

PATHWAYS

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 12, ISSUE 2 SUMMER 2025



June 7, 2025: Pictured above on the balcony of Ralph's on the Park Restaurant, are the Pathology Department faculty members, current and emeritus, fellows and residents who gathered to celebrate the 2025 graduation. The ceremony was replete with certificates and awards (serious and otherwise) presented to the faculty, fellows and residents. It was a festive, yet bittersweet celebration as we honored the transitions the ceremony represented. Drs. Younes Aljohmani, Ghaidaa Majari and Robert Wood completed their fellowships in Cytopathology, Dermatopathology and Hematopathology respectively. Dr. Aljohmani remains in the Department as the new DermPath Fellow; Dr. Majari will likewise remain to complete her fifth year of residency, and Dr. Wood will join Moffit Cancer Center in Tampa, FL for a Molecular Pathology Fellowship. Graduating residents Drs. Hanadi Osman and Konrad Bach will become fellows in Surgical Pathology at Wake Forest University School of Medicine, and Cytopathology at the Medical University of South Carolina, respectively.

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FELLOWS' AND RESIDENTS' GRADUATION



Fellows receive their graduate certificates from faculty: Top: Left to right, Drs. Younes Aljohmani (Cytopathology) and Krzysztof Moroz. Top Right: left to right: Drs. Abida Kadi, Ghaidaa Majari (Dermatopathology) and Alun Wang; Right, Drs. Robert Wood (Hematopathology) and Janet Schmid.



Dr. Ryan Craig presents certificates to graduating residents Drs. Hanadi Osman and Konrad Bach

RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE



Dr. Abida Kadi, Assistant Professor, received the Philip J. Daroca Award for Excellence in Residency Education from Drs. Sarah Lewis and Annette Hebert.



Dr. Di Tian (left) bestowed the Rokitsky Award for Excellence in Autopsy to Drs. Annette Hebert and Keaton Ott.



Dr. Hanadi Osman receives the award for Excellence in Surgical Pathology from Dr. Krzysztof Moroz.



Center: Dr. Farhanaz Panjshiri receives the Nina Dhurandhar, M.D. Award for Excellence in Cytopathology. Pictured left to right: Drs. Akannsha Singh; Panjshiri, Nina Dhurandhar (Professor Emeritus) and Krzysztof Moroz.

Resident's Corner

REFLECTIONS ON THE COLLEGE OF AMERICAN PATHOLOGISTS PATHOLOGY LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

by Dr. Carlos Lopez, P.G.Y. III



In April 2025, I had the honor of attending the College of American Pathologists (CAP) Pathology Leadership Summit in Washington, D.C. This event brought together pathology residents, fellows, and practicing pathologists from across the country for an intensive and inspiring experience focused on advocacy, leadership development, and the future of our specialty.

The summit began with interactive sessions led by Dr. Donald Karcher, CAP president, among other CAP leaders and health policy experts. These discussions provided critical insight into the evolving landscape of healthcare legislation and the key policy issues currently impacting pathology. Topics such as Medicare reimbursement reform, Protecting Access to Medicare Act (PAMA), the importance of pathology services in public health infrastructure, and the preservation and expansion of the Conrad 30 waiver program for international medical graduates were central themes. Through these sessions, I gained a clearer understanding of how national policies intersect with our day-to-day

responsibilities as future pathologists and the vital role we must play as residents in shaping that intersection.

One of the most impactful aspects of the summit was the opportunity to participate in Capitol Hill meetings with congressional offices. Alongside other CAP members, I met with legislative staffers from Louisiana to advocate for issues affecting our profession. I shared personal experiences as a pathology resident and emphasized the indispensable role pathologists play in patient care. These conversations reaffirmed that lawmakers value hearing directly from physicians, especially when it comes to policies that affect access to timely diagnostics and patient safety.

Equally valuable was the chance to connect with fellow trainees and leaders within the pathology community. I found inspiration in the shared commitment to advocacy and leadership, and I left the summit with a renewed sense of purpose. This experience has strengthened my resolve to remain actively engaged in health policy and professional leadership throughout my career.

Attending the CAP Pathology Leadership Summit was a formative milestone in my development as a physician and advocate. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity and support from my program, especially Dr. Ryan Craig, Ms. Beatris DeLucca, and my co-residents Drs. Fara Panjshiri and Phoenix Hwaung. I look forward to continuing to contribute to the advancement of pathology at our program and national levels.

Residents/Fellows Presentation

Dr. Robert Wood, Hematopathology Fellow, gave a presentation at the Regional Hematopathology Meeting, in New York during May 2025. Dr. Wood presented, *High-grade B-cell Lymphoma, NOS, with Blastoid Morphology, Leukemic Presentation, & Unusual Cytogenetics: A Dilemma in Classification, Prognosis, and Treatment*. Robert Wood, Jiao Liu, Matthew Hurford, Janet Schmid.

INTRODUCING THE DEPARTMENT OF PATHOLOGY AND LABORATORY MEDICINE FELLOWS AND RESIDENTS 2025- 2026



Younes Aljohmani, MD
PGY VI
Dermatopathology Fellow



Yazan Juma, MD
PGY VI
Hematopathology Fellow



Nathan Rinehouse, MD
PGY V
Cytopathology Fellow



Annette Hebert, MD
PGY IV
Chief Resident

Tulane University
Department of Pathology & Laboratory Medicine
Residents & Fellows

2025



2026



Sarah Lewis, DO
PGY IV
Chief Resident



Ghaidaa Majari, MD
PGY V



Ross Bonnot, MD
PGY IV



Yuhua Xue, MB, PhD
PGY IV



Phoenix Hwaung, MD
PGY III



Carlos Lopez, MD
PGY III



Farhanaz Panjshiri, MD
PGY III



Elizabeth Bozner, MD
PGY II



Austin Acks, MD
PGY I



Uyiosaifafa Oronsaye, MD
PGY I



Melinda Schnietz, MD
PGY I

The William H. Sternberg-Richard J. Reed Surgical Pathology Lecture Series



Dr. Beverly Wang

The Annual William H. Sternberg – Richard J. Reed Surgical Pathology Lecture Series took place on May 9, 2025. The Series pays homage to two trailblazing Pathologists who were part of Tulane University School of Medicine’s Department of Pathology: Drs. William H. Sternberg and Richard J. Reed. This year’s guest speaker was Dr. Beverly Wang, Chief of Anatomic Pathology and Vice Chair of Pathology, University of California at Irvine. After a microscope session with residents reviewing slide cases called, the “unknowns,” Dr. Wang delivered the featured lecture entitled, *Head and Neck Squamous Cell Carcinoma Updates: Clinical Consideration and PD-L1 Expression*.

Dr. Wang has many years of experience in clinico-pathological correlation of head and neck research including “Histologic assessment of risk in oral squamous cell carcinoma”. She has conducted several NIH funded translational research projects, including a). Mucosal melanoma of the head and neck; and b). Cohort study on oral squamous cell carcinoma involving multiple institutions. Her area of expertise is translational research correlated to head and neck pathology.

Since 2011, Dr. Wang has been named one of the Best Doctors, by New York Magazine; one of the New York Super Doctors, by Castle Connolly; and Top Doctors of New York Times Magazine. Since 2015, Dr. Wang has been named one of the Super Doctors in Southern California, by Los Angeles Times Magazine.

LAB PROFILE

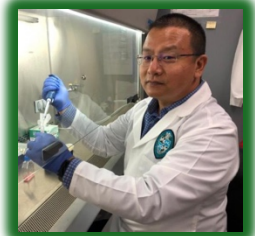
(Second Installment in a Continuing Series)

THE ZHEN LIN LABORATORY

Interview with Dr. Lin, Lab Director (seen right)

PATHWAYS: Describe your personal mission statement for your lab.

DR. LIN: My personal mission for the lab is to advance our understanding of virus-host interactions in cancer development, with the ultimate goal of translating these insights into novel diagnostic and therapeutic strategies. We are particularly interested in how DNA oncogenic viruses such as Epstein-Barr virus (EBV) and human papillomavirus (HPV) contribute to tumorigenesis through regulating non-coding RNA, genome instability, immune modulation, and metabolic reprogramming.



My long-term career goals are to become a leading expert in the EBV/HPV field and maintain a highly productive and high-quality research programs. The research being conducted in my laboratory is of high quality as evidenced by a number of publications in high impact journals such as PLoS Pathogens, Cancers, and Journals of Virology. I will continue to collaborate with leading experts in the virology and oncology fields, ultimately leading to discovery of critical oncogenic pathways and potential new therapeutic targets. My goals are to foster my existing collaborations and to initiate new collaborations with experts in the viral oncology field and become one of the leading experts.

PATHWAYS: Tell us about the roles your lab staff play and the research in which they're involved.

DR. LIN: I currently have two Postdoctoral Fellows contributing to our research programs. Dr. Janarhan Avilala, Ph.D., leads our HPV research program and plays a central role in developing our newly established primate-like small animal model (i.e., Chinese tree shrew) for EBV studies. Dr. Hirotomo Dochi, M.D., Ph.D., heads the EBV research program, with a focus on non-coding RNA-mediated genome instability. Both fellows are actively involved in experimental design, manuscript preparation, and mentoring junior members of the lab.

PATHWAYS: Describe the research you're doing and its goals. How far reaching is this?

DR. LIN: My research focuses on two human DNA tumor viruses: Human papillomavirus (HPV) and Epstein-Barr virus (EBV). I have been utilizing genome-wide molecular, biochemical, and bioinformatics-based strategies to identify and characterize targets and cell signaling pathways that are regulated by viral and cellular RNAs during the course of herpesvirus and papillomavirus infection and associated pathogenesis. Meanwhile, I am also interested in clinical translational research and try to develop new therapeutic approaches to treat virus-associated cancers and other diseases.

HPV research program: The central question I try to address in this research program is if HPV infection is causally associated with lung cancers (LCs) and if so, how HPV contributes to the lung carcinogenesis. I have been examining the hypothesis that HPV promotes lung oncogenesis by inducing a unique set of cancer driver mutations and/or by affecting cellular pathways through a synergistic expression of classic HPV oncogenes as well as novel identified viral circular RNAs. I believe that my research can provide solid evidence supporting a causal role of HPV in HIV associated LCs and obtain much needed, unprecedented insight into the unique mechanism underlying the HPV(+) LCs in HIV infected

individuals, which will be particularly significant for future patient care and disease management. This research program was initially supported by a 5-year research grant with a total cost of more than \$1 million as a part of an NIH P20 COBRE grant awarded in 2017. In 2021, I received another major grant from the National Cancer Institute (NCI). This 5-year R01 award allows me to further investigate the role of HPV in the development of HIV-associated LCs.

EBV research program: The central goal of this research project is to determine the precise role of EBV in the pathogenesis of its associated cancers including Lung Cancers, Gastric Cancers, Nasopharyngeal Carcinomas, and Lymphomas using our well-established sequencing-based approach as well as traditional molecular biology methods. My EBV research has been supported by an NIH/CRDF global grant (from November 2019 to March 2022). This research results from an international collaboration with Japan, Asia Pacific, and US teams. Since June 2022, my EBV research has been being supported by 4 separate extramural grants from the Ladies Leukemia League. I have been investigating the mechanism of EBV-mediated oncogenesis as well as testing new therapeutic agents to treat EBV-associated tumors. Recently, my collaboration with Dr. Hong Liu in the Department of Biochemistry allows us to charter a whole new area in EBV infection and tumorigenesis. We have been investigating a whole new species of non-coding RNA in EBV biology and pathogenesis.

Another exciting development is the establishment of a novel primate-like small animal model called Chinese tree shrew in my lab at Tulane. EBV has been known for long time to only infect human, which makes almost all the key research findings of EBV are derived from the in vitro cell culture. The new discovery that tree shrews are susceptible to EBV infection and EBV behaves similarly in tree shrews as in humans makes it a highly attractive animal model for EBV related cancer research. Currently, the tree shrew model is not commercially available. Fortunately, with the help of Dr. Joseph Wekselblatt at Caltech, we have established the first tree shrew colony in state of Louisiana (arguably the 2nd largest colony in the whole country). This project is also supported by Dr. Erik Flemington from the Pathology Department. With the advantages of both small animal (i.e., mice) and large animal (i.e., monkeys), we believe that this new primate-like small animal model will not only enhance our own EBV research program, but also benefit to the entire local research community who is interested in using this model for various types of research (e.g., cancer, aging, metabolism, infectious diseases, etc.).

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WELCOME

The Department is pleased to welcome two new members to the Pathologists' Assistant Program: Darryl Duncan [MHS, PA(ASCP), who will serve as the Director of the Pathologists' Assistant Program (seen below, left), and Charles L. Collins, M.D., Anatomic Pathologist and Instructor for the P.A. Program (right).



Farewell to COVID Warriors

On Friday, June 27, the Department of Pathology & Laboratory Medicine gathered in the Dunlap Library to celebrate the incredible contributions of Mala Ratnayaka, Nick Tran, and Thang Nguyen. As they embark on exciting new chapters beyond Tulane, we came together to honor their work, friendship, and the lasting impact they've had—especially through their dedication in the Covid Lab. Best of luck to Mala, Nick, and Thang—they'll always have a place in our Path family!

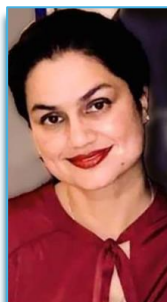
Below, left to right: Dr. Xiao-Ming Yin, Chair; Nick Tran; Mala Ratnayaka, Thang Nguyen, and Dr. Di Tian, Molecular Lab Director.



TULANE UNIVERSITY
PATHOLOGY & LABORATORY MEDICINE

ADMINISTRATIVE APPRECIATION LUNCHEON

Administrative Professionals Appreciation Luncheon was held May 1, 2025. Pictured from left to right, top: Nick Tran; Bea DeLucca; Jeanne Frois; Catherine Downs; Corlis Trepagnier. Bottom, left to right: Prabjot (Jyoti) Coonar; Evie Burguières; Brandi Johnson





All in good fun: Residents bestow humorous homemade awards to faculty members at the graduation ceremony: Top, left to right: Drs. Eddie Martin; Sarah Lewis, Tim Peterson; Annette Hebert; Alun Wang; guest; Dr. Lewis again, Bea DeLucca (Residency Program Coordinator) and Dr. Hebert. Below, left to right: Drs. Matthew Hurford; Akannsha Singh; Drs. Lewis; Ryan Craig; Ibrahim Aburiziq.

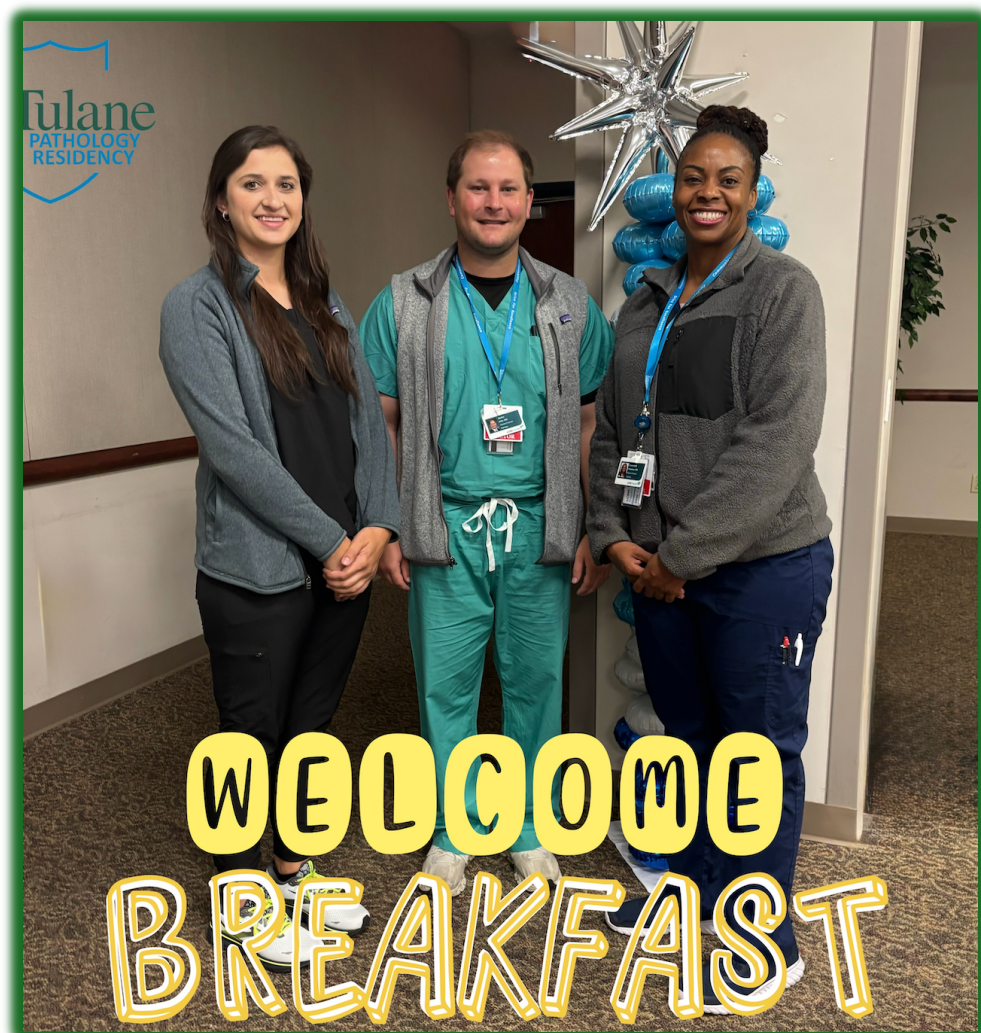


**Dr. Abida Kadi with
Dr. Annette Hebert**

NEW RESIDENTS WELCOME BREAKFAST

A welcome breakfast was held for the new residents joining the Pathology Department at East Jefferson Hospital on July 1, 2025, attended by faculty, residents and some staff members.

Pictured below, left to right: Drs. Melinda Schnietz; Austin Acks and Uyiosaifafa Oronsaye, all P.G.Y. I residents.



THE YEAR SO FAR, A RECAP OF DEPARTMENT MILESTONES

- The Department is pleased to announce that Dr. Chiung-Kuei Huang has been awarded a new five-year R01 grant from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), with full support for both direct and indirect costs. The grant will commence on May 2, 2025. We extend our congratulations to Dr. Huang on this significant achievement.
- NCI Awards R01 Grants to Drs. Wu and Zhang - Apr 23, 2025
The Department congratulates Drs. Tong Wu and Jinqiang Zhang for winning a competitive renewal of an R01 grant, and a new R01 grant, respectively. Both grants are awarded by NCI and have a term of 5 years with all direct and indirect costs supported, starting this January and April, respectively.
- **Dr. Xiao-Ming Yin for being elected 2024 Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science - Apr 7, 2025**
Congratulations to Dr. Xiao-Ming Yin for being elected 2024 Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), one of the most prestigious honors in the scientific community. Dr. Yin's research is focused on the molecular mechanisms of autophagy in tissue injury, cell death, and the translational aspect of tissue repair and cancer therapy.

Blood Donations Surge & TUSOM Pathology Steps Up Following Bourbon Street Attack - Jan 8, 2025

Following the tragic incident on Bourbon Street that claimed 14 lives and injured dozens, hundreds of New Orleanians stepped up to donate blood. Dr. Tim Peterson, Assistant Professor of the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine at Tulane University School of Medicine and Medical Director of The Blood Center, worked to capture the surge and praised the city's quick response. "We opened our Metairie center on New Year's Day and collected over 125 units of blood in just four hours," said Peterson. As the medical director of The Blood Center and East Jefferson General Hospital's blood bank, he oversees more than 80% of the state's blood supply. Thanks to the help of many, including Dr. Peterson, blood donated during the final days of 2024 helped stabilize patients rushed to UMC after the attack. Dr. Peterson hopes this surge inspires ongoing donor participation, noting, "If everyone who donates once a year donated twice, shortages could be eliminated." Dr. Peterson's dedication to transfusion medicine and emphasis on the lifesaving impact of blood donation exudes in his teachings to Tulane students and residents. To donate, visit [The Blood Center's website](#)

Both Clinical and Research Faculty have met to discuss the accomplishments and challenges this year has presented, as well as the achieving future goals.

PATHWAYS EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTORS



Dr. Ryan Craig



**Left to right: Bea DeLucca; Jeanne Frois;
Brandy DeLucca Richard and Evie Burguières**



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