Welcome to this quarter’s edition of UCF College of Medicine’s Faculty AcCOMplishments! This newsletter is designed to highlight our faculty’s hard work and dedication to the medical field and the value it adds to our university and community. In addition to highlighting these endeavors, the content also acts as a resource for research collaborations and interests among fellow faculty members. Take a few moments to discover the amazing contributions that our faculty have accomplished.

FEATURED ARTICLE

Dr. Sharon Wasserstrom, one of UCF Health’s top physicians and sole faculty certified in Lifestyle Medicine, has recently been named Medical Director for the new and upcoming Lake Nona Performance Club (LNPC). The club is planned to open virtually as early as January 2021, with a soft opening date set for August 2021. It will serve as a one-stop place for a holistic approach to promoting overall wellness which has the potential of impactful outcomes.

Dr. Wasserstrom and Jay Groves, the Executive Director of the LNPC, met at the Lake Nona Impact Forum last year. Their passion and support for Lifestyle Medicine led them to discover that both the LNPC and UCF College of Medicine share the same strategic goals and initiatives.

“Lifestyle medicine is all about the study of lifestyle changes and how they impact wellness,” Dr Wasserstrom states. “It plays an integral role in preventing, treating, and even reversing diseases. The pillars of Lifestyle Medicine include proper nutrition, exercise, reduced stress, sufficient sleep, and positive social connections. The LNPC is founded on these same principles, offering services that will help optimize these pillars. The club will offer programs available to club members, as well as participants referred for group visits, helping those with specific health conditions make impactful lifestyle changes.”
“It’s important for all health practitioners to be well-versed in Lifestyle Medicine techniques so that they can educate and empower their patients to make lifestyle changes and promote overall wellness,” Dr. Wasserstrom emphasizes. “Lake Nona was built on the premise of lifestyle health, bringing wellness to the community, and being an example of what wellness means.”

The LNPC further encompasses and highlights this mission, providing all the components of wellness under one roof. When you will walk into the club, you will enter a communal space that provides an array of interrelated components of wellness. In addition to providing in-depth overall performance assessments with the most state-of-the-art equipment and trained staff, the center will offer exercise classes (such as yoga, Pilates, and Tai Chi), mindful meditation, and feature a culinary demonstration kitchen. They will have highly trained physical therapists and a nutritionist on staff, providing members with invaluable knowledge and support to create sustainable change. Small group programs will be available to both participants and the public, running for approximately eight weeks to help participants restore health while living with certain health conditions. The club will also be hosting a number of partnered community events, free to the public.

Furthermore, the club is collaborating with the UCF College of Medicine to provide opportunities for medical students to gain hands-on learning experience to practice empowering participants to embrace lifestyle changes. The students can explore various health and learning strategies of Lifestyle Medicine to restore health and discover first-hand how lifestyle changes impact patients. “It is going to be wonderful to have all of the components of wellness in one building,” Dr. Wasserstrom emphasizes. “The LNPC’s goal is to transform one community at a time. It’s not just a gym membership. It’s so much more.”

Dr. Wasserstrom’s role as the LNPC’s Medical Director will help provide medical direction and oversight for the club regarding guidelines, policies, standards, and safety procedures. She will also serve as Co-Chair of the LNPC Medical Advisory Council, comprised of local health professionals tasked with community and medical programming. She will act as an expert resource for other health professionals regarding impactful Lifestyle Medicine evidence-based programs and the LNPC’s integrative approach.

“I’m thrilled to take a leadership role in the new Lake Nona Performance Center. The club aligns with my own personal experience and values, as well as Lake Nona Tavistock’s mission of community wellness. Promoting wellness is the key to turning the tide from excessive chronic disease and relying on medication and procedures. We aim instead to find a way to restore wellness for patients, participants, and local community members. I felt inspired and hopeful at the discovery of this new club opening in Lake Nona. I immediately felt a call to action to promote the importance of maximizing citizens’ lifestyles using the pillars of lifestyle medicine all in one central place.”


FACULTY PUBLICATIONS


FACULTY PRESENTATIONS

Azarfar A, Bég S. Cough as a Presentation of Polymyalgia Rheumatica. Poster accepted at Congress of Clinical Rheumatology, Destin, August 2020.


Denise, K. Invited Presentation: Using Technology to Increase Student (and Faculty Satisfaction with) Engagement in Medical Education, Eastern Virginia Medical School. 2020.


FACULTY PRESENTATIONS


AWARDS, SERVICE & RECOGNITION

- Cyrus Elena
  Co-PI for grant for Examining the impact of macro and ecological disparities on COVID-19 health related outcomes in the United States; NIMHD. (September 2020)

- Denise Kay, Andrea Berry & Nicholas A. Coles
  Received the Teaching and Learning in Medicine 6th Annual Editor’s Choice Award for What Experiences in Medical School Trigger Professional Identity Development?

- Gorman, Laurel
  ◇ Received service award from the ASPET Division of Pharmacology Education for professional service and leadership. September 2020.
AWARDS, SERVICE & RECOGNITION

- **Hines, Robin**

- **Karasik, Olga**
  Selected to serve on the AAIM Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force

- **Li, Xiaoman (Shawn)**
  Received 3 year NSF grant for Informatics: An Integrative Study of Distal Gene Regulation

- **Rahman, Saleh**
  ◦ Received $20,000 UCF grant for Retrospective Epidemiological Study on COVID-19: Disparities in Diagnostic and Clinical Outcomes in Hospitalized Patients
  ◦ Selected as Diversity, Anti-Racism, Inclusion, Value and Health Equity (DRIVE) Task Force Member for Nemours Children’s Health System

- **Siddiqi, Shadab**
  Received NIH grant award for Regulation of VLDL Transport and Secretion

- **Singla, Dinender**
  Received NIH supplement award for project “Amelioration of Doxorubicin Induced Muscle Dysfunction with Embryonic Stem Cell-Derived Exosomes”

- **Taliaferro, Lindsay**
  ◦ 2019 NIH Sexual & Gender Minority Early Stage Investigator Award, Sexual & Gender Minority Research Office
  ◦ NIH R01 Grant, "Social Connections Preventing Suicide Ideation During Developmental Transitions among Young Sexual Minority Women"
  ◦ COM ADR Research Award, "Mobile App for Youth Suicide Prevention: Development and Preliminary Evaluation"

- **Tigno-Aranjuez, Justine**
  Received grant award for Negative Regulation of Allergic Asthma by LMAN1, a Novel Receptor for House Dust Mite from American Lung Association

- **Verduin, Marcy**
  Reappointed to 3 year term as AAMC Group on Student Affairs (GSA) representative to the NBME Advisory Committee for Medical School Programs.

- **Wasserstrom, Sharon**
  Selected to be the inaugural Medical Director for the upcoming Lake Nona Performance Club