

UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
DEPARTMENT OF

Family and Community Medicine



University of
CINCINNATI

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CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I am thrilled to welcome you to our Fall 2025 Departmental Newsletter! Fall is my favorite season, as many of you know. This season brings more than just pumpkin candles and fall colors-it's a time to reflect on our progress and celebrate the incredible momentum we've built together.

At our recent State of the Department address on October 14, we had the opportunity to look back on a year of remarkable growth. I'm excited to share just a few of the highlights with you:

- **WE'RE GROWING!** Over the past two years, we've welcomed more than **20 new faculty members** to our department. Each brings unique expertise, energy, and passion to our mission, and we're thrilled to have each of them on board.
- **EXPANDING OUR REACH:** Our clinical footprint now spans over **20 sites across southwestern Ohio**, and we're proud to extend our care globally with active clinical activities in **Guatemala and Tanzania**. Be sure to check out the inspiring story in this issue that highlights our international work—and don't miss the interactive map showcasing all of our clinical sites!
- **EDUCATING THE FUTURE:** Our educational impact continues to grow. In the 2024–2025 academic year, we engaged with over **1,600 learners**, including **759 undergraduate students**, **93 graduate students**, **50 Family Medicine residents**, and **3 fellows**. We also celebrated the graduation of **10 newly board-certified family physicians**—congratulations to each of them!

These milestones are a testament to the dedication, collaboration, and vision that define our department. Whether you're a student, faculty member, staff, alumni, or community partner, your contributions are what make our work so meaningful. Thank you for being part of this journey. I hope you enjoy reading about the exciting developments and stories in this issue. Let's keep the momentum going!

Warmly,

Christy O'Dea, MD MPH FAAFP
Chair, Department of Family and Community Medicine
Christine.Odea@uc.edu



Christine O'Dea, MD, MPH
Chair



Scan here to view the interactive map of our clinical sites



DFCM Welcomes Your Support.

To donate online, scan above or visit [Give to Family Medicine](#). For more info call 513-556-6781.

[UC Family Medicine](#)



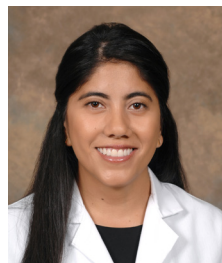
Facebook:
ucfamilymed

231 Albert Sabin Way
Cincinnati, OH 45267-0582

CHAIR:
CHRISTINE O'DEA

Assistant to:
Kim Hawkins
Kimberly.Hawkins@uc.edu
513-558-4021

Direct newsletter comments to Anderson.Christopher@uc.edu



Andrea Jaramillo, DO



Juliana Lavey, MD

WELCOME TO OUR NEW PALLIATIVE FELLOWS

The Hospice & Palliative Medicine (HPM) Fellowship welcomed Andrea Jaramillo, DO and Juliana Lavey, MD as the inaugural fellows for the 2025-2026 academic year. The HPM fellowship is housed within the Department of Family & Community Medicine and hosted at The West Chester Hospital. Reid Hartmann, MD is the HPM Fellowship Director, and the Associate Program Director is Lisa Kiser, MD.

The HPM Fellowship trains two fellows per year for this one-year program. A majority of their time is spent in inpatient palliative care consultation, equipping fellows to care for patients with serious life-limiting illness through a focus on symptom management as well as defining goals of care. The fellows also spend 10 weeks working with Hospice of Cincinnati, in both home and inpatient hospice settings.

The fellowship has dedicated training experiences in communication skills and weekly didactic sessions. There is strong collaboration with the Cincinnati Children's HPM Fellowship, as well as the Geriatrics Fellowship at West Chester Hospital.

While the fellowship is new at West Chester Hospital this academic year, the program is built on the training model implemented by Dr. Doug Smucker when the fellowship operated at The Christ Hospital. Many graduates of The Christ Hospital program are active faculty with the new fellowship.


SPOTLIGHT: ALUMNI UPDATES

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Andrew Bazemore, MD

CLASS OF 2000



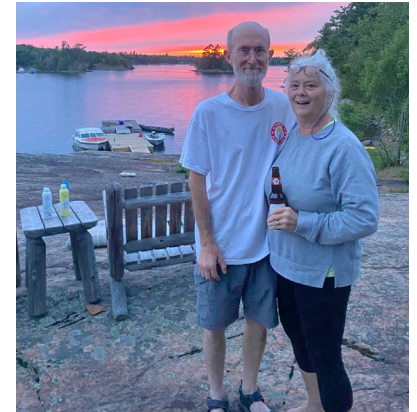
I'm doing well, and currently serving in a few different roles with the American Board of Family Medicine: as Senior Vice President for Research

& Policy, Co-director of its Center for Professionalism and Value in Health Care in Washington, and a steward of its national leadership/scholarship programs (e.g. Pisacano Scholars, Puffer Fellowship, etc.). And since that run-on sentence confuses even my parents about what the heck I do, overall it means offering whatever I can to advance equitable, high-quality primary care - through conducting & publishing policy-oriented research, organizing & hosting scientific convenings, and mentoring/advising wherever possible in these challenging times for U.S. public health and primary care. It also means serving on global, national and regional committees and boards, trying to lean into areas that seem most in need of attention, whether as incoming president for NAPCRG, board member for the Rural Medical Training Collaborative,

staying active as a member of the National Academy of Medicine, working on WONCA global committees and locally on primary care task forces and GME advisory groups in my home state (Virginia), or continuing to support the work that I enjoyed extending from UCincinnati to VCU in Intibuca, Honduras, where our residency is in its 20th year of work just up the road from the original Shoulder to Shoulder site in Santa Lucia. I always enjoy seeing UC Family Medicine colleagues when in Cincinnati (It was great to see many at the 50th anniversary celebrations last fall) and elsewhere - recently, my wonderful wife Carolyn and I got to spend time with 1997 residency classmate Kevin Anderson and his wife Kathleen at the WONCA World conferences in Portugal. Carolyn and I spend a lot of life outside of work chasing around and sharing the lives of 4 fabulous kids - 3 now in college and 1 graduate serving as an Americorps volunteer in Appalachian North Carolina - and at home taking care of the four pets they left us with :). I also stay active with friends and family, whether on the tennis court, bicycle, section-hiking 1000 miles of the Appalachian Trail in the last few years, or in suffering UNC games as a pathologically devoted Tarheel. Finally, I'm increasingly aware of how much I owe to UC DFCM and the many folks that I consider mentors and friends from my time in training and on faculty there... for which I am grateful.

Will Sawyer, MD

CLASS OF 1985



Dr. Sawyer with his wife, Stephanie, in Northern Ontario

The journey began after graduating from UCCOM 1982, then after looking into rotating internship since I was undecided which direction to go thought I would try a residency training in Family Medicine as it would be similar to a rotating internship. Completed the training at the UC Campus in 1985 and then Married 3 weeks later to Stephanie Erb having survived the medical training journey!

So, May 1, 1986 I began my solo practice and both relationships are still going strong 40 years later! Teaching and coaching patients to improve their health is our toughest task and after years of treating patients with viral respiratory infections, 4 children who attended daycare and keenly observing the hand hygiene behavior pattern of



IN MEMORY OF STEVEN D. BARTZ, MD, RPH – CLASS OF 1998

Our department was saddened to learn that Steven Bartz, MD, RPH, passed away on August 27, 2025. Dr. Bartz was a graduate of our Family Medicine Residency Program, Class of 1998, and a fellow of geriatric medicine. He joined the faculty, practiced, and taught in the UC Family Medicine program, and liked to say he'd spent as many years in school after 18 as before. Dr. Bartz was committed to serving those in need, joining seven Global Health trips to provide medical care in Honduras, Brazil, and Ecuador.

Dr. Stephen Bartz was an incredible human being and member of our faculty here at the UC Department of Family & Community Medicine. He will be greatly missed.



SPOTLIGHT: WELCOME NEW DFCM FACULTY MEMBERS

many patients, including myself, I became keenly aware of the simple touch (self-inoculation) of your own facial mucous membranes; T Zone., as the vehicle for transmission causing the illness. So, in the 90's, I created "Henry the Hand Champion Handwasher" as a tool to teach and change behavior for both adults and children about effective hand hygiene behaviors to reduce respiratory and gastro-intestinal infections; the 4 Principles of Hand Awareness. Seeing the benefit potential, I created a Foundation with the hopes of teaching the world these 4 Principles of Hand (Hygiene) Awareness to reduce infectious disease in many areas: school health, health care infection prevention, and early childcare. I am hoping that everyone follows the critical recommendation "Do not touch the T Zone" also referred to as the facial mucous membranes, the only portals of entry for ALL respiratory and GI infections! Since H1N1 in 2009 I have worn a face shield when treating patients with suspected infectious disease and broke my "unconscious" habit and have enjoyed great health.



Dr. Sawyer with Henry the Hand, Champion Handwasher

Then Covid changed how many of us provided medical care to this day. The acceptance of telehealth has allowed me as a solo FM to travel and enjoy my clinical practice instead of being locked into in-office face to face patient visits.



Katie Johnson, MD

What division are you a part of?
Medical Education Division

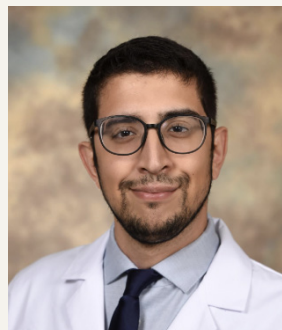
What is your hometown?
Cincinnati, OH

Where did you go to Medical School?
University of Cincinnati College of Medicine

Where did you attend for residency?
Christ/UC family medicine residency

What are some of your hobbies?
Playing with my kids, sourdough, volleyball

What do you love about being a family doctor?
I love the wonderful relationships that develop over the years with patients and their families!



Aaron Ramirez, MD, MPH

What division are you a part of?
I am a part of the Global Health Division.

What is your hometown?
Richmond, VA

Where did you go to Medical School?
Virginia Commonwealth University, School of Medicine

Where did you attend for residency?
University of Cincinnati/Cincinnati Children's Hospital Internal Medicine & Pediatrics Residency Program

What are some of your hobbies?
Painting, Cooking, Reading, Board Games

What do you love about being a family doctor/pediatrician?
That I get to be a part of someone's growth and development.

Fun Fact:
I am a big nerd—My favorite series is Avatar, the Last Airbender and I have a collection of all the comics and series.

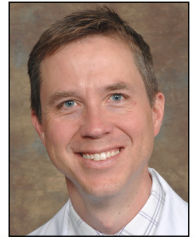
DIVISION UPDATE:

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PROGRAM
COORDINATOR
Sarah Jadeed
sarah.jadeed
@uc.edu

DIVISION OF URBAN, UNDERSERVED & GLOBAL HEALTH

Joseph Kiesler, MD, Director



Joseph Kiesler, MD

Greetings from the Division of Urban, Underserved and Global Health. We are excited to share a few of the highlights from our wonderful team and also ask for your continued support to do this work. First, we would like to thank our partner in Guatemala, Wuqu' Kawoq, whom we have been working with since 2015. Our mutual commitment to this partnership has allowed us to contribute to the communities Wuqu'Kawoq serves. Five times a year we send a team of healthcare professionals to assist Wuqu' Kawoq in caring for the community. These teams include our family medicine residents and attendings, medical students, public health students, pharmacy



David Strawhun, MD

students and health professionals from other medical schools/residencies. In between these visits, our residents and attendings provide continuity of care via telehealth.

To also assist with continuity, we are excited to have our UC Volunteer Physician, Dr. David Strawhun, working with Wuqu' Kawoq for the next year. A graduate of our Christ Hospital/UC Family Medicine Residency Program, Dr. Strawhun is seeing patients with Wuqu'Kawoq in between our team's visits and then serving as an attending for the team. It is invaluable to have David there to help coordinate logistics for the team and help provide follow-up for patients. David shared why he wanted to work with Wuqu'Kawoq as a UC Volunteer Physician - "I was impressed by their impactful clinical work and the evident trust they build within the communities in which they work. It is both through effective systems and the compassion of Wuqu' Kawoq's staff that make it such a special organization. From building diabetes treatment protocols that are effective and affordable to advocating for a laboring K'iche-speaking pregnant patient by having staff travel alongside them to Guatemala City to navigate a busy hospital system, I have seen firsthand just how powerful their work truly is. I have also seen how unique the relationship between University of Cincinnati and Wuqu' Kawoq is. UC attendings and resident physicians return to the same clinics every two months to provide consistent care, and every patient receives free, comprehensive services - this consistency is needed to build relationships and to have a meaningful impact." To follow Dr. Strawhun's work this year in Guatemala, please visit his [blog](#).



Dr. Strawhun's blog



Noemí Rico-Ceppi, MD

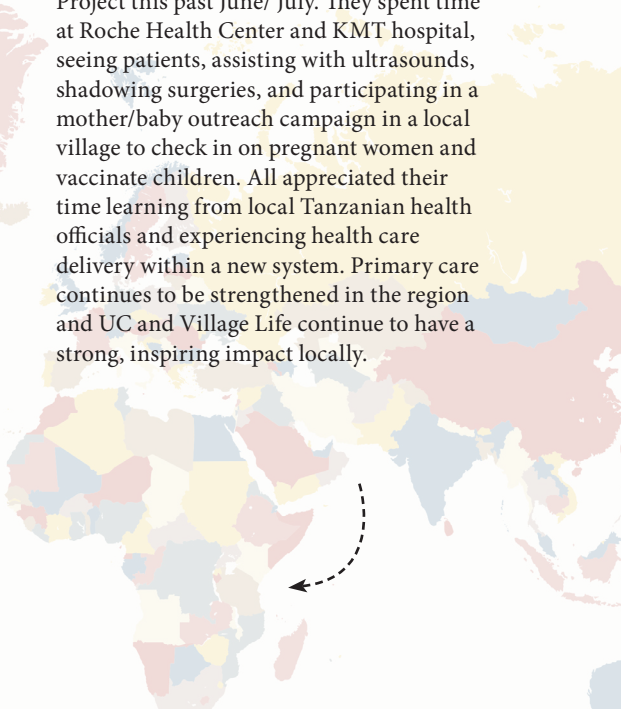
WELCOME OUR NEW GLOBAL HEALTH & MATERNITY CARE FELLOW

Hello everyone - my name is Noemí Rico-Ceppi, your new global health & maternity care fellow! I am originally from north central California but midwest-raised. I moved to Cincinnati in 2022 for FM residency at TCH/UC to join my husband who is currently completing his FM-psych residency here at UC. I absolutely LOVE the broad scope of family medicine with special interests in serving patients from classically oppressed backgrounds (particularly Spanish-speaking communities), women's health, & maternity care - both locally & abroad. I am so excited to join the department that's filled with caring individuals who share the same passion!

DIVISION UPDATE: Urban, Underserved & Global Health, Cont.

VILLAGE LIFE OUTREACH PROJECT IN TANZANIA

Medical students from the global health longitudinal elective, Global Health fellow, Navid Noori, MD, and faculty, Rebecca Fujimura, MD, traveled to Shirati, Tanzania with Village Life Outreach Project this past June/ July. They spent time at Roche Health Center and KMT hospital, seeing patients, assisting with ultrasounds, shadowing surgeries, and participating in a mother/baby outreach campaign in a local village to check in on pregnant women and vaccinate children. All appreciated their time learning from local Tanzanian health officials and experiencing health care delivery within a new system. Primary care continues to be strengthened in the region and UC and Village Life continue to have a strong, inspiring impact locally.



Dr. Noori and Dr. Fujimura at Roche Health Clinic (SHED/VL)



Roche Health Clinic (SHED/VL) and local staff



GHLE students at Shirati KMT Hospital

DIVISION UPDATE:

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MEDICAL EDUCATION DIVISION

Sarah Pickle, MD, Director



Sarah Pickle, MD

EXPANDING RURAL HEALTH TRAINING: NEW MEDICAL EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP IN HILLSBORO

PROGRAM
COORDINATOR
Mckenzie Breig
mckenzie.breig
@uc.edu

As part of our growing efforts to expand rural health training, the UC Department of Family and Community Medicine recently launched a new rotation site in partnership with the UC Area Health Education Center (AHEC). Fourth-year medical student Caroline Hazapas was among the first to participate in this four-week rural Family Medicine elective, based at The Wright Center/HealthSource Residency in Hillsboro, OH under the directorship of Dr. Mike Dietz, and Highland District Hospital.

Caroline described the rotation as both welcoming and educationally rich, noting the balance of autonomy and support she received from dedicated preceptors. She gained hands-on experience in full-spectrum rural care, including procedures, osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT), and point-of-care ultrasound. The rotation offered a well-rounded experience across clinic, hospital, and community settings—with teaching tailored to learner needs and a team invested in medical education.

Beyond clinical learning, the rotation offered meaningful community engagement. Caroline was hosted by local physician Dr. Anthony Wetherington and his family, sharing meals and conversations that brought rural life into focus. She also participated in hospital rounding, resident didactics, nursing home visits, and time at the University Health Clinic in Wilmington.

This new partnership reflects our division's commitment to preparing future family physicians for practice in rural and underserved areas—centering on continuity, community, and relationship-based care.



Caroline Hazapas (far right) pictured with another resident and preceptor, Dr. Anthony Wetherington (center).

DIVISION UPDATE: Medical Education Division, Cont.

CAREERS IN MEDICINE WEEK SHOWCASES THE BREADTH OF FAMILY MEDICINE

During the Careers in Medicine Week, hosted by the Office of Student Affairs, the Department of Family and Community Medicine designed and led three featured events to help second-year medical students explore the range and impact of Family Medicine. More than 90 students participated in interactive sessions that highlighted both the depth of clinical practice and the unique scope of primary care careers.

Family Medicine faculty hosted engaging panels that emphasized advanced scope of practice and innovative models of care, including lifestyle medicine, pain management in primary care, and direct primary care. These discussions illustrated how family physicians are leading new approaches to patient-centered care that prioritize prevention, quality of life, and continuity.

Students also participated in fellowship exploration sessions covering opportunities in Developmental Medicine, Geriatrics, Global Health, LGBTQ+ Health, Palliative Care, and Primary Care Oncology. Faculty and fellows shared insights into how specialized training within Family Medicine can prepare physicians to address evolving community and population health needs.



A medical student participating in the suturing hands-on procedural training workshop.



DFCM faculty member, Dr. Rocky Ellis, leading a workshop



Medical students participate in a hands-on procedural training workshop practicing IUD insertions.

Hands-on procedural training workshops offered another highlight of the week. Under the guidance of Family Medicine faculty and residents, students practiced musculoskeletal and joint injections, IUD insertions, dermatologic biopsies, and suturing—skills central to comprehensive primary care practice.

The department's contributions to Careers in Medicine Week reflected the collaborative spirit of Family Medicine and its commitment to medical student education. Through these interactive experiences, students gained practical skills, career insight, and a deeper appreciation for the versatility and leadership opportunities within the specialty.

A heartfelt thank-you to the Family Medicine faculty, fellows, and residents who generously shared their time and expertise, helping to inspire the next generation of family medicine physicians.

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University of Cincinnati College of Medicine
Department of Family and Community Medicine
Medical Sciences Building 4012
231 Albert Sabin Way
PO Box 670582
Cincinnati, Ohio 45267-0582

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



OUR 2025 UC FAMILY MEDICINE RESIDENCY GRADUATES

From left to right: Dorjee Norbu, Samantha Lammie, Noemí Rico-Ceppi, Julie Lavey, Sage Hunt, Samia Nandyal, Elsie Ikpot, Josh Smith, and David Strawhun