

General Faculty Meeting

October 23, 2025 7:00a-8:00a

Department of Pediatrics

Zoom



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Celebrate!



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Publications



Alyssa Averhoff, DO & Courtney McLean, MD
had a publication in Air Medical Journal
*"Effects of Transport Team Composition on
Neonatal Intubation Success."*



Elizabeth Null, MD, FAAP, FACMG
had a publication recently, due to for print in
December 2025 in Molecular Genetics and
Metabolism Reports. *"Carbonic anhydrase VA
deficiency due to a novel CA5A variant"*



Sarah Swenson, MD, DPhil
had an op Ed published on the impact of
changing immigration policies on infants in
the NICU. *"Immigration policies are creating
impossible choices for NICU families: Lelis
Vernon, Sarah Swenson and Emily Miller"*

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Publications



Eleanor Gradidge, MD

had an abstract accepted to SCCM World Congress in 2026 and given a Star Research Award. Akande M, White, B, **Gradidge E**, Naumann M, Rogerson C, Polikoff L, McCrory M.

“Neighborhood Child Opportunity Index 3.0 and Clinical Outcomes of Pediatric Critical Asthma.”



Melissa Thoene, PhD, RD, LMNT & Ann Anderson Berry, MD, PhD

had a publication in Nutrients. [“Differential Plasma Carotenoid Profiles in Hypertensive Disorders of Pregnancy.”](#)



Ruben Quiros, MD

Was a co-author in a multicenter study by the Global ALagille Alliance (GALA) Study Group representing 34 countries.

[“Phenotypic Divergence of JAG1- and NOTCH2-Associated Alagille Syndrome & Disease-Specific NOTCH2 Variant Classification Guidelines.”](#)

He and **Morgan Dreesen, MD** also presented abstracts at the [19th Congress of the International Intestinal Rehabilitation and Transplantation Association \(CIIRTA\). Gothenburg, Sweden. September 10-13, 2025:](#)

Quiros-Tejeira RE. *Iron Deficiency in Children with Short Bowel Syndrome.*

Dreesen M, Quiros-Tejeira RE. *D-Lactic Acidosis in Pediatric Patients with Short Bowel Syndrome: Diagnosis and Management.*

Quiros-Tejeira RE. *Assessing the Dynamic Nature of Quality of Life in Pediatric Intestinal Failure: Insights from a Monthly Longitudinal Study.*

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Faculty Achievements



Bradford Becken, III, MD

was recently mentioned in a story published in the Omaha World Herald on a child that he treated with a rare ear infection. *“Elkhorn 8-year-old kicks rare ear infection with rarer treatment.”*



Heather Thomas, MD

is a 2025 recipient of the annual Cystic Fibrosis Foundation’s Quality Improvement Award. The CF team will be recognized for outstanding QI processes and accomplishments at NACFC.



Kari Simonsen, MD, MBA, FPIDS

has recently been elected as secretary-treasurer of the Pediatric Infectious Disease Society.

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Faculty Achievements



Heidi Castillo, MD & Jonathan Castillo, MD

The American Academy of Pediatrics promoted in the month of October, work completed by Drs. Heidi Castillo and Jonathan Castillo on **Health Care Transition** in Spina Bifida. The development of these *Videos* and *Best Practice Resources* was funded by the CDC.



Allison Ashford, MD

is fighting for healthcare at a National level.



Arwa Nasir, MBBS

gave two presentations on "Global trends in autism diagnosis" at the congress of the union of middle eastern and mediterranean pediatric societies and the Jordan pediatric society meeting in Amman Jordan.

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Faculty Achievements



Jill Skrabal, PhD, RD, LMNT, CDE

received the Everyday Life Saver Award, this is a prestigious award from the Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) Newborn Screening Symposium. This is to recognize individuals for their contributions to the newborn screening system.



Jared Baxter, MD

was nominated for the Emergency Nurses Association of Nebraska ED Provider Award, honoring an ED provider who provides excellent patient care and advocates for emergency nurses. "He is a great patient advocate and always makes sure that the families of our patients understand the plan of care and the whys of what we are doing."



Sidharth Mahapatra, MD, PhD

was invited to present a poster at the College of Medicine Annual Research Retreat on in recognition of outstanding scientific achievement: **Awarded New Federal Funding in FY25.**

Is also traveling to Chicago to film a segment highlighting his research for the Children's Hospital Association (CHA). CHA is creating a new video focusing on medical research happening at children's hospitals. He will be amongst 3 other researchers from Lurie Children's, Cincinnati Children's, and Children's Wisconsin.

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Grants/Research



Shirley Delair, MD, PhD, MPH

is co-investigator on a new grant: University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) FY 2025 RWHAP Part D WICY Supplemental Funding: HIV Care Innovation: Implementing Evidence-Informed Interventions
Specific aim of project: To adapt and implement an evidence-informed intervention titled Intervention to Telehealth and Text to Improve Engagement in Care (i2TEC) to increase enrollment among low-income women and youth, with the goal of improving engagement in holistic, high-quality HIV primary care at Specialty Care Center (SCC) among the Ryan White Part D Program population.

Melissa Acquazzino, MD

has new NIH funding "Tracking and Engaging Disconnected Long-Term Survivors of Childhood Cancer to Improve Adherence to Evidence-Based Screening Guidelines" funding has been issued as a supplement to the Cancer Center Support Grant



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Children's Nebraska has officially been verified as a **Level 1 Pediatric Trauma Center** by the American College of Surgeons (ACS)!!!!

Lots of medical specialties are also required for the certification,
special kudos to those faculty that are on the trauma team:

Rob Chaplin

Jim Buscher

Suzanne Haney



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Debbie Tomek is celebrating 30
years with Children's!!

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Gen-Peds Kearney

Angela Kratochvil-Stava, MD

“She is very good with my kids. Very professional, very kind. She makes going to the doctor a very easy experience, no matter what the issue is. And I just really appreciate having her as part of our care team and part of my kids’ lives.”

Hematology/Oncology

Don Coulter, MD

“I just want to say that Dr. Coulter and his nurse, Anissa Hoie, are very sweet people, very helpful, and very kind and patient with my daughter.”



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Infectious Disease

ID Team

“I really liked the attention I received.

They spoke very well about my situation. They were very attentive during my appointment and were very attentive to everything I needed to discuss. And they answered my questions very well.”

Emergency Medicine

Jared Baxter, MD

“Great Experience!!”



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Allergy

Hana Niebur, MD

“She was so helpful with my son and all of his allergy concerns and any questions that we had. I am very satisfied with her service and I don't think that our son's allergies would have improved as much and as soon without her help.”

Genetics

Christopher Cummings, MD, PhD

“The doctor was awesome. The nurses are awesome. It was just a very awesome appointment. Very happy with the results. Keep up the good work.”



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Cardiology

Trey Jantzen, MD, FASE

“Dr. Jantzen is the best! From the moment I was a scared mom with a 6-month-old baby seeing cardiology, fast forward to a healthy 3-year-old who doesn't need to come back, he provided excellent care.”

Thomas Becker, MD

“Dr. Becker was wonderful. His nursing staff and the technicians were wonderful. Thank you for everything that you've done for my son and really appreciate it.”

Scott Fletcher, MD

“The nurses and doctors that come to Norfolk Clinic for Cardiology have always been very timely and very courteous and very knowledgeable of any questions that we've asked.”

Daniel Vari, MD

“He took extra time in discussing all the questions I had about my child. He studied her case beforehand and knew everything about her. I have never had a doctor that seemed genuinely happy to be there. Thank you, Dr. Vari!”

Jill Shivapour, MD

Dr. Shivapour is a wonderful doctor! She truly cares about her patients and their families. The staff were great!

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Endocrinology

Heather Wadams, MD

“They are all very friendly, and I feel like they were listening to me the entire time, and they go beyond to help us.”

Rebecca Johnson, MD

“She was very good at explaining things in language my daughter and her father could understand. I felt heard and respected by her rather than talked down to, and I am absolutely thrilled she is up to date with the latest research and best practices.”

Salaheddin Elrokhsi, MD, MSc

“He is absolutely fabulous. We love how caring he is and he looks at the whole situation and he thinks of things that I’m thinking of and says them before I get to say them. He’s very on the ball and considerate.”

Monina Cabrera, MD

“I would like to thank all of children's Nebraska for the exceptional care you have given and for saving her life.”



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General Pediatrics-UNMC

Helen Grace, DO

“Always is very efficient, always knows our case, and takes all the time we need and does not rush us and meets every need we have. And we so appreciate her and her nursing staff. They help us tremendously.”

Debbie Tomek, MD

Students said “Dr. Tomek has the best bedside manner I have ever seen.”
Students went on to talk about how much this influenced them and set an example they want to emulate in practice.



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Nephrology

Miranda Floen, MD
“Dr. Floen in Nephrology
was amazing!”

Morgan Beebe, MD, MA
“Dr. Beebe was amazing!!! She
listened and explained things in
an easy to understand way. Most
importantly for me, my daughter
felt very comfortable with her.”

Flu Shots!!!

Liz Null is pictured
getting her flu shot
while doing a
consult on a
Saturday. The
med/surg nurses
helped to give flu
shots since the
hospital medicine
team was busy.
Great teamwork in
action!



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5-Star Google Reviews



Salaheddin Elrokhsi,
MD, MSc



Alvaro Flores Lopez,
MD



Minnie
Abromowitch, MD



Sree Valli Aparna
Srishti, MD



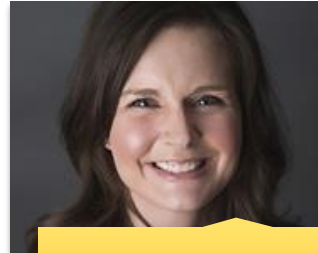
Rhonda Wright, MD



Steven Haskett, MD



Kody Moffatt, MD



Melissa Caha, DO



Helen Lovell, MD



Heather Thomas,
MD

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Celebrate Our Successes!!

Send copies of awards, certificates, publications, grants, recognitions, honors, etc. (along with photographs) to Steph Montgomery.

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