

# In Ignotis “Into the Unknown”

## Message from the Chair

As we reflect on the past month, below are several remarkable accomplishments by our faculty in advancing the mission of research and scholarship in our department. Faculty and trainees published peer-reviewed articles and presented abstracts at national conferences. Additionally, last month brought recognition to our department with several faculty members receiving prestigious awards. Our department continues to support a diverse portfolio of ongoing research studies, each contributing to the evidence base that informs clinical practice and medical education. Finally, I would like to remind you of the opportunities for intellectual engagement and skill development available to all. Our Research Workshops are designed to equip you with practical tools to enhance your scholarship & journal club offers a platform for critical discussion of the latest literature. Thank you for your dedication to advancing our shared mission.

## Peer Reviewed Publications

**Bahniwal RK, Sadr N, Schinderle C, Avila CJ, Sill JD, Qayyum R.** Obesity Paradox and the Effect of NT-proBNP on All-Cause and Cause-Specific Mortality. *Clin Cardiol.* 2024 Nov;47(11):e70044. doi: 10.1002/clc.70044. PMID: 39514242; PMCID: PMC11546245.

Kong Y, Edler MC, Hamel E, Britton-Jenkins AR, Gillan O, Mooberry SL, Mu D, **Brown ML.** Synthesis and structure-activity relationship of boronic acid bioisosteres of combretastatin A-4 as anticancer agents. *Bioorg Med Chem.* 2024 Nov 10;116:117999. doi: 10.1016/j.bmc.2024.117999. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 39546933.

Rentz DM, Aisen PS, Atri A, Hitchcock J, Irizarry M, Landen J, Matthews BR, Miller DS, Mahinrad S, Napoli S, **Okhravi HR,** Petersen RC, Siemers ER, Weber CJ, Weisman DC, Carrillo MC. Benefits and risks of FDA-approved amyloid-targeting antibodies for treatment of early Alzheimer's disease: Navigating clinician-patient engagement. *Alzheimers Dement.* 2024 Nov;20(11):8162-8171. doi: 10.1002/alz.14199. Epub 2024 Sep 22. PMID: 39306695; PMCID: PMC11567834.

## Abstracts, Posters, & Presentations

**Okhravi HR** presented at the Clinical Trials on Alzheimer's Disease-CTAD 2024 Scientific Meeting on 30 Oct 2024. Efficacy, Cardiovascular Safety and Adverse Events Associated with Escitalopram in Alzheimer's Dementia: Results from the S-CitAD Trial.

**Kim M, Brown III, S, Serji S, Kassabo W** had a poster presentation at CHEST. Inspiratory Muscle Training Devices: An Unusual Cause of Recurrent Spontaneous Pneumothorax.

**Kim M, Shah M** had a poster presentation at ATA. Diagnostic Discrepancy: A Case of Coexisting Papillary and Anaplastic Thyroid Carcinoma.

## Awards

**Qayyum R & Fanning L** won the *Faculty Award for Excellence Award* at the EVMS Legacy Awards Night.

**Lieb D & Newby K** won the *Champion of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Award* at the EVMS Legacy Award Night.

**Okhravi HR & Niknejad B, & McQueen-Gibson E** won the *Team Achievement Award* at the EVMS Legacy Awards Night.

**Siraj E** won the *Philanthropy Champion Award* at the EVMS Legacy Awards Night.

**Derber C** won the *FFAOE Award for Educational Leadership Award* at the EVMS Legacy Awards Night.

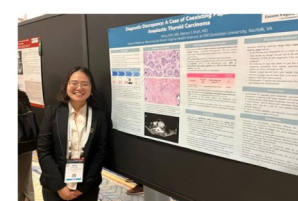
**Okigbo C** won the *Faculty Rising Star Award* at the EVMS Legacy Awards Night.

**Shripad N** has served as a *Fellow-in-Training* on the Board for the Mid-Atlantic Society of Endocrinologists & organized a webinar on the topic of Artificial Intelligence for Mid Atlantic fellows & also coordinated the career panel at the most recent meeting at the University of Maryland. **Kamran A** was elected as the incoming *Fellow-in-Training* for the board.

**Vargas A** was awarded the Outstanding Poster Presentation Award at the American College of Gastroenterology meeting on 29 Oct 2024.



MACON & JOAN BROCK VIRGINIA HEALTH SCIENCES  
**Eastern Virginia Medical School**  
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## Researcher Spotlight—Sean Hesselbacher, MD

**You have spent much of your academic career involved in research. What is your motivation for continuing this pursuit of research & scholarly work?** I started research as an undergraduate with animal models of learning and memory, though I don't think I understood most of what we were doing at the time. Between college graduation and medical school (at EVMS!), I worked as a lab tech in an invasive cardiovascular research lab, where I gained a lot of exposure to experimental techniques. This helped me out when I was in PCCM fellowship and I worked with an outstanding mentor who had translational projects involving everything from cell cultures to longitudinal clinical observations. It was during this time that I participated in a research certificate program, which gave me knowledge and understanding to be able to take on the clinical research projects I have been involved with since then. Clinical research, especially retrospective studies, more practically fits into the schedules of a primarily clinical physician.



**You are the editor for a recently established, open-access journal - the *Eastern Virginia Medical Journal*. What inspired you to embark upon this journey?** This journal was initially conceived by EVMS GME as a place for trainees to publish the results of their scholarly activity. It grew from there to include GME faculty and staff. I enjoy editorial work and peer review because it gives me the opportunity to learn about the forefront of medical science and, at the same time, have an impact on how it is presented to the world.

**What are your goals, as chief editor, for maintaining this publication? What types of submissions are you hoping to receive at this time?** My first short-term goal is the successful publication of the first issue! Moving forward, I anticipate 2 issues per year, so we will need to work to maintain the quality. I would also like to ultimately develop an educational curriculum that may include a process for mentoring trainees while they participate in the peer review process as well as a didactic curriculum and presentations. Ultimately, we will work toward indexing in PubMed Central. We intend to publish many types of articles, including Original Research or Brief Reports, Quality Improvement, Advances in Medical Education, Review Articles, Case Reports, Letters to the Editor, and Special Articles. Since we are new, we can also be flexible in the types of articles we publish – if we find that our audience is especially interested in a particular type of article, we may be able to add it.

**As a research mentor for trainees in various contexts (e.g., EVMS, Military/VA hospitals), what have you learned about the research process, in general, or about trainees' interests in research?** Every trainee comes in with a different level of experience or comfort with research. I'm not so far out from where they are that I don't remember what it was like to try and figure things out, but I also have some experience to give them guidance. I think the most important things I can provide are keeping them on schedule. Since sleep medicine fellows have to stay on track to get a project done in a year, I help them navigate the particulars of government oversight. In general, I find that trainees have some wonderful ideas for research projects – another role I fill is to help them narrow their ideas down to something that can reasonably be accomplished in the time allotted.

**What haven't we asked you about that you would like to share?** We are always looking for high quality submissions to *EVMJ*, especially from Internal Medicine sources. We would like to make the publication process as painless as possible and a relatively "safe" place for trainees to learn to navigate the process. We aim to be a go-to submission site, for example, as a second choice (after the premier specialty journals) or when timely publication is needed. **Submit case reports & manuscripts for *EVMJ* [here](#).**

## Media Highlights

**King J** was featured in the Eastern Virginia Medical School at Old Dominion Weekly Pulse on 28 Oct 2024. Internists: key innovators in tackling chronic diseases. Read the clip [here](#).

**Qayyum R** was featured in the Eastern Virginia Medical School at Old Dominion Weekly Pulse on 6 Nov 2024 to discuss recently published findings from a joint research study. Read the clip [here](#).

**Johnson DA** had a video presentation on Medscape on 27 Oct 2024. Mortality Rates From Early-Onset CRC Have Risen Considerably Over the Last Two Decades. Watch the clip [here](#).

**Qayyum R** was given recognition for service on the editorial leadership team for the Journal of Hospital Medicine in a recent article about the journal's 20<sup>th</sup> year in existence. Read the article [here](#).

**Lieb D** was featured in a Pulse Check video on 21 Nov 2024 at the Macon & Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences at Old Dominion University for Diabetes & Alzheimer's Awareness Month. Watch the clip [here](#).

**Okhravi HR** was featured in the Macon & Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences at Old Dominion University Weekly Pulse on 21 Nov 2024. Read the article [here](#).

## December Reminders:

### Medicine Grand Rounds:

Wednesdays, 12-1 p.m.

12/4—Dr. Nathaniel Gordon, Macon & Joan Brock, VHS, EVMS at ODU

12/11—Dr. Raphaela Goldbach-Mansky, Chief & Senior Investigator, NIH

12/18—No Grand Rounds

12/25—No Grand Rounds

### Research Events:

12/10—Research Workshop  
Zoom, 5:00-6:00 p.m.,  
TriNetX—Dr. Angela Toepp

No Research Journal Club  
this month.

### Research Office Hours

Fridays, 2:00-4:00 p.m.

We'll see you in the new year  
for Grand Rounds & our  
Monthly Research Events!



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