

SIU Women in Medicine

January 2016

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Happy New Year!

Greetings Everyone!

I sincerely hope this finds everyone excited to embark on a brand new year!

Our Women in Medicine Group has really taken off since its establishment in January 2015. We continue to meet regularly to discuss important issues affecting women in medicine, regularly make contributions to our community, and of course have fun in the process!

In this issue I hope you will be inspired by our stories, important volunteer work, talent, and triumphs. Above all, I hope you continue to offer your support and encouragement as our group expands and reaches new horizons.

Please email me interesting articles, your stories, volunteer opportunities, recipes, etc!

Take care and wish you a truly joyful and exciting year.

Sincerely,

Vidhya Prakash



And the Winner Is...

The Dancing with the Starz Event, on behalf of the Prairie Art Alliance, took place on November 7th, 2015. Rama Poola won for Best Costume. Rama is pictured with her dancing partner, Steve Harris. Congratulations, Rama!





“The secret of change is to focus all of your energy not on fighting the old, but on building the new”~ Socrates

Purpose. Suffering. Belief.
Elements of transformation
When the undeniable
Inevitability of change
Is imminent on the horizon

So as the typhoon emerges
Surrender to the storm
Sway with the breeze
Tirelessly ride the current
And patiently know

That to embrace the shift
In the fluctuating tides
And the storms that pass
Is the difference between

Stagnating in the waters
Or swimming in a reservoir of
unrealized potential.

Yasmine Ibrahim, PGY 2

RESIDENTS' CORNER



Zainab Al Obaidi,
Najwa Pervin, Yasmine
Ibrahim



Zainab's Birthday Dinner! Left to right: Susrut Pendyala, Bashar Amr, Zubair Saeed Zafar, Sidharth Chandra, Bianca Madrid, Yasmine Ibrahim, Najwa Pervin, Zainab Al Obaidi, and the lovely wives of Susrut and Bash!

Having fun at the ACP Meeting! Left to right: Zubair Saeed Zafar, Najwa Pervin, Anshul Pandey, Yasmine Ibrahim, Jake Varney, and Zainab Al Obaidi



Fellowship Match Day Celebration! From left to right: Susrut and his lovely wife, Bash and his lovely wife, Dr. Hudali, Sidharth Chandra, Nino Cavataio, Sean Hayes, Mohammad Al-Akchar, Mark Massoud, Haseeb Nawaz, Zubair Saeed Zafar, and Yasmine Ibrahim



PERSPECTIVES

I've always found hospitals to be fascinating. They're like a museum of emotions. The same PA system that announces a code blue and brings misery, sorrow and desperation to someone, can seconds later be chiming a tune of joy announcing the arrival of a new life. Under the same roof some get cured and sigh in relief, others mourn as they receive a diagnosis of terminal illness. As physicians, we experience this wide array of emotions every day, but, there are some incidents that leave a lasting impact.

I was an intern rotating in the ICU for the very first time. Everything was intimidating, from managing the ventilators to putting in central lines. I was starting my day shift, and the night resident ended his sign out by exclaiming that the POA of the stat-ice patient he admitted last night was his 23 year old daughter. I knew this case was going to come with a series of counseling sessions but did not realize how deeply it would affect me. There was no one in the room when I pre-rounded on that patient in the morning, I looked at the monitors, examined him and walked out mulling over how young he was to be in that state. Later that day as we rounded, we found him surrounded by friends and family. There was a girl almost my height, dressed in blue jeans and a purple sweat shirt bent over the patient, and talking to him in a soft voice. "She must be the daughter" I thought. As my attending started to talk to the family she straightened up. I could see her better now. She had a cherubic face and looked young for her age. She patiently heard all the details that my attending gave and kept a straight face even as she fought back tears. The other people in the room took the lead in the discussion while she stood in the back, right next to her dad, trying to process the information. It was obvious she was concerned the most but just couldn't bring herself to express it. Towards the afternoon, on the same day, I noticed her sitting on a chair next to her dad and I thought I should go talk to her personally since she must've felt lost with all those people in the room earlier. I stepped in and saw that she was talking to her dad again, I couldn't hear what she said but she sounded so gentle and soft. She tried to smile as I walked in. She talked about how close she was to him, how her dad was a strong man, and how she knows he'll come back. I could feel my heart beat faster as I realized that she probably isn't understanding how things might not turn out to be as perfectly as she has them imagined. I tried to lay out the facts as clearly as I could. I then tried to ease her up by talking about her college and some other random things. The next day as we rounded, I could see that her eyes would constantly dart towards me as the attending spoke to her, and then as I'd nod my head she'd look back. It seemed like my agreement would reassure her. I wonder if it was her relatable age or the situation she was in but I felt like it was my obligation to explain things to her every day after rounds so that she understood them well.

Over the next few days this became a routine, she would glance at me during rounds, and I would nod as always. In the ensuing days she eventually came face to face with the brutal but foreseeable crisis. There were no chances of meaningful recovery for her dad and she was expected to make a decision. I've been a part of many end of life discussions but this one in particular was the toughest. Not only because she was 23 and had a huge responsibility delegated to her, not just because she was about to lose her father a year after her mother died but also because she trusted me in a way that she trusted no one else on the team. This in particular made me feel overwhelmed. After many discussions, each ending in tears on her part and a heavy heart on mine she helplessly decided to withdraw life support. She, however, took great pride in knowing that her father would be an organ donor.

I was there as he was extubated, I was there as she lay her head on his chest and cried uncontrollably with her teenage brother by her side. I was there as his oxygen saturations went down, and I was there as my senior called the time of death. As always her eyes darted to me for reassurance, confirmation or possibly another explanation. This time, unfortunately, I could not nod my head...

Najwa Pervin, PGY 2

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Ouch! Vidhya Prakash

It was a few days before Mother's Day and I eagerly went through my 4 year-old's schoolbag to see what he had done that day. I found a paper where he could fill in the blanks about his mom. "The best thing she cooks is mac and cheese".....aww! "She always does stuff for me".....too sweet! "My mom's favorite thing to do to relax is sleep on the couch".....OUCH!

It made me take a hard look at myself and I realized that in my spare time, that is indeed what I did due to fatigue. Why was I exhausted all of the time? I finally went to see my physician who diagnosed me with vitamin D deficiency. I was started on weekly higher dose supplements (50,000 IUs) for 12 weeks followed by daily supplements (2000 IUs). I feel like a new woman. I am not as tired, I have more energy, and both of my children are especially happy to have their mom back! See what our expert, Dr. Poola has to say about vitamin D deficiency above.



Ask the Expert: Rama Poola

How do you define Vitamin D Deficiency?

According to Endocrine Society Vitamin D deficiency is defined as 25OH vitamin D levels of less than 30ng/ml. Institute of Medicine however considers 20ng/ml as the cut off. The discrepancy stems from lack of sufficient evidence of benefit from vitamin D except in bone disease.

What are Risk Factors?

- 1.Limited exposure to sun especially in winter months in higher altitude areas.
2. Dark skin
3. Obesity
- 4.Institutionalised and immobilized persons.
- 5.Malabsorptive conditions
- 6.Medications: Anticonvulsants, Antiretroviral meds causing accelerated metabolism of 25OH vitamin D, glucocorticoids.
- 7.Renal and liver failure.
- 8.Poor dietary intake.

What are the signs and symptoms?

Infants and children present with Rickets: delayed closing of fontanels, poor dentition, motor weakness, irritability, bowing of long legs, prominent and painful costochondral

junctions and rarely fractures. Adults present with osteomalacia, low bone mineral density, generalized body pain, muscle pain from hypocalcemia and or hypophosphatemia.

How is it diagnosed and treated?

Vitamin D deficiency is diagnosed by measuring 25OH vitamin D3 levels by radioimmunoassay. 25OH vitamin D3 levels reflect storage reserve as this is stored in adipose tissue and has a long half life. Treatment is guided based upon the levels. Severe deficiency is usually treated with pharmacological doses of Vitamin D2 (Ergocalciferol) which is converted to D3 in the body. Low to low normal levels are usually treated with Vitamin D3 or Cholecalciferol 1000 to 5000IU daily.

How is it prevented?

Adequate sun exposure :15 minutes daily, darker skin complexion and winter months warrant longer exposure. Adequate dietary intake:400 IU daily during adulthood, 800 to 1000IU for post menopausal women and older adults. Pregnant and lactating women 600IU daily.

Articles

How Men Can Excel as Mentors of Women: http://journals.lww.com/academicmedicine/Fulltext/2014/08000/How_Men_Can_Excel_as_Mentors_of_Women.10.aspx

Patient Narratives and Gender Stereotypes among Medical Students: http://journals.lww.com/academicmedicine/Fulltext/2013/07000/Using_Patients_Narratives_to_Reveal_Gender.35.aspx

Gender Differences in Salary: http://journals.lww.com/academicmedicine/Fulltext/2013/11000/Gender_Differences_in_Salary_in_a_Recent_Cohort_of.37.aspx

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Sojourn Shelter Experience
Nicole Emmanuel, PGY 1

"Women In Medicine"; an exciting concept I thought to myself while Dr. Prakash addressed the new PGY1's during an orientation session. She explained that the group was formed to provide support for us women during residency, acknowledging the fact that many of us have left our loved ones and have traveled to a new state, or country for this opportunity. The group itself seemed to have evolved from a social entity to one of philanthropy, lending support to the society at large.

One of my more memorable experiences was visiting the Sojourn Shelter last November where we collected food items for the shelter and delivered them personally. The most meaningful part of our visit was the time spent with the children at the shelter. Armed with construction paper and the rest of our Arts & Kraft toolkit which included Keebler's cookies, reese's and cream topping; we spent the night diligently making very tasty Pilgrims hats and thanksgiving trees.

The joy and excitement on the faces of the children as they skillfully performed the activities planned, and the appreciation of their mothers for the time of respite was priceless. In their innocence and childlike hope, these kids inspired us with their positivity and loving nature despite their current circumstances. Being weary of this era of materialism, I was deeply moved when these little ones disclosed what they were thankful for. (cont'd next page)

Sojourn Shelter

Sojourn Shelter experience (continued):

Expecting responses such as toys, and food, I was awestruck by to hear them proudly shout out "God, my brother, my sister, my mother!" Even at such a tender age they demonstrated understanding of what really matters in life despite your social standing.

At the end of the night, although we were the ones who went bearing gifts, we ended up being the ones who left feeling inspired by the innocence, and wisdom of these 4, 5 and 6 year olds. Their unsophisticated outlook on life epitomized this quote by Helen Keller, "The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched - they must be felt with the heart."



Special thanks to all those who donated to the Sojourn Shelter. The directors and residents were most appreciative. Below are samples from the activities we did with the adorable children at the Sojourn Shelter. Bottom top "Pilgrim Hats" made out of cookies, peanut butter cups and pieces. Bottom below: A Thanksgiving tree with leaves expressing what the kids are thankful for.



From left: Vineka Heeramun, Nicole Emmanuel, Chrystal Joseph and Vidhya Prakash



From left: Nicole Emmanuel and Chrystal Joseph

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CSN Winter Drive Chrystal Joseph, PGY 4

During my service as a Medicine-Psychiatry resident for almost 3.5 years, I have seen the social, physical and emotional impact of chronic psychiatric illnesses on our patients. Of the programs in place to minimize this impact, the Community Support Network (CSN) targets the most "problematic" population: the non-compliant, financially devoid, with significant medical comorbidities, and poor social support. With the current status of the State budget, this program is under heavy cuts. So, with the acts of generosity our group has conducted thus far, I thought the CSN program would be an appropriate addition.

A casual discussion with the CSN director triggered my idea for a winter drive. I have donated to several causes, but this was my first opportunity to organize a donation drive. I hoped that someone, anyone would donate anything.....

Needless to say, the response was more than anyone anticipated. The very generous donations from residents, as well as faculty, reinforced my hope in the good-heartedness of mankind. I look forward to the opportunity to participate in similar ventures in the future.

Community Support Network Winter Drive



Special thanks to all for their generation donations! From left to right: Michelle Davidson, Vidhya Prakash, Chrystal Joseph, Barbara Nelson, CSN director Ruta Kulys, Kathy Sheets and Kristoffer Barrington

Quotable Quotes

Each person must live their life as a model for others. Rosa Parks

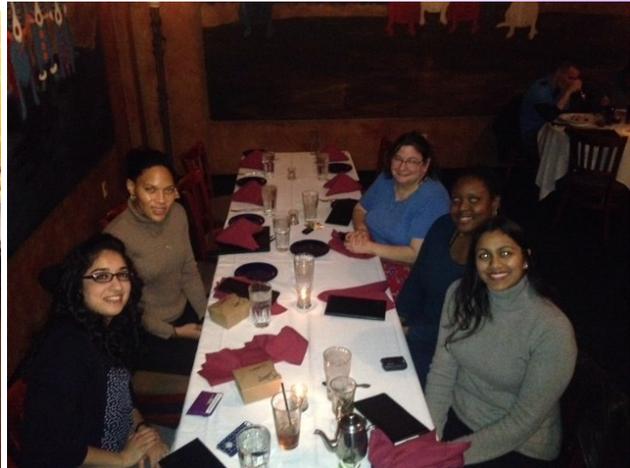
Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Helen Keller

HAVING FUN!!

LADIES NIGHT



We had a great time at Flavor of India!
From left: Vidhya Prakash, Vineka Heeramun, Zainab Al Obaidi, Chrystal Joseph and Laura Shea



More great food and company at Indigo Restaurant. From left: Sana Waqar, Nicole Emmanuel, Kathy Bottum, Chrystal Joseph and Vidhya Prakash

INTERNATIONAL POTLUCK



From left: Adrienne Stitch, Jacque Mool, Kayt Schlepffhorst, Veena Kesireddy, and Sana Waqar



From left: Sharon Onguti, Krati Chauhan, Vidhya Prakash, Sana Waqar, Adrienne Stitch, and Yasmine Ibrahim



Madalina Butnariu

We had a celebration of cultures at our International Potluck! We had a ball indulging in delectable treats from Romania, India, Mexico and of course the USA! Spectacular outfits from around the world made it seem more like a fabulous fashion show!



Women in Medicine Faculty Spotlight

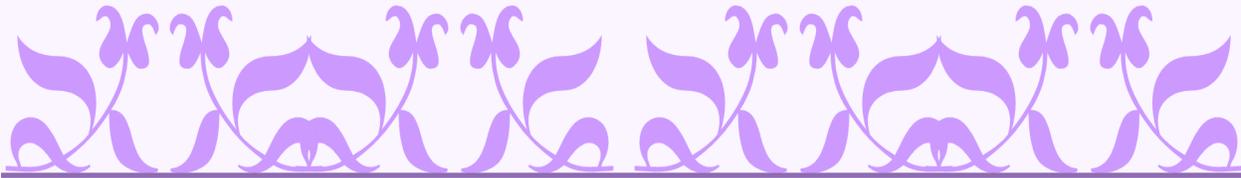
Laura Salazar



Laura with her husband Israel, daughter Sofia and son Huan

1. **Born and Raised:** Chicago, IL
2. **Birthday:** October 23, 1979
3. **Family:** Husband Israel, Daughter Sofia (7) and Son Huan (2)
4. **Favorite Book:** I wish I could say something very cultured here, but if I'm going to be honest, it's Harry Potter. And yes, they were my favorite before I had children.
5. **Hobbies:** Haha! That's a good one. I *used* to like to play tennis, watch Japanimation, and play video games (Warcraft).
6. **My Personal Hero:** My grandmother. She was probably the strongest, toughest woman I knew. Just as an example, at the age of 98, she had a massive PE. Heart rate was sitting in the 30-40's. She was up and walking the halls the next day with no oxygen.
7. **Most Embarrassing Moment:** There's just so many to pick from ...
I would probably say it was my very first interview when I was 16 or 17. My parents made me interview for a 7 year combined undergraduate-med school program I didn't want to do. At that time (in case you haven't figured it out yet from my previous answers) I was quite socially awkward. I showed up to this interview in jeans. During the interview, I sat so far slouched in the chair that I think my head was resting on the back of the chair. I have a sneaking suspicion that I swung back and forth in the spinning chair, too. Good thing the interview was optional at University of Chicago (my undergrad)!
8. **Proudest Moment:** Life is so full of these - from the birth of my children, to hearing them say their first word ("Da-Da" ... Insert jealous look here), to seeing them take their first steps, to my daughter's first day of kindergarten (she turned around before getting on the bus and said "mom, I'm going to be ok")
9. **Why she loves being a woman in Medicine:** I love being part of a group of women who are not afraid of showing their strength and growing to be leaders in this world. I love how medicine can contribute so much to the world and, more personally, how medicine has allowed me to help my family in so many ways.





Women in Medicine Resident Spotlight

Zainab Al Obaidi



Top Left: Zainab's mom and dad



Top Right: Zainab (left) with sisters Yasmin and Sarah



Bottom Left: (From left to right) Sarah, Zainab, Mohammed and Ahmed (Zainab's brothers), sister Yasmin and her husband Ali Kiliddar and Zainab's dad in the middle. This pic was taken at Yasmin and Ali's Engagement party in Chicago last year.



Bottom Right: Burj Al Arab, Dubai

1. Born and raised: I was born and raised in Dubai, United Arab Emirates

2. Birthday: Dec 11, 1987

3. Family: I am the oldest sister with 2 sisters: Yasmin and Sarah and 2 brothers: Mohammed and Ahmed.

4. Favorite books: Dan Brown- The Da Vinci Code, Jane Austen- Pride and Prejudice.

5. Hobbies: Working out at the gym, travelling , volunteering and catching up with friends

6. Personal hero: My Grandma. She is one of the strongest people I know. She has been through a lot yet continues to inspire and support everyone around her.

7. Most embarrassing moment: I can't recall any particular incident but I tend to have embarrassing encounters every now and then :)

8. Proudest moment: When I graduated med school.

9. Why she loves being a Woman in Medicine: It is a group that brought (and continues) to bring people together. I truly believe that we all share things in common and having women (like myself) chat and express our day to day challenges has been quite an inspiration to me. All thanks to the co-founder, Dr. Prakash!

