

THIRD QUARTER NEWSLETTER 2025

ANESTHESIOLOGY RESIDENCY AND FELLOWSHIP

Dear Team,

As we look back on the third quarter, our Anesthesiology Residency and Fellowship programs continue to demonstrate excellence, collaboration, and growth. The fall season brings renewed focus and momentum as we settle into the academic year. Our new Residents and Fellows have found their stride, and our continuing team members continue to lead by example through mentorship, scholarship, and patient care. Autumn is also a time to reflect and prepare. In this edition, we celebrate recent accomplishments, share important program updates, and highlight the scholarly work and community engagement that make our department shine. Your dedication to education, innovation, and compassionate care continues to strengthen our collective mission.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment and for making our program a place of learning, support, and excellence

Stay informed, stay engaged, and as always, thank you for your hard work!

AWARDS & SHOUT OUTS

Recognizing team members for achievements, teamwork, and outstanding contributions



Tulip Award for Drs. Ezana Girmai and Matthew Isenhower - From Jaliah Richardson, RN, Labor & Delivery

"I want to recognize and thank both Dr. Isenhower and Dr. Girmai for their particularly hard work on 10/2/2025. It was an extremely busy night, so busy that the entire trauma team of anesthesia residents also came up to help. We ended up doing 5 c-sections and they also placed so many labor epidurals, this team did it all with truly the best patient centered care throughout. In the middle of all of this, there was a midwife patient who had been laboring for 30+ hours, was exhausted, and wanted an epidural but was terrified. Dr. Girmai prioritized sitting down with and talking to her to make sure she felt as comfortable as possible; e made her experience just as important as all of the other tasks he had on his plate. As Charge that night, I so appreciated how communicative they were which helped us move efficiently and provide the best possible care to our patients. We appreciate you Dr. Isenhower and Dr. Girmai!"

Resident of the Quarter

Mei Mei Edwards - Third Quarter 2025

- Mei Mei has excelled as the trauma bag resident, demonstrating advanced airway management across multiple ICUs and showcasing rare technical skill in safely decompressing a trauma RSI case, an impressive contribution to patient safety. Her morale and teamwork are consistently outstanding. Dr. Edwards responded swiftly and effectively to a hypotensive PACU patient, involving her medical student and utilizing ultrasound and push-dose pressors. Her clear communication and leadership in a high-pressure moment exemplify VCU's Star Service values. Mei Mei has shown exemplary clinical judgment, professionalism, and dedication to patient care, serving as role models within the program.



Honorable Mentions:



Ricky Moscoso

"Ricky Moscoso showed exceptional skill, professionalism, and composure during a high-acuity pediatric anesthesia shift. His attention to detail, ability to manage stress, and strong clinical performance impressed multiple attendings. Ricky is a standout resident with potential for a pediatric fellowship."



Elija Weber

"Dr. Weber stepped up during a challenging cardiac call weekend, showing empathy, professionalism, and enthusiasm. His support of the team and dedication to patient care exemplify leadership and reliability, making him a role model as he continues to grow in his training."



Travis Cuddy

"Travis is an incredibly kind and helpful senior resident. He is always willing to help and never makes you feel bad for asking for it. When he was T2, he helped me set up for an intense case I had not experienced before and helped me transport the patient to pacu on pressors. His presence was not only invaluable for patient care but also put me at ease since I knew I had a smart, capable senior for support."



Steve Sartore

"I enjoy working with Steve. He does a fabulous job and is a tremendous leader."



Taylor Lonjin

"Excellent rapport with patients. Very collegial and goes out of this way to help the team. Very strong procedurally"



Tabi Eckert

"Great resident, cares about patients. Wonderful job on trauma as T3"



Submit your vote for the Fourth Quarter!

TEAM UPDATES

Introducing new team members, promotions, and recognizing those who are moving on.



This quarter we welcomed the following Faculty to our team:

- Dr. Jorge Guerrero
- Dr. Deanna Couser
- *Dr. Timothy Wills
- *Dr. James Henry Wilson II
- *Dr. Eric Morgan
- Dr. Joseph Cinclair
- *Dr. Ashton Engdahl
- *Dr. Tyler Tupper
- Dr. Jack Chiles
- Dr. Ioana Rus
- Dr. Christopher Stemland

***Recent Resident or Fellow graduate. Welcome back!**

UPCOMING EVENTS

Department meetings, educational workshops, national conferences, and social events

Check out the local calendar on Visit Richmond VA LINK: bit.ly/3FMYCOG

- Let Stewart know if you are interested in coordinating a group outing!
 - Maymont Park Garden Glow, Oct 15 - Nov 9
 - Shadows of Shockoe Ghost Tour, Oct 24, 29, 30
 - Richmond Christmas Parade, Saturday, December 6 at 10:15am
 - LINK richmondparade.org



Maymont Park Garden Glow Oct 15 - Nov 9

PAST EVENTS

Updates and moments from past events and conferences



SPA & ASA 2025

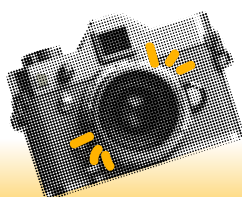
- Our team proudly hosted recruitment booths at both the Society of Pediatric Anesthesia (SPA) Annual Meeting and the American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA) Annual Conference! We connected with hundreds of attendees, sparking exciting conversations and building relationships, especially with medical students who may one day join us as faculty. The energy was electric, and the future looks bright!



American Society of
Anesthesiologists®

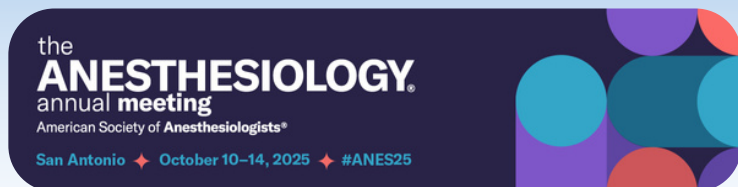
ASA Presentations and Posters

- **Catheter Based Epidural Blood Patch: An Optimized Approach** - Presented by Ezoza Azzam, Co-Author by Christopher Evans, BS, Purvika Gautam, BS, Shilen Thakrar, MD
- **Tricuspid valve repair complicated by postoperative compartment syndrome in a patient with Hemophilia A: A Case Report** - Presented by Lee Friedman, Co-Author by Joshua Musih, DO, Vivian Bui-Huynh, MD
- **Rare Incidence of Tracheal Deviation Following Interscalene Nerve Block for Shoulder Surgery: A Case of Postoperative Respiratory Compromise and Considerations for High-Risk Patients** - Presented by Hayley Gray, Author by Maya Golan, DO, Michael Buxhoeveden, MD, Geoffrey Fisher, MD
- **Incarcerated Gravid Uterus in an Incisional Ventral Hernia: Anesthetic Implications** - Presented by Taylor Lonjin, Co-Author by Arunthevaraja Karuppiah, MD, Alexis Lonjin, BS
- **Graft-Versus-Host-Disease (GVHD) after Deceased Donor Liver Transplantation (DDLT)** - Author by Taylor Lonjin, DO, Sergio Navarrette, DO, Lindsey Pflugner, MD, Sayuri Jinadasa, MD
- **Perioperative Management of High-Risk Geriatric Patient with Systemic Mastocytosis, Multiple Myeloma and Sick Sinus Syndrome Undergoing Hip Surgery** - Presented by Kirklen Petersen, Co-Author by Patrick Reddy, MD, Sabrina Dhillon, MD, FASA
- **Dexmedetomidine-Assisted Anesthetic Management of Empyema in a High-Risk Parturient with Cardiopulmonary Failure**, Author by Luke Johnson, BA, Steven Sartore, DO, Dean Zhang, BS, Jessica Potter, MD
- **Perioperative Management of High-Risk Obstetric Patient with Xylazine or “Tranq” Skin Ulcers and Substance Use Disorder Presenting for Labor** - Presented by Karen Semaan, Co-Author by Fatoumata Kromah, MD, Kirklen Petersen, MD
- **The Limits of Intervention: Mechanical Thrombectomy for Acute Pulmonary Embolism Complicated by Cardiovascular Collapse Requiring ACLS and ECMO** - Author by Jonathan Tran, DO
- **Challenging Management of MDS in a Primigravid Patient** - Presented by Jon Vachon, Co-Author by Nelson Soria-Gutierrez, MD, Matthew Vachon, MD, Shilen Thakrar, MD
- **Not Quite My Tempo: Why EP Exists** - Presented by Jon Vachon, Co-Author by Mark Nelson, MD



ASA Pics on the next page!





The most popular photo op!

One of the busiest booths at the Residency Open House!



Dr. Mark Nelson and Dr. Bryant Tran promoting their PerioPacemaker App



Global Health Update New section!

Teaching, learning, and growing together worldwide

- We are proud to celebrate the publication of "Bringing POCUS Beyond Borders" by Drs. Taylor Lonjin and Olga Suarez-Winowski, highlighting the Department of Anesthesiology's growing leadership in global health education. This feature showcases our internationally recognized initiative to expand access to point-of-care ultrasound (POCUS) training across resource-limited settings. Through hands-on instruction, peer mentorship, and cross-cultural collaboration with partners such as the Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México, our residents and faculty are empowering clinicians worldwide to integrate ultrasound into safe, high-quality perioperative care. The continued success of this program exemplifies VCU Anesthesiology's commitment to innovation, service, and global partnership, we are building bridges that extend our impact far beyond the operating room!
- LINK (bit.ly/496zaAk)

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virginia society
of anesthesiologists

FALL 2025: POCUS

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Bringing POCUS Beyond Borders

Virginia Commonwealth University Department of Anesthesiology Leads International Ultrasound Training Initiative



Taylor Lonjin, DO
Anesthesia Resident



Olga Suarez-Winowski, MD
Associate Professor of Anesthesiology

Read more on Page 10 of the VSA Update

Check back for more next Spring! We have another educational trip planned with a fresh group of Residents and Faculty!



Our Global Health Meet & Greet was a hit! Looking forward to future events and fundraisers

WELLNESS

Tips on managing stress, maintaining work-life balance, and available wellness resources.

2025 Richmond Marathon/Half/8K - Sign Up Today!

- The Richmond Marathon Weekend on November 15, 2025, brings together runners from across the region in a celebration of wellness, teamwork, and community spirit. Among the participants is the Department of Anesthesiology's spirited team, "Running on Fumes," proudly representing their commitment to health and camaraderie beyond the hospital walls.
- While the half and full marathon events are fully booked, limited spots remain in the VCU Health 8K. The weekend promises an energizing atmosphere for runners of all levels, along with pre-race festivities like a carb-loading party to fuel the fun.



Meet our Industrial Athletic Trainer, Katie Roberts

- VCU Health proudly offers the only program in the U.S. focused on the musculoskeletal health and wellness of healthcare professionals. This innovative service is designed to: Prevent workplace injuries, reduce physical discomfort, and boost resilience and wellbeing.
 - Free to VCU Health Team Members (Residents, Fellows, and Faculty...sorry Med Students!)
 - Early intervention for musculoskeletal discomfort
 - Job demand specific interventions
 - Onsite services for Downtown Campus
 - Flexible appointments
 - No workers comp claim required

Professional Wellness - Exploring and celebrating the strengths in our Residency Program

- Our CA-1 residents recently took part in a CliftonStrengths session that encouraged open discussion and self-reflection. The group was alert, engaged, and eager to talk about their strengths, how those traits fit their personalities, and how they can use them in daily practice.
- The session was such a success that we plan to continue this approach in the coming years, with a more advanced focus for CA-2 residents and a leadership focus for CA-3s. As we bring CliftonStrengths language into our evaluations and team culture, we hope to help every resident recognize and apply their strengths in ways that support their growth and well-being.



Library Updates

Highlighting new research, journal articles, and scholarly contributions from department members

In addition to the posters and presentations shared at ASA (on page 3) our team has been busy producing all kinds of scholarly works! Below is a list of the ones our editors are aware of - but there's more out there!

- **Including Multiple Support Persons During Cesarean Delivery: An Opportunity to Promote Patient-Centered Care**, by Evans, Christopher M. BS; Everett, Terry MD; Mallepally, Adarsh BS; Perkins, Holly DeBernard MS, FNP-C; Ward, Amanda F. PhD, CRNA; Thakrar, Shilen P. MD, MSHA

- PMID: 41118601, LINK [bit.ly/4qnY0SF](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/41118601/)

- **Heated High-Flow Nasal Cannula for the Treatment of Unintended Perioperative Hypothermia: A Feasibility Study**, by Kirklen Petersen, Spencer Rice, Kenneth Potter, Shannon Boylan, Kristina Clark, Megan McCartney, Laura Lahaye

- PMID: 40354161, LINK [bit.ly/3WkAJ6g](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/40354161/)

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- PMID: 40354161, LINK [bit.ly/3WkAJ6g](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/40354161/)

- **Middle Eastern and North African: Recognizing the New US Census Category in Anesthesiology Research and Practice**, by Karen Semaan, Dimitry Tumin

- PMID: 39715519, LINK [bit.ly/47ndPQI](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/39715519/)

Dexmedetomidine-Assisted Anesthetic Management of Empyema in a High-Risk Parturient With Cardiopulmonary Failure: A Case Report, by Luke M Johnson, Steven Sartore, Dean Zhang, Jessica Potter

- PMID: 40476132, LINK [bit.ly/4o64V1p](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/40476132/)

TNK Induced Angioedema with Difficult Intubation: Risk Factors and Decision Making During a Medical Emergency, by Kumar, Aditya BS, Vogel, Jack MD, Petersen, Kirklen, MD, Lonjin, Taylor, DO, Seibert, Adam, MD, Hussain, Rashid MD

- Society of Critical Care Medicine - Critical Care Congress Abstract Submission

Preoperative Anesthesia Evaluation in a Patient with Hyperthyroidism and a Mediastinal Mass: A Case Report, by Jennifer Alvis MSN, FNP-BC, Olga Suarez-Winowiski, MD

- A&A Practice Journal



Library Updates... Continued

Apnea and Bilateral Ophthalmoplegia after a Retrobulbar Block: Clinical Decision-Making and Dilemmas, by Nguyen, A., Tran, J., Abdulhakim, A., Potter, J., Hussain, R.

- A&A Practice Journal

Management of Elevated Intracranial Pressure in Patients with Cryptococcal Meningoencephalitis: A Case Report, by Richard Young, Steven Yee, Rafael Robles, Sergio Navarrete, Rashid Hussain

- Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Neuroscience in Anesthesiology and Critical Care

REBOA to the Rescue: Management of Massive Hemorrhage following Catastrophic Uterine Rupture, by Travis Cuddy MD, Lawrence Jones MD, Victor Saxena MD

- Won top 10 Case Report Award! LINK bit.ly/3L2Rj8m

Trials and Tribulations of the Mustard Atrial Switch Procedure, by Tran, Jonathan, Engdahl, Ashton, Tupper, Tyler, Pal, Nirvik.

- International Conference at Society of Cardiothoracic Anesthesiology

Military-Civilian Partnerships Lead the Way; Fundamental Assessment and Management of Military Trauma (FAM2T) Training Development and Evaluation by a Civilian Academic Institution, by Rokayak, O., Cole, J, Ufkes, P., Catlin, J., Gould, J., Alford, J., Lammers, D., Lafreniere, J., Gurney, J., Aboutanous, M.

- ACS-VA Committee on Trauma, Physician-In-Training Paper Competition, Richmond

Updates from Faizaan Khan (CA1/PGY2):

- Poster Presentation at the Society for Perioperative Assessment and Quality Improvement 2025
 - Discussed a case where pre-operative screen prevented an unnecessary surgery and possible lethal intraoperative complications.
- Poster Presentation/ Abstract: Frail scale In Progress
 - Assessed 50 patients and followed their post operative trajectory. Working on correlating frailty scores and post operative complications to determine if prehabilitation would improve outcomes. Working with PACE and Department of Geriatrics
- Poster Presentation/ Abstract: Blood transfusions and Antibodies at VCU In Progress
 - Working to create a guide for the Department of Anesthesia and Surgery as well as other departments to help understand the process of order blood and ordering blood for patients with complex antibodies.

Updates from Marjo Beltoja (CA2/PGY3):

- Artificial Intelligence: A New Chapter in Perioperative Medicine
 - currently in review by journal