and psychological health of our growing Hispanic immigrant population, using community engaged approaches to better understand how to provide the most cost effective care to these vulnerable youth. Tulane Pediatrics strives to include trainees at every level from undergraduate, to graduate, medical and postdoctoral fellows. Our students present at many local, national and international meetings with over 15 presentations in 2016 at the Southern Society for Pediatric Research. Tulane Pediatrics national profile in research is also highlighted by the number of faculty that serve on NIH research study sections, serving as reviewers for grants and assisting NIH and other federal agencies in setting the priorities for the next generation of research. Several of our faculty also are on editorial boards, directly the scientific dissemination of research across the globe and determining the scientific merit of research in many different fields.

Improving the health of children is a primary mission of Tulane Pediatrics and our faculty are dedicated to advancing both the science and the art of medicine. There are many opportunities to get involved, both to support our growing research portfolio, provide support for students to design, implement and present their own research, and most importantly to help us achieve of mission of being able to make a difference in the lives of children and their families in New Orleans and around the world.

American Federation for Medical Research
The American Federation for Medical Research held it’s annual southern regional meeting at the Intercontinental Hotel in New Orleans in February 2016. Tulane Pediatrics residents, medical students, and graduate students represented Tulane well in their presentations.

POSTER PRESENTATIONS
Meredith Collins
MANAGEMENT OF TWIN-TWIN TRANSFUSION SYNDROME LEADING TO INTRAUTERINE FETAL DEMISE AND ISCHEMIC LIMB LOSS AND PVL IN THE SURVIVING TWIN
Mentor: Dr. Jay Goldsmith

Eric Debbold
PROPONIC ACIDEMIA AND AUTISM: METABOLIC DYSREGULATION IN ACTION
Mentor: Dr. Eva Morava-Kozicz

Virginia Hatch
IMPACT OF PRENATAL ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION ON INFANT ENGAGEMENT
Mentor: Dr. Stacy Drury

Joseph Kovacs
PAIR OF SIBLINGS WITH KABUKI SYNDROME FEATURES AND A DE NOVO MUTATION IN
Mentor: Dr. Eva Morava-Kozicz

Renfang Song
PRORENIN RECEPTORS SIGNALING PROMOTES NEPHRON INDUCTION DURING MOUSE KIDNEY DEVELOPMENT
Mentor: Dr. Ihor Yosypiv

Hongbing Liu, PhD
HISTONE DEACETYLASES 1 AND 2 BALANCE NEPHRON PROGENITOR RENEWAL AND DIFFERENTIATION DURING KIDNEY ORGANOGENESIS
-2016 SSPR Young Faculty Award Recipient
Mentor: Dr. Samir El-Dahr

Jesse Smith
THE TRANSGENERATION EFFECT OF PARENTAL ALCOHOLISM ON GRANDCHILDREN’S TELOMERE LENGTH AT BIRTH
Mentor: Dr. Stacy Drury

Ann Adams
METABOLIC CONTROL OF NEPHRON PROGENITOR CELL RENEWAL AND DIFFERENTIATION
-2016 SAFMR/SSI Trainee Research Travel Award
Mentor: Dr. Zubaida Saifudeen

Francesca Edington-Giordano
INHIBITION OF GLYCOLYSIS ACCELERATES NEPHROGENESIS IN EMBRYONIC KIDNEYS
-2016 SAFMR/SSI Trainee Research Travel Award
Mentor: Dr. Zubaida Saifudeen

Harrison Lindley
ENERGY METABOLISM PROFILE OF NEPHRON PROGENITOR CELL
-2016 SAFMR/SSI Trainee Research Travel Award
Mentor: Dr. Zubaida Saifudeen

TO DONATE TO ANY OF THESE ONGOING RESEARCH PROJECTS PLEASE CONTACT THE DEPARTMENT AT PEDIATRICS@WAVE.TULANE.EDU

By providing the highest quality care, the mission of Tulane Pediatrics is to make a difference in the lives of all children. Tulane Pediatrics has a strong commitment to training the next generation of pediatricians and scientists. Our faculty and residents are dedicated to advancing both the science and the art of pediatrics. There are many opportunities to get involved, both to support our growing research portfolio, provide support for students to design, implement and present their own research, and most importantly to help us achieve of mission of being able to make a difference in the lives of children and their families in New Orleans and around the world.

Over the next several months, she will meet with faculty and residents to gather information relative to current strengths and areas of potential growth. Using this information, she will be creating an active, virtual Department of Pediatrics Research Institute where the research accomplishments of the Department can be advertised and made available to students and collaborators. Starting in September, she will be holding monthly research meetings for faculty and fellows to present data, discuss potential grant applications, and build a Department wide research strategic plan. Dr. Drury will also be meeting with all the residents to present basic tenets of clinical and translational research and will work directly with the Chief Residents and Training Director to mentor and develop resident research and quality improvement projects. She looks forward to strengthening the current on-going research within the department, enhancing current infrastructure, increasing both the visibility and funding for Pediatric Research, and growing novel trans-disciplinary programs. Input from students, residents, faculty and alumni on areas of research interest and thoughts for growing the research arm of the department is welcome.
Ashley Politz, executive director of the Louisiana-chapter American Academy of Pediatrics; Katie Savage of the Children’s Health Fund (New York office) and Drs. Carlson and Mukerjee from the New Orleans Children’s Health Project meeting at a shelter in Baton Rouge to triage the medical needs of the flooding victims.

The section of Community Pediatrics and Global Health works in conjunction with the Children’s Health Fund. After rushing mobile medical clinics to the Gulf to provide crisis relief in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, Children’s Health Fund stayed to provide essential health care long after the initial recovery efforts. The section supports the community in building for the future by bringing compassionate, comprehensive health care to approximately 1,000 of the area’s most vulnerable children each year, regardless of their ability to pay. “We are treating the sickest of the sick,” says Dr. John Carlson, a physician at the program. We target the kids with multiple health challenges and stick with them over time to ensure they stay healthy.”

In the parishes the New Orleans program serves—Orleans and Jefferson—a lack of insurance, a lack of public transportation, and an acute shortage of doctors and other health care professionals compound the difficulties many low-income children face in trying to obtain quality health care. These challenges, which existed even before Hurricane Katrina, increased in the aftermath as an influx of immigrants who came to rebuild the city brought their families too. The New Orleans program targets high need children (ages 0-18) at various community sites in Jefferson and Orleans parishes who are unlikely to access routine health care and therefore, shoulder the burden of undiagnosed or unmanaged chronic conditions that impede their ability to perform well in school.

Because children in New Orleans suffer from asthma at rates that are double and triple the national average, the program collaborates with schools and school districts to find and treat students with uncontrolled asthma symptoms. Caring for New Orleans’ neediest young people also means providing services in Spanish, since a growing number of the city’s low-income residents come from Spanish-speaking households. Our newest faculty member, Dr. Kim Mukerjee, along with two case managers, Carlos Naranjo and Miguel Alonso Solares, are fluent in Spanish to help serve this growing patient population, which is currently 69% Hispanic.

“IT IS ESTIMATED THAT 80% OF HEALTH HAPPENS OUTSIDE THE PHYSICIAN’S OFFICE.”

– Mary Rossi, MD
Section Chief
Welcome to Our New Faculty

Trey Dunbar, MD
Vice Chairman - Quality Improvement
Elsie Schaefer Chair of Neonatology
Section Chief of Neonatology-Perinatology Medicine
Joined 11/1/2015

Elizabeth Lindsay, MD
Assistant Professor
Section of Neonatology-Perinatology Medicine
Joined 12/1/2015

Meghan Howell, MD
Assistant Professor
Section of General Pediatrics
Joined 1/1/2016

Kim Mukerjee, MD
Assistant Professor
Section of Community Pediatrics and Global Health
Joined 7/1/2016

Tamas Kozicz, MD, PhD
Associate Professor
Hayward Center for Genetics
Joined 9/1/2016

Uwe Blecker, MD
Professor, Section Chief
Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology

Dr. Uwe Blecker is board-certified in general pediatrics and pediatric gastroenterology and nutrition and serves as the chief for the section of pediatric gastroenterology. He joined the Tulane Faculty in December 2015.

After receiving the B.S. in medical sciences in 1986, Dr. Uwe Blecker then earned the M.D. magna cum laude from Free University of Brussels, Belgium in 1990. He then completed a pediatric residency from 1990-93 at Academic Children's Hospital in Brussels, Belgium, followed by a pediatric gastroenterology fellowship at Hahnemann University Hospital in Philadelphia and Wyler Children's Hospital at the University of Chicago.

In 1996, Dr. Blecker joined LSU Medical Center here in New Orleans as Associate Professor of Pediatrics and Medical Director of the LSU Medical Center Pediatric Weight Management Program. In 1998, he joined the faculty at Thomas Jefferson University as Director of Nutrition Support Services at Alfred I. DuPont Hospital for Children in Philadelphia. In 2000, he became Professor of Pediatrics and Chief of the Division of Pediatric Gastroenterology and Nutrition at The University of Arizona Health Sciences Center in Tucson. In 2001, he joined the staff of St. Christopher's Hospital for Children as Chief of the Division of Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition. He returned to Tucson in 2002 as Director of the Pediatrics and Gastroenterology program at Tucson Medical Center and Director of Pediatric Gastroenterology, P.C. He became Chief of the Division of Pediatric Gastroenterology and Nutrition at West Virginia University Health Sciences Center in 2008. In 2015, Dr. Blecker joined Tulane after a successful stint at the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson.

Dr. Blecker has served as co-principal investigator or principal investigator for numerous studies and is the author of more than 100 articles in peer-reviewed publications, four books, six book chapters and nearly 300 communications at national and international meetings.

In addition to English, he is fluent in Dutch, German, French and Spanish.

PEDS NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2016
On June 30th, an appreciation event for Patsy Stewart, Paula Thomas, Andrea Macksey, and Lisa Cunningham was held in the Riverboat Room of Tulane Lakeside Hospital. All four have recently retired or announced their retirement from Tulane University. Combined they have served Tulane University for over 65 years. We wish them well and will certainly miss their contributions to the department.

Celebrating Outstanding Careers

Dr. Russell Van Dyke was named the recipient of James H. Nakano Award for Scientific Excellence from the National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases of the CDC for the Manuscript: “The First Association of a Primary Amebic Meningoencephalitis Death with Culturable Naegleria fowleri in Tap Water from a U.S. Treated Public Drinking Water System” published in Clinical Infectious Diseases, 2015. (Awarded March 24, 2016)

Van Dyke Recipient of James H. Nakano Award

Dr. Samir El-Dahr has been elected to the Executive Board of the Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs. AMSPDC fosters education and research in the field of child health and human development. The membership of AMSPDC consists of the chair or acting chair or academic administrative head of the department of pediatrics of each accredited medical school in the United States and Canada. Dr. El-Dahr will serve a two year term.

Upcoming Speakers (speakers and dates may change)

9/15/2016 James Mann Lecture
9/22/2016 Bertha Martinez Lecture
9/29/2016 Naomi Laventhal, MD
10/6/2016 Susan Mclellan, MD
10/13/2016 Sarah Labuda, MD
10/20/2016 Stephen Nelson, MD
10/27/2016 Ihor Yosypiv, MD
11/3/2016 Bryan Sibley, MD (LA AAAP)
11/10/2016 Trey Dunbar, MD
11/17/2016 Quality Review Conference
11/24/2016 Thanksgiving
12/1/2016 Tami Singleton, MD
12/8/2016 Samir El-Dahr, MD
12/15/2016 Charles F. Wasserman Lecture
12/22/2016 Winter Recess

Dr. Jessica Debord was selected as a participant in Association of Pediatric Program Directors (APPD) Leadership in Educational Academic Development (LEAD) Cohort 5. APPD LEAD is a competitive, nationally recognized program that provides a unique opportunity for pediatric academic leaders in medical education to engage and learn from seasoned program directors, pediatric educators, and other national leaders in pediatrics.

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We want to congratulate all of our graduating senior residents and wish them the best of luck in all of their future endeavors! Carissa Armstrong and Libby Boweles will be the new Tulane Pediatric Chief Residents. Meredith Collins is pursuing a Neonatology Fellowship. Courtney Crayne as earned a Pediatric Rheumatology Fellowship at Univ. Alabama Birmingham. Christina Lewis will be General Pediatrician in Mandeville at Leblanc Pediatrics. Omar Maatouk has joined Nemours duPont Hospital in Delaware as a General Pediatrician. Jessica May will be a General Pediatrician at Ochsner Westside Pediatrics. Kimberly Kavanagh and Tessa Kleyn are both completing Adult Psychiatry residency and child psychiatry fellowships.

New Student Clerkship Coordinator

Pediatrics Staff Member, Lauren Rossi has recently been promoted to Sr. Administrative Program Coordinator for our Student Clerkship. Lauren joined Tulane in November of 2015 as Executive Secretary. She has extensive experience scheduling large scale projects for the film industry and has made a great impact in the short amount of time here. Lauren replaces Rhonda Bell, who has faithfully served the department for over 8 years and will be leaving the department for other opportunities in October.

2016 Ralph V. Platou Visiting Professor

For the first time in 2016, the Ralph V. Platou Visiting Professorship was reimaged into part of our residency graduation program. Going forward, graduating residents will invite a guest lecturer to speak on a pediatrics topic of their choice at Grand Rounds. The visiting professor also gives a keynote address at the graduation ceremony the next night. This year’s Platou Visiting Professor was Dr. Alan J. Shapiro, the Senior Medical Director of Montefiore and the Children’s Health Fund in New York. He is also the Co-Founder and Medical Director of Terra Firma. His lecture was titled “Unaccompanied Immigrant Children: Supporting Resiliency” and was well received by all who attended. He also gave an inspiring keynote speech at our residency graduation.

We are extremely grateful to the Platou family for their support of this visiting professorship so that we may continue to honor Dr. Platou and his memory.


JAY P. GOLDSMITH, MD


HANS ANDERSON, MD

Andersson, HC. 50 Years ago in The Journal of Pediatrics: HANS ANDERSON, MD


PEDS NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2016

HANS ANDERSON, MD


Tina C.飲料的使用對運動表現的影響。Epub 2015 Oct. 10.1016/j.jpeds.2015.08.012


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e53 enables metabolic fitness and self-renewal of nephron progenitor cells.

Liu, Y; Liu, L; Brown, A; Badillo, M; Li, M; Carroll, T; Oxborough, L; Feng, J. Salfedeen. Development. 2015 Apr 1;142(7):1288-41. doi: 10.1242

dev.116117. PMID: 25804735

Histone deacetylase 1 and 2 regulate Wnt and β-catenin pathways in the ureteric bud epithelium.


PMID: 25758227

Angiotensin II regulates brain (pro)renin receptor expression through activation of cAMP response-element-binding protein. Angiotensin II regulates brain (pro)renin receptor expression through activation of cAMP response-element-binding protein.


PMID: 26499457

John Schiefllein, MD


Dinesh Singh, MD


Patrick A. Singh, MD, PhD


Russell Van Dyke, MD


Van Dyke RB, Danner SP, Chesteman S, Kirschner P, Neumann et al., et al. Outcomes of Infants Born to HIV-infected Women Identified by Rapid HIV Testing Late in Pregnancy or at Delivery: The MIRASaida Study. AIDS Clin Res 2015 July 1; 5: 1-6. 484. PMID: 26283219


Pediatrics Newsletter September 2016