

Focus on UCSF Fresno

February 2022

Teach

Internship Seeks to Diversify Surgery Workforce in the Valley



Students from the Pre-medical Surgical Internship (PSI) program

By Barbara Anderson

A Pre-medical Surgical Internship (PSI) program, started and developed by faculty in the UCSF Fresno Department of Surgery for students from diverse backgrounds and groups traditionally underrepresented in medicine, has welcomed its inaugural class and introduced a curriculum to prepare students to apply and successfully enroll in medical school.

The class of six PSI students are from the San Joaquin Valley and were selected from 100 applicants for the seven-month intensive internship. PSI is a subcommittee of the Intentional Recruitment Coalition (IRC) established in September 2020 by UCSF Fresno surgeons to increase diversity in the physician workforce to meet the needs of the patient population, and in so doing improve health in the Valley.

“It’s hard to get into medical school and sometimes you need programs like this to help with your CV (curriculum vitae),” said Kamell Eckroth-Bernard, MD, FACS, a UCSF Fresno residency program alumnus, vascular surgeon and UCSF associate professor of surgery. “Having this internship on your résumé when you apply to medical school will be a big plus,” he said.

Some students in the current PSI class will be applying to medical school this year. Each student receives a \$1,000 stipend, with the possibility of another \$1,000 to help offset costs of Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) preparatory courses. The IRC is sponsoring a [golf tournament on March 26](#) at the Dragonfly Golf Club in Madera to raise funds for PSI.

Yazen Qumsiyeh, MD, a fourth-year resident in the UCSF surgery program, is leading the PSI subcommittee and developed its curriculum. Dr. Qumsiyeh emigrated to the United States with his family as a young teenager and remembers his own struggles as a pre-medical student. “I took ideas from my own experiences and other programs I have been involved with in the past,” he said.

The PSI curriculum introduces students to medical and surgical topics, such as suturing and knot tying and the interns are taught skills to help their candidacies to medical school: interviewing, personal statement writing, time management, mechanisms for coping with stress and mentorship building. The curriculum also includes discussions about health needs. “The curriculum is designed to get them to think about things I feel are not always talked about in medical school – health inequities, disparities, professionalism and communication skills,” Dr. Qumsiyeh said. “Introducing these topics early on will really make these students stand out in the future,” he said.

“We wanted to make sure we weren’t just talking about medical topics, surgical topics,” Dr. Eckroth-Bernard said. “We wanted to make sure the students had exposure to more than that because the whole process of getting into medical school is not just about medicine,” he said. “Medical schools want to see applicants who are well-rounded. They want to see people who aren’t just doing science all the time.”

PSI interns were to shadow UCSF Fresno surgeons on shifts in the hospital, but the program had to be modified because of COVID-19 restrictions. Instead, UCSF Fresno surgeons and residents are volunteering more time to give lectures. Sammy Siada, DO, RPVI, a UCSF Fresno vascular surgeon and UCSF Health Sciences assistant clinical professor, gave a presentation on an introduction to vascular surgery and a separate lecture on social determinants of health (conditions in the environment such as economic stability, education access and quality, health care access and quality, racism, and discrimination that have a major impact on people’s health). “It’s important for faculty to participate because these pre-medical surgical interns are eager to learn what medicine and surgery have to offer and need role models in medicine and surgery to help them along the arduous career path of becoming a physician,” Dr. Siada said.

“It’s very inspiring to see the speakers who come out each week and speak to us,” said PSI intern Karina Peterson, 28, of Fresno. Peterson is the first in her family to have a college degree and to hold a military rank. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in public health from Fresno State and is a U.S. Army drill sergeant in the Army Reserves. She is working on her master’s degree in

public health and is employed by Central California Faculty Medical Group as a medical scribe through a UCSF Fresno-led program at Community Regional Medical Center. The PSI program has given her “more direction and more information about a medical career” in her future, she said.

The internship has helped Gabriela Lopez Ruano of Modesto, gain insight to different specialties in medicine. She has enjoyed interacting with medical students, residents and attending physicians. “I am learning about resources, opportunities, and pathways that I can take advantage of to be successful in medicine,” she said. Lopez Ruano has a Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry from UC Irvine. She is a first-generation college graduate and the first in her family to pursue medicine.

Alexa Valladolid, 22, of Modesto, is grateful for the PSI program. “And I do think it’s going to make a difference in the San Joaquin Valley to increase the physician workforce and make more students from underrepresented backgrounds stay on this path,” she said. Valladolid graduated this past August from UC San Diego with a Bachelor of Science degree in global health. She is the first-generation in her family to graduate from college. Her goal is to apply to medical school next spring and to return, after graduation, to UCSF Fresno for residency.

The UCSF Fresno PSI program to help pre-medical students successfully enroll in medical school is needed in the San Joaquin Valley, which has one of the lowest ratios of physicians to patients, Dr. Qumsiyeh said. “Physicians who are from here are more likely to come back and work here – and they understand the community more than anyone.”



Pulmonary-Critical Care Specialists at UCSF Fresno Provide Latest and Best Therapies for Thousands of Critically Ill COVID-19 Patients

Patient Nat DiBuduo thanking Mohamed Fayed, MD

By Barbara Anderson

UCSF Fresno pulmonary and critical care specialists have been on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic since it started, providing the latest and best therapies available for thousands of critically ill patients in the San Joaquin Valley.

“We’re talking about a really, really huge number of patients,” said Mohamed Fayed, MD, a UCSF Fresno pulmonologist and critical care physician who estimates he has taken care of between 5,000 and 7,000 patients infected with COVID-19.

COVID-19 can damage lungs, causing mild to severe breathing problems and pneumonia and requiring the skills of lung specialists for treatment and care. Patients often require oxygen, either through a nasal cannula (low flow oxygen) or in severe cases patients can require high flow oxygen or pressurized air with a mask (non-invasive mechanical ventilation). The most seriously ill can develop worsening acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) requiring invasive mechanical ventilation, where the lungs are seriously damaged.

In the most severe cases when mechanical ventilation is not enough, some patients are given ExtraCorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO) to support the lungs and allow time for lungs to heal. UCSF Fresno pulmonary and critical care physicians at Community Regional Medical Center (CRMC) are the only dedicated ECMO team in the San Joaquin Valley for adult patients. Over the past two years, the team has placed 55 patients with COVID-19 on ECMO. “It’s all

about how much support the patient needs,” Dr. Fayed said. “It really makes us happy to be able to help people to that degree.”

UCSF Fresno pulmonologists have treated COVID-19 patients as young as 18 to as old as 99 years of age – pregnant women, breastfeeding moms. “We’ve seen everything,” Dr. Fayed said. Patients receive care specific to the severity of the illness. Dr. Fayed may see a patient who is stable once a day, but a sicker patient may have four visits and he can see a patient on ECMO as many as eight times in a day. Typically, patients who have underlying health conditions, such as diabetes, heart disease, liver disease and people over age 65 are more vulnerable to serious illness with COVID-19 and require more care.

Nat DiBuduo, 71, of Fresno knew he would be at risk for lung complications from COVID-19, and he thought, “if I was to get COVID, I wouldn’t have good results.” But he had a good outcome in December 2020, and he credits Dr. Fayed. “As far as I am concerned, he saved my life.”

DiBuduo had moderately severe COVID-19, needing oxygen and medication therapy. He was given dexamethasone, a corticosteroid, to help reduce inflammation in his lungs; and his therapy included remdesivir, an anti-viral medication, Dr. Fayed said. Remdesivir is widely used as a COVID-19 therapy now, and this is largely due to research early in the pandemic led by Eyad Almasri, MD, UCSF Fresno assistant dean of research and pulmonary and critical care specialist. UCSF Fresno investigators have been involved in dozens of COVID-19 clinical trials over the past two years and an arsenal of new drug therapies is now available to fight COVID-19 infections, including options of oral medications for outpatients. UCSF Fresno currently has five COVID-19 clinical trials for patients in the hospital and has one trial for outpatients, Dr. Fayed said.

“All of the tools we have now have definitely improved the outcomes for patients,” Dr. Fayed said. “Without these medications, we would have had more harm and more deaths in patients.”

Some COVID-19 patients have been caught off-guard by how quickly COVID-19 can affect oxygen levels in the blood and wait longer than they should to seek care, Dr. Fayed said. “By the time the patients come to us, the disease is advanced in their lungs,” he said.

DiBuduo thankfully sought care early. He and his wife got COVID-19 after returning home from a weeklong vacation at Newport Beach, Calif, in December 2020. (Vaccines for COVID-19 were not yet available.) The DiBuduos now are fully vaccinated and received booster shots from the UCSF Fresno Mobile Heal COVID-19 Equity Project (CEP).

The couple were careful on vacation, wearing N95 masks and eating out only a couple of times at outdoor restaurant settings, but within days of being home, they had symptoms of COVID-19. “I was coughing and had respiratory difficulty breathing,” he said. “My wife’s symptoms were total fatigue, muscle pain, joint pain, headaches, sensitivity to light.” She did not need hospital care, but DiBuduo’s difficulty breathing worsened. He used a home pulse oximeter to monitor his blood oxygen levels. When the levels consistently dropped into the 80s (95% to 100% is considered normal), he went to the emergency department at CRMC.

His decision to go to the hospital likely spared DiBuduo from having to be on a high-pressure oxygen mask or on a ventilator – and averted a lengthy hospital stay. “He presented with low oxygen, but the degree of severity wasn’t too bad,” Dr. Fayed said. “He needed nasal oxygen only.”

DiBuduo, a Valley native with long-time ties to farming and winemaking, had family and friends praying for his recovery – and for Dr. Fayed, too. DiBuduo went home after a week in the hospital. “I asked (Dr. Fayed) to get me home for Christmas and he got me out of there on December 23. So, he held up his part of the promise,” DiBuduo said. “He’s a very busy doctor but he’s given us the personal attention we very much appreciate.”

Helping COVID-19 patients have successful recoveries is gratifying for Dr. Fayed. Providing the latest and best therapy for each patient is what he and colleagues at UCSF Fresno strive to do every day, he said. “We want to make sure that everyone has access to the best care.”

Research

UCSF Fresno Infectious Diseases Specialist Among Nationwide Group of Investigators to Review Immunodulatory Therapies for COVID-19



Almira Opardija, MD

By Barbara Anderson

A review of clinical trials of immunodulatory agents for limiting the body's inflammatory response to SARS-CoV-2 concluded there was convincing evidence for the beneficial use of corticosteroids in the treatment of COVID-19. However, developments in therapeutics for COVID-19 are happening rapidly, said Almira Opardija, MD, a UCSF Fresno infectious disease specialist who participated in the review.

“New information is coming out every day about therapies for COVID-19, and we were looking at trials that were present at the time,” said Dr. Opardija, faculty in the UCSF Fresno Department of Internal Medicine, Division of Infectious Diseases. Dr. Opardija was invited to participate in the review by Zelalem Temesgen, MD, FIDSA, at Mayo Clinic. She was one of seven investigators from institutions across the country who conducted the review, “Investigational Immunodulatory Therapies for COVID-19,” that was submitted May 20, 2021, and revised July 6, 2021, for publication in “Drugs of the Future 2021.”

The review, for example, did not include Sotrovimab, a monoclonal antibody for COVID-19 that has been shown to reduce risk of hospitalization and death by 85% compared with a placebo, Dr. Opardija said. “This one is important, as there is belief it works versus Omicron. We didn't know about Omicron at the time of the review.”

Therapeutics for COVID-19 fall into two main categories: immunodulatory agents that address the inflammatory response to the virus, and antiviral agents that limit replication of the virus in the body. The investigators looked at data on a dozen immunodulatory therapies. Dr. Opardija had responsibility for the section of the review on interferons, a group of proteins produced in cells in the body during an inflammatory response to a viral infection. The conclusion: “Even though they are fascinating, and I believe there is still more we need to learn about them; they are not recommended at this point,” Dr. Opardija said.

The review included summaries on a dozen immunodulatory agents: anti-interleukin agents, corticosteroids, immune globulin, convalescent plasma, monoclonal antibodies, anti-IL-1-agents, Janus kinase inhibitors, interferons, GM-CSF, anti-GM-CSF monoclonal antibodies, C-C chemokine receptor type 5 (CCR5) and CCR2 antagonists.

No one should read the review and think there will be nothing to add, change or subtract, but the summaries can provide a helpful tool for organizing immunodulatory therapeutics by their mechanism of action, reason for selecting them, and concerns about safety and drug interactions, Dr. Opardija said. “It helps me compartmentalize these therapeutics and makes it easier to add a new agent because you can plug it into one of the categories.”

Academic training programs have a responsibility to advance medical knowledge to improve health outcomes, said Michael W. Peterson, MD, MACP, UCSF Fresno Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education and Research. “We are very proud of the expansion of research at UCSF Fresno over the last three years including a significant role in expanding our knowledge in diagnosing and treating COVID-19 infections. Dr. Opardija's publication is an example of the outstanding work that faculty and trainees at UCSF Fresno have accomplished and are continuing to produce.”



UCSF Fresno and American Ambulance Partner for Award-Winning Educational Emergency Medical Services Podcast

American Ambulance Podcast (photo by John-Mark Bergen)

By Barbara Anderson

A unique podcast for paramedics and EMTs (emergency medical technicians) produced by American Ambulance and hosted by UCSF Fresno Emergency Medicine physicians has won statewide acclaim and drawn listeners from as far away as Alaska and Australia.

The [American Ambulance EMS podcast](#) received the California Ambulance Association Services Excellence (CAASE) Award for Innovation in EMS in 2021, and an episode about amputations ranked among the [Top 12 podcasts in 2021](#).



Danielle Campagne, MD, FACEP, vice chair of Emergency Medicine at UCSF Fresno

The Innovation Award recognized the unique partnership between American Ambulance and UCSF Fresno physicians Danielle Campagne, MD, FACEP, vice chair of Emergency Medicine at UCSF Fresno, UCSF associate professor of Emergency Medicine and American Ambulance medical director; Patil Armenian, UCSF associate professor of Emergency Medicine and co-director of Toxicology at UCSF Fresno; and Saajan Bhakta, DO, UCSF Fresno fourth-year Emergency Medicine resident. “I listen to a lot of EMS (Emergency Medical Services) podcasts and sometimes they include the medical director, but I have not found one with three physicians dedicated to each and every podcast,” said Steve Melander, chief operations officer at American Ambulance.

The podcast has been well received, Melander said. “What makes it so good is you have those three physicians with various backgrounds and experiences.”

Melander got the idea of starting an EMS podcast two years ago. He had been looking for a new way for EMS field staff to receive educational information. He pitched the idea of a podcast to Dr. Campagne, who initially hesitated. “I am not a techy,” she explained. But she mentioned the concept to her colleague, Dr. Armenian. “I love podcasts and I listen to podcasts all of the time,” Dr. Armenian said. “I told Dr. Campagne, ‘we’re doing the podcast and I’m doing it with you.’” The professors brought aboard Dr. Bhakta, who has an interest in pre-hospital and disaster medicine – and who is an avid podcast listener. Melander tapped John-Mark Bergen, multi-media arts specialist at American Ambulance, to produce the podcast.

The first episode of American Ambulance EMS aired in April 2020 – a month after the World Health Organization proclaimed COVID-19 a pandemic. “It was perfect timing for what we needed for EMS education locally and nationally,” said Dr. Campagne. “We can’t get people in a room together and it is difficult to coordinate schedules to do EMS education on Zoom.” Field staff can listen to episodes on shifts while driving or at times of their convenience. Episodes are recorded in the ambulance company’s conference room, which has space for the physicians to maintain social distance. “The mics are spread out as far as they can and still be plugged into my computer,” Bergen said. “And we’re all masked up,” said Dr. Armenian.

The physicians had recorded 60 episodes as of December 2021. They record up to three episodes at one sitting and take turns as content director. Research is done for each topic and an outline of the contents is created prior to the recording. The preparation allows for a conversation among themselves and with a guest instead of giving a lecture about the evidence-based research and practices. Dr. Campagne is comfortable with the format. “It’s not recorded live – we can make edits – and John-Mark makes us sound good. “It’s turned out to be very fun,” she said.

Podcast topics have ranged from anaphylaxis (a severe, life-threatening allergic reaction) to dental emergencies, stroke and hypothermic cardiac arrest. They also have included a discussion about PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder). “Some of the episodes are very medical, such as how to stop bleeding, but some episodes look at the super-fast decision making and innerworkings of an EMS system,” Dr. Armenian said.

American Ambulance paramedics are often guests on the podcast. “We like to highlight the unsung heroes,” Dr. Campagne said. EMS field staff provide a lot of the experience in the community, Dr. Bhakta said. “We have episodes where we interview the most experienced medics out there. And they have been great sources for ideas and topics and experiences to talk about.”

Bergen looks forward to recording Drs. Campagne, Armenian and Bhakta. “It’s an awesome group,” and the topics are interesting. “It has been really eye-opening for me. You can think that you’re not a doctor or a paramedic and that there is ‘nothing for me here,’ but I actually understand and appreciate the podcast and I learn something every time. It’s accessible,” he said.

“American Ambulance has a desire not only to provide valuable information to our employees who serve our community, but to anyone working in EMS and emergency medicine,” said American Ambulance General Manager Erik S. Peterson, Esq. The dedication of Dr. Campagne and the other doctors and her guests has been inspiring. Certainly, some of our content is considered in the context of our local policies, but they have covered many topics that even the general public may benefit from. We are grateful. It has been an exciting program and we are excited we can offer it.”

Dr. Armenian appreciates the commitment that American Ambulance has shown the podcast team. “They are supportive of our creativity,” she said. And Dr. Bhakta said, “it’s a great collaboration and I’m excited to be doing it.” Dr. Campagne has been medical director at American Ambulance for the past 2 ½ years and said UCSF Fresno values its relationship with American Ambulance. “We are a unique collaborative partnership,” she said.

Inspire

UCSF Fresno People Spotlight



Liana Milanés, MD

UCSF Fresno's success and growth are a direct result of the dedication and inspiration of our faculty, staff, residents, fellows, students, alumni, partners, donors and friends. In each issue of Focus, we introduce you to the people who contribute to the greatness of UCSF Fresno through informal interviews.

This month, please meet Liana Milanés, MD, associate program director, UCSF Fresno Family and Community Medicine Residency Program.

What is your name? Nickname?

My name is Dr. Liana Milanés with emphasis on the last syllable but over the years it has become too hard to include the tilde on any official forms.

Where did you grow up and where did you go to school (high school, college, graduate school, residency training, any other certifications)?

I was born in Havana, Cuba, and lived there until I was nine years old. We moved around a bit. I lived in Chicago, Ill., Puerto Rico and eventually settled and grew up in Miami, Fla.

I earned my medical degree from Ross University and completed residency training in Family and Community Medicine at UCSF Fresno.

What inspired you to pursue your specialty/Family and Community Medicine?

Family Medicine was always the specialty for me. It is a specialty rooted in the pursuit of social justice. It's about understanding patients in the context of their communities and the systemic issues that affect their lives. It is intellectually challenging in that you must be able to respond to a multitude of issues often in very different settings with varying access to resources. The best family med doc is the one willing and able to respond to the needs of their community and who leads their practice to develop whatever skillset is needed to best care for that community.

Why did you join the faculty at UCSF Fresno?

I think this is one of the best family medicine programs in the nation, in terms of depth of training, access to cross-specialty training, focus on resident empowerment and advocacy. I felt empowered as chief resident and becoming faculty felt like a natural transition. I love working with residents every day, learning from them, pushing myself to seek new areas for professional development and practice. I connect with my clinic patient population and love that I get to use my Spanish daily.

What are your areas of expertise or special interests in medicine?

My areas of expertise and special interests include behavioral health and psychiatry, addiction medicine, clinic procedures, medical education, faculty development, social justice and advocacy including LGBTQ+ health.

What is the most rewarding aspect of your job/role? What is the most challenging?

Teaching and teaching. Working with residents is an incredible experience that I am grateful for. They bring out the best in me. It is very challenging to role model best practices in our imperfect and at times exploitive health care systems.

What is at the top of your personal or professional to-do list?

Personally, I am always looking for a new day hike recommendation. Also expanding my cooking beyond Cuban recipes. Professionally, I'd love to start up another medication assisted treatment clinic site closer to the hospital. I am also hoping that with some workshops and time we can make all three of our clinic sites more LGBTQ+ friendly and begin to provide comprehensive primary care that includes hormone therapy. I would love to roll out some more continuing medical education events on things like trauma informed care, deprescribing opioids & benzos, pain management basics, primary care psychiatry, etc.

The zombie apocalypse is coming. Which three people from UCSF Fresno would you pick to be on your team and why?

Roger Mortimer, MD, without question. I am sure he already owns all the survival gear and knows how to use it all. Ila Naeni, DO, because she has all the plans, and the back up plans to the plans. She also is the only person I trust not to fall asleep on night watch. Sherry Valdez, she is an MA who has been with our program for years and is well known for getting things done. I have no doubt she could take down zombies without breaking a sweat.

What do you like to do in your off time?

Read, camp, hike, swim. Play with my dogs Mango and Papaya. Cook and plot to change the world with my partner Megan.

What is the most important thing you would like people to know about you? Or what else would you like to add about you, your background, family or career?

It is a very important time for medicine in the United State. I believe we can shape the course of it. It is important for physicians to use their voice and advocate for their patients and communities but also for ourselves and our health care teams. Speak up, be an ally, negotiate, find a seat at the table, get invited to that meeting, send that email, vote and voice truth to power.



Narayana Ambati, MD: Honoring a Legacy of Healing and Teaching

Narayana Ambati, MD (right) and Rama Ambati

By Kathleen Smith, Development and Alumni Relations, UCSF Fresno

The UCSF Fresno Department of Surgery provides state-of-the-art surgical care for the diverse patient population of the Central Valley and surrounding communities and provides an

outstanding clinical general surgery education to future generations of skilled physicians and surgeons. UCSF Fresno surgical residents are trained to meet the current challenges of the health care environment and shape the future of medicine. They work and gain real-world, hands-on experience in a variety of training sites with an impressive list of specialists at major hospitals, health agencies, clinics and physicians' offices, and wilderness medicine settings.

One such specialist is [Narayana Ambati, MD](#), UCSF clinical professor of Urology. Dr. Ambati joined the faculty at UCSF Fresno in 1986. He is a nationally recognized practitioner, researcher, educator, author, and speaker in the field of urology. His commitment to his medical practice, along with his strong dedication to serving where there is great need, drew him to the Central Valley.

Born in India, Dr. Ambati always had an immense sense of gratitude and appreciation for education and his instructors, particularly because access to them was limited in the small village where he grew up. Yet only 40 miles away from his home where he attended high school, he met well-educated medical professionals and found inspiration for his future career path. He went on to attend college and medical school, pursuing a focus on general surgery through a master's degree in surgery.

During his residency at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, he found his passion – the field of urology. He made the move to the United States when he was recruited as a fellow to the University of Iowa and soon was made a tenured professor. Since his arrival in Fresno, Dr. Ambati has been committed to his general urology and urological oncology practice and paying forward his passion for education by training local surgery residents through the UCSF Fresno Department of Surgery Residency Program.

For the last 35 years, Dr. Ambati has proudly supported our vision to advance healing, increase equitable health care access and provide the highest quality experiential learning to the next generation of skilled physicians and surgeons.

In recognition of Dr. Ambati's transformative impact on our program and community, the UCSF Fresno Department of Surgery has honored he and his wife, Rama by establishing the ***Narayana Ambati, MD, and Rama Ambati Endowment in Urology at UCSF Fresno***. When fully funded, the endowment will provide a steady source of resources to help the program:

- Recruit renowned faculty members like Dr. Ambati, who embrace innovative ideas and proudly deliver an exceptional education to UCSF Fresno physician trainees
- Support groundbreaking research in trauma, critical care, general surgery, surgical oncology, vascular surgery, and violence intervention and prevention and
- Continue to provide the best clinical care to thousands of patients each year.

To ensure Dr. Ambati's legacy of healing and teaching continues at UCSF Fresno as we usher in the next generation of skilled surgeons to provide outstanding care for Valley communities, please make a gift to the [Ambati Endowment](#). For information about [other ways to give](#), please contact Kathleen Smith, assistant director of development for UCSF Fresno at (559) 499-6426 or kathleen.smith@ucsf.edu.

Kudos

UCSF Fresno Recognition



Congratulations to [UCSF](#) SJV PRIME medical student **Marcus Cummins**. Marcus took first place in the 2021 American College of Physicians Northern California Abstract Competition. Students and residents from Northern California medical schools submitted posters and video presentations and a handful were selected to present live. Marcus presented in the medical student clinical vignette category, and after two rounds of live presentations, he was selected as the winner.



Eyad Almasri, MD (left) and Mohamed Fayed, MD

Kudos to **Eyad Almasri, MD**, and **Mohamed Fayed, MD**, faculty in the UCSF Fresno Department of Internal Medicine Division of Pulmonary and Critical Care, for getting their research “Efficacy and safety of two neutralizing monoclonal antibody therapies, sotrovimab and BR11-196 plus BR11-198, for adults hospitalized with COVID-19 (TICO): a randomized controlled trial” published in the Lancet ID with a high author order.

Congrats to our Medical Library Professionals for their recent accomplishments:

Sharon McClain on becoming the newest member of UC Archival Management

Robyn Aguiar in collaboration with California Health Sciences University on receiving a \$5,000 grant from the National Network of Libraries of Medicine to support several sessions with high school students in the San Joaquin Valley to help them understand the respiratory system and the effects of poor air quality on the respiratory system.

Congratulations to the following SPOT Award recipients:

Winter 2022

Summer Connery, CME Events Specialist

Shannon Kremer, Fellowship Programs Supervisor, Internal Medicine

Monica Meza, Human Resources Manager

Sharon McClain, Medical Library Professional

Sandra Ortega, Academic Affairs Lead, Internal Medicine

Barbara Price, Administrative Manager, Psychiatry

Lorna Tahan, Health Professions Education Specialist, Internal Medicine

Fall 2021

Kasan Jones, Program Manager, Undergraduate Medical Education

Marie Martinez, Residency, Fellowships and Medical Student Programs Coordinator
Emergency Medicine

Dieu Nguyen, Executive Assistant, Facilities

Maria Ragan, Finance Manager, Finance

Sajid Saleem, EHS/Security Specialist, Facilities
Juanita Sprowell, Student Life/Development, Undergraduate Medical Education
Hailie Williams, Program Coordinator, Undergraduate Medical Education

To nominate a colleague for a SPOT Award, go to: <https://bit.ly/FresnoSPOT>

Kudos to the following on their promotions:

Lee Hagerty, Clinical Skills and Simulation Coordinator, Information Technology Services (10/18/21)

Tiffany Tarvin, Residency Program Coordinator, Internal Medicine (11/15/21)

Shannon Kremer, Fellowship Programs Supervisor, Internal Medicine (12/27/21)

Sandra Ortega, Academic Support Staff Supervisor, Internal Medicine (12/13/21)

Stephanie Huerta-Alvarez, Academic Program Coordinator, UCSF Fresno Latino Center for Medical Education and Research (1/3/22)

Noel Sandoval, Educational Technology Integrator, Information Technology Services (1/9/22)

Welcome aboard to these new hires:

Linda Nieves, Practice Coordinator, Ambulatory Care, UCSF Fresno AMC, Hillblom Center on Aging, Neurology (12/8/21)

Ka Her, Residency Program Supervisor, Internal Medicine (12/13/21)

Kelly Meehan, Clinical Research Coordinator, Research (12/29/21)

Kathleen Lozano, Risk Manager, Risk Management (1/26/22)

Craig McDonald, Chief Financial Officer, Associate Dean's Office (2/22/22)