

Obstetrics & Gynecology NEWSLETTER

SCIENCE FEATURE:

Advancing Maternal & Child Health: A Celebration of Innovation showcases Impactful Research and Interventions—

On Thursday, March 20, 2025, the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin (AHW) Endowment hosted an event that brought together healthcare professionals, researchers, and community partners committed to improving maternal and child health outcomes across Wisconsin.



The day opened with remarks from Dr. Ugwuji Maduekwe, who highlighted the impact of federal funding and shared insight. Dr. Anna Palatnik delivered the keynote on "Equity-Focused Interventions in Improving Maternal Health Outcomes," addressing disparities in maternal health and showcasing current equity-driven efforts at MCW and across the region.

Presentations from our department included:

- * Improving Maternal Health with the Focus on the Fourth Trimester, by Natasha Griffin, M.Ed.
- * Increasing Access to Pregnancy Care through Mobile Clinics by Laurie Diske, MSN, MBA, RN
- * Developing Perinatal Trauma-Informed Care Curriculum for Obstetric Clinicians and Staff by Abbey Kruper, PsyD
- * Preconception Health and Contraception Education among High School Students by Nadia Tabit
- * Postpartum Management of Preeclampsia by Nadine Sunji, MD
- * Building Trust and Uniting Teams through Doula by Erica Marion, PhD

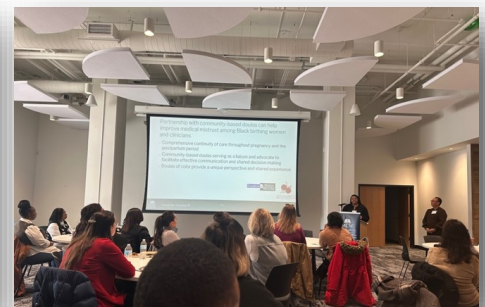
Welcome to the Spring 2025 OBGYN NEWSLETTER

I'm excited to share the Spring 2025 Department of OBGYN newsletter. With the addition of new faculty and APPs, we've expanded our clinical presence across Southeast Wisconsin. We invite you to learn more about the unique backgrounds and expertise each new team member brings to our department.

In this edition, you'll find highlights from the recent Women's Health conference and the Advancing Maternal & Child Health: A Celebration of Innovation event, along with photos of our faculty and staff both at work and at leisure. Additionally, the newsletter includes updates on new clinical trials, faculty accomplishments, and upcoming events.

We'd love to hear from you—please let us know if you plan to visit the Milwaukee area!

Janet S. Rader, MD
she/her
Jack A. and Elaine D. Klieger
Professor and Chair
Department of Obstetrics and
Gynecology
Associate Director, CRTEC
Medical College of Wisconsin
Cancer Center



NEW GRANT:

- **Co-PI—Emily Davidson, MD:** National Institute of Diabetes, Digestive and Kidney Diseases Mechanism (NIH) - 1R01DK139030-01A — Mechanisms of Improving Fecal Continence Muscles Motor Function in Health and Disease

NEW CLINICAL TRIAL:

- **PI: Elizabeth Hopp, MD — GOG-3104-GILEAD-GS-US-682-6769:** A Randomized, Open-label, Phase 3 Study of Sacituzumab Govitecan Versus Treatment of Physician's Choice in Participants With Endometrial Cancer Who Have Received Prior Platinum-based Chemotherapy and Anti-PD-1/PD-L1 Immunotherapy.

CLINICAL TRIAL NEWS:

- **GOG 3037** clinical trial received shout out from sponsor acknowledging positive results and MCW being one of the highest enrollers in the US.
- **Brock Polnaszek, MD**, selected as a secondary site investigator for **NIH REPAIR Study**.

Maternal Mobile Clinic featured on TMJ4 —

TMJ4 spoke with Goodman-Johnson about the importance of the Maternal Mobile Clinic. She shared the 'why' behind it is all in the numbers.



"Numbers don't lie, and numbers are higher in these black and brown communities, specifically in the city of Milwaukee, where things can get segregated," said Goodman-Johnson. "So, we were really strategic in our placements in the community. We researched different ZIP Codes where moms were least likely to get their OB care, prenatal or postpartum, and we planted the mobile clinic with some community organizations."

GRANT HIGHLIGHT:

Erica McKinney, PhD, recipient of the TEMPO Foundation Professional Training Grant—

The Institute for Creative Mindfulness: EMDR Therapy Training for BIPOC Clinicians program. EMDR therapy is an evidenced based therapy used to treat PTSD and other forms of human distress connected to trauma and adverse life experiences. This training program is unique as there is a special emphasis on the experiences and contributions of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian and other traditionally underrepresented persons of color) providers, patients and other related professionals.



WELCOME NEW FACULTY:

Weichao "Vera" Chen, PhD
— Assistant Professor in Education, joining us from American College of Surgeons.

WELCOME ADVANCED PRACTICE CLINICIAN:

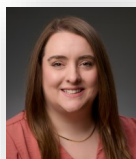
Nina Adams, NP — Nurse Practitioner in GynOnc, joining us from Aurora HealthCare.

WELCOME NEW STAFF:

Timothy Akhalu — Maternal-Fetal Medicine Research Program Coordinator.



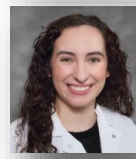
Ailing Tong — Research Associate in Dr. Liang Liang's lab.



Ashley Smith — Research Scientist in Dr. Bill Chen's lab.



Sonya Carpenter, RN — GynOnc Research Nurse.



Alexia Castillo — Research Scientist in Dr. Liang Liang's lab.



Chetan Patil — Research Scientist in Dr. Liang Liang's lab.

*Celebration of Employees:*

- **Kelly Morey—30 years**
- **Melissa Knabe —15 years**
- **Kendra Eaves—10 years**
- **Meghan Ritchie—10 years**
- **Carissa Aboubakare, NP —5 years**
- **Ashley Boehrig, NP —5 years**
- **Jamie Harriman, CGC—5 years**
- **Libby Woodard, CNM—5 years**

Congratulations to Kelly Morey on an incredible milestone—30 years of dedicated service as our Education Program Coordinator! Your unwavering commitment, passion for learning, and tireless support have shaped countless lives and inspired generations. Your leadership, heart, and professionalism continue to set the standard. Thank you for all you do!

✓ MARK YOUR CALENDARS:**June 20, 2025: Resident and Fellow Graduation***The Wisconsin Country Club***June 25, 2025: Resident and Fellow
Research & Alumni Day***MCW Alumni Center***April 17, 2026: Annual Women's Health
Conference**

TBA

In the NEWS :

- **Erica McKinney, PhD**, was a panelist for "The Black Birth Collection" panel discussion on "Reclaiming our Birth Experience."
- **Timothy Akhalu**, Project Manager, was interviewed by Fox 32 Chicago talking about why self-care matters for those who give their to others.



To support our department in research or education, visit our website at <https://obgyn.mcw.edu/about-us/philanthropy/> or call (414) 955-4711 to donate.

DEPARTMENT NEWS:

- **Camilla Dagum, MD, GynOnc Fellow**, presented a virtual poster on "Identifying extracellular vesicle-based biomarkers that distinguish responders from non-responders in EndoBARR clinical trial patients" at the SGO annual meeting. Coauthors for the abstract & poster were Mona Singh, PhD, William Bradley, MD, and Sunila Pradeep, PhD.
- **Camilla Dagum, MD**, abstract accepted for online publication for ASCO 2025 meeting on "Characterizing platinum resistance in recurrent endometrial cancer: a retrospective cohort study". Coauthors are Mitchell Depke; Brittany Derynda; Emmy Lambert; Nathan Deep; Carolyn Storch; Melodee Liegl; Amy Pan; Elizabeth Hopp.
- **Alina Tvina, MD** presented a poster on "Fetal anatomic survey is less likely to be completed within standard gestational age window for patients with BMI > 40kg/m²" at the 2025 Society of Maternal Fetal Medicine. Coauthors were Meredith Cruz, Rachel Knoebl, Faith Bobholz, Madalyn Welch, Anna Palatnik.
- **Alina Tvina, MD** presented her poster on "P197 Identification and Characterization of Rho-related BTB Domain Containing 1 (RhoBTB1)-Cullin 3 (CUL3) Proteins in Placenta" at the 2024 American Heart Association Hypertension Conference. Coauthors were Guarav Kumar, Ko ting Lu, Jennifer McIntosh, Curt Sigmund.
- **Brock Polnaszek, MD**, selected as Editorial Board Member of AJOG-MFM.
- **Kaila Harold**, MCW student, received The Dr. and Mrs. Jack A. Klieger Endowed Award

WELCOME RESIDENT CLASS OF 2029:



Samantha Boettcher, MD
Medical College of Wisconsin



Hannah Coggeshall, MD
University of Kansas School of Medicine



Reese Jacobson, MD
Medical College of Wisconsin

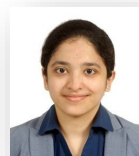


Sarani Pachalla, MD
University of Kansas School of Medicine



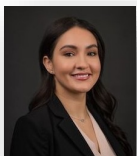
Nadine Sunji, MD
American University of Beirut

WELCOME GYNONC FELLOW CLASS OF 2028:



Dr. Alka Bapat from Icahn
School of Medicine at Mount Si-
nai, Queens Hospital Center

WELCOME MFM FELLOW CLASS OF 2028:



Dr. Sanela Potchileev from The
University of Chicago

DEPARTMENT NEWS Cont'd:

- **Camilla Dagum, MD**, presented a speed poster at the 2025 MCW Cancer Center Trainee Symposium—poster/abstract is entitled "Identifying pathways affected by EndoBARR triplet therapy for endometrial cancer via patient extracellular vesicle analysis". Mentor is Sunila Pradeep, PhD.
- **Anupama Nair, PhD**, in Pradeep Chaluvally-Raghavan's lab, received the Best Poster Award for her work on "immune evasion mechanisms in cancer" for the category of postdoctoral fellows' competition conducted part of MCW Cancer's Trainee Research Symposium.
- ACOG invited **Dr. Klatt** to join their Grievance Committee – reviews and evaluates grievances regarding professional conduct of Fellows that may violate the College's code of professional ethics, College bylaws or College policies.

Resident News:

- **Micaela Stevenson, MD ('25)**, has been nominated to be on the board of the recurrent pregnancy loss association (RPLA)

ALUMNI CORNER:

We'd like to hear from you! Please
send us your
updates to:

obgynresidency@mcw.edu

DEPARTMENT NEWS CONT'D:

- **Sonam Mittal, PhD**, received the Best Poster Award at 34th MCW Graduate School Symposium held on Nov 18, 2024 for “Metabolic reprogramming in macrophages through extracellular vesicle loaded eIF4E in ovarian cancer.”
- **Leah Gerlach**, MCW student, received The Dr. John J. and Joan M. Brennan Endowed Award in Obstetrics and Gynecology.
- Meenakshi Pradeep, a high school student at the Eisenhower High School’s work performed under the mentorship of **Dr. Akinyemi Ojesina**, was selected for Best Poster Award (high school category) at the MCW Cancer Center Trainee Symposium. Meenakshi’s work was on the “identification of novel biomarkers for ovarian cancer”.
- **Pradeep Chaluvally-Raghavan, PhD**, selected for the American Cancer Society’s Extramural Discovery Science Accelerator award for our research on Oncostatin M Receptor antibody drug conjugate development and validation.
- **Dr. Gecsi** opened “Intimate Partner Violence Screening in an Obstetrics Clinic: A Retrospective Study”



- **Morgan Armstrong and Samantha Stachowiak**, certified genetic counselors, featured in The Word on Medicine’s Breast Cancer and Genetics radio program.
- **Dr. Libby Hopp** featured in Tosa Living Magazine for participating in Running Towards a Cure – A Ray of Hope Event.
- **Anna Palatnik, MD**, receives The Julia A. Uihlein, MD, Dean of the School of Medicine’s CTSI Award – Breakthrough in translational science.
- **Dr. Prerna Pandya** was accepted to the national AUGS CME Committee and **Dr. Emily Davidson** was accepted to the national AUGS Coding Committee.
- **Carissa Aboubakare, NP**, was chosen to be this year’s Chair of the AUGS APP Course.
- **Dr. Liang** organizer of Gordon Research Conference “The Interaction Between Humans, Lifestyles and the Environment Viewed through Metabolism”
- **Dr. Kruper** Primary Academic Partner for Nourishing Futures: Enhancing Maternal Child Health through Nutrition and Education—WMJ Journal – 2024 volume 123 Issue 6
- **Dr. Kruper and Erica Marion, PhD**, “Pregnant Women Perceptions of Cannabinoid Use in Milwaukee, Wisconsin”
- **Dr. Dielentheis** “Gravid Hysterectomy in the Setting of Placenta Increta at 12 Weeks Gestation”
- **Drs. Schoyer and Gunderson** “The Perceptions of Infertility Patients Regarding the COVID-19 Vaccine: A Mixed Methods Analysis of Patient Readiness”

**Stay in touch and
follow us!**

Have something to share?

Send it our way!

mcwobgyn@mcw.edu



PUBLICATIONS:

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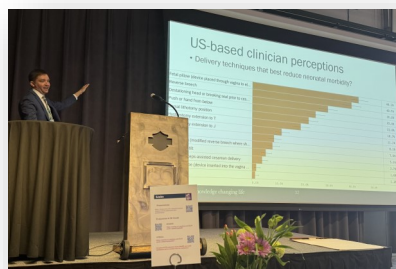
DEPARTMENT WINTER BALL—January 25:

We hosted a department winter ball this past January at the Harley Davidson Museum. It was well attended by our faculty, clinicians, researchers and staff in our department.



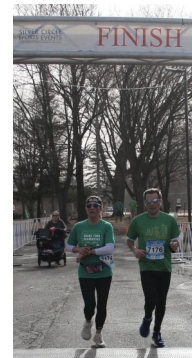
WOMEN’S ANNUAL HEALTH CONFERENCE 2025:

We hosted another successful Women’s Health Conference at the Harley Davidson Garage on April 11th. The day was packed with education—we heard from a variety of speakers on a range of topics very relevant to providers caring for the people in our community. We were able to review best practices in obstetric care, gyn cancer care, optimization of mental health needs in the face of infertility, care for a gender diverse patient population, and provider self-care. It was a great day of building professional community through energizing and engaging speakers. We look forward to this day every year, and are already planning for next years event!



PERSONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS OR NEWS:

Theresa Dlugi, Research Associate, participated in the local Chilly Willy Winter run series and ran two 5K races, four 10K races and one half-marathon (13.1 miles in a 0 degree Fahrenheit windchill) between November and March. I finished in the top 3 of my age group/division in each race and accumulated enough points to finish first in my division for the whole series.



Drs. Mona Farez, Christine Pando, Allie Linton, Morgan Briggs and Amy Domeyer ran the Brew City Half Marathon in Milwaukee.

