



## June 2023 Newsletter

Welcome to the third edition of The Scalpel. In this edition we will turn our spotlight on the recent research initiatives of the surgery department. We are acutely aware that research is a critical component of any reputable academic department. In the last several months, we have essentially laid a solid foundation to create a sustainable research initiative in the department. We believe that, in our quest to train doctors of the future, especially in this ever-changing healthcare landscape, engaging in research activity is important. This does not only stimulate them to be inquisitive, but also to be lifelong learners. Under the leadership of our Vice Chair of research, Dr. Phelan, we have invested in many ways to remove the bottlenecks and make it easy for our faculty and learners to participate in research. This is important because we recognize that they have many other competing interests and expectations. We have hired a research coordinator to not only help coordinate clinical trials but also to help the investigators obtain IRBs and other necessary paperwork. We currently have 1 FTE statistician employed by the department who works with students, residents, and faculty helping with writing manuscripts and grants. We have initiated both faculty and resident research meetings which have stimulated significant interest and robust participation. Last month, we had our first Department of Surgery Research Symposium, hosted by our invited visiting professor Dr. Tim Pawlik, Professor and Chair of Surgery at the Ohio State University. This was a very successful event with multiple cutting-edge research projects presented by our medical students, residents, and faculty. Our goal is to continue to accentuate research, to foster intellectual curiosity, and to create a department that is nationally recognized for its research endeavors, funding, and NIH standing.

More importantly, we seek to provide more innovative treatment options for our patients, through our translational research, to continue to improve their overall outcomes. To achieve our research goals, we will collaborate with other departments within our institution and beyond and continue to build new bridges.

Sincerely,



**Valentine N. Nfonsam, MD, MS, FACS, FASCRS**  
Professor and Chair  
Isidore Cohn Jr., MD Endowed Chair of Surgery  
Department of Surgery  
School of Medicine  
LSU Health New Orleans



## Wins and Accomplishments

*Congratulations*

*to our faculty that were promoted and tenured this year!*



**Michael Cook, MD, FACS**  
Associate Professor of  
Clinical Surgery



**Fabienne Gray, MD, FACS**  
Associate Professor of  
Clinical Surgery



**Frank Lau, MD, FACS**  
Professor of  
Clinical Surgery



**Mary Maluccio, MD, MPH, FACS**  
Tenured Professor  
of Surgery

## *A Trip to Bulgaria*



In May, Drs. Morrison and Hodgdon visited the University of Pleven in Pleven, Bulgaria for the third time. The trip consisted primarily of lectures related to minimally invasive surgery aimed toward education of medical students and surgical residents at the University. The program at the medical school includes hands-on suture labs on live pig models for the residents as well as lectures. The university is an international medical school with students from all over the world.

This trip also included lectures by the World Team given at the inaugural meeting of the Bulgarian Association of Minimally Invasive and Robotic Surgeons. Last year they were included as lecture guests of the Bulgarian Surgical Association at their annual congress, and in 2019 they lectured at the meeting of the Society of European Robotic Surgeons in Sofia, Bulgaria. The World Team is comprised of a group of surgeons, gynecologists and urologists from the Society of Laparoscopic and Robotic Surgeons here in the US. This team has traveled to several different countries educating local practicing surgeons and residents. There are currently two more planned trips for next year in affiliation with the University of Pleven in Bulgaria. We look forward to developing this relationship further with the University of Pleven!



# Education Updates

Changes to didactics are coming! Starting with the new academic year, our schedule for Thursday conference will shift in an effort to better align education across our three campuses. The general outline is as follows:

6:30am - Didactics  
7:30am - Grand Rounds  
8:30am M&M

The first Thursday of every month will consist of didactics only, as the department's faculty meeting takes place at 7:30am.



June 8, 2023 was the Resident Research Day where all the PGY-4 residents present their research projects to residents, faculty, and medical students.

# Research Symposium Winners

*The scores are in, and the winners of the Department of Surgery's 1st Annual Research Symposium have been announced. Congratulations to everyone who presented!*

## Oral Presentations



Celia Short, MD  
General Surgery, PGY-4

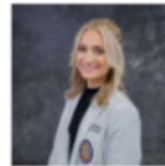


Logan Gold, BS  
MS-3



Harel Schwartzberg, MD  
Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery,  
PGY-2

## Quick-Shot Presentations



Hannah Leblanc, BS  
MS-3



Morgan Brown, MD  
General Surgery, PGY-2



Robert Ross, MD, MPH  
Research Fellow

## Poster Presentations



Michael Maurer, BS  
MS-2



Katherine Pavleszek, BS  
MS-2



Austin Primeaux, BS  
MS-3

# Alumni Spotlight



## **Sybile Val, MD, FACS**

Board Certified Plastic & Reconstructive Surgeon

Val Plastic Surgery - Atlanta, GA

Hometown: Westchester, New York

Medical School: Wright State University School of Medicine

Residency: SUNY Downstate for General Surgery, LSU Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery  
Class of: 2014

With a passion for learning from the best, LSU Surgery was an easy choice. I picked LSU because microsurgical breast reconstruction was pioneered in New Orleans.

Innovative thinkers have always been a part of the fabric of LSU Surgery. I'm proud to have trained under so many innovators and progressive thinkers. For the future, I see the department continuing its legacy of innovation, excellence, and progressive strategic growth.

My dedication to women's health as well as diversity, equity, and inclusion in the field of plastic surgery continue to be my professional focus. I am excited to participate in local and national initiatives aimed at providing better care for all women as well as diversification efforts in medicine at the medical school, residency/fellowship levels.

# Faculty Spotlight



## **Shawn McKinney, MD, MPH, FACS**

Vice Chair of Quality & Safety

Professor of Clinical Surgery

Division of Surgical Oncology

Joined Faculty: 2020

Hometown: New Orleans, LA

Medical School: Morehouse School of Medicine

Residency: Morehouse School of Medicine

Fellowship: Surgical Breast Oncology at Baylor University

When choosing to come to LSU, I was drawn to the dedication of the faculty to fulfill the overall mission of taking care of those patients who need it the most. Throughout my career I have always been associated with an academic medical center and the ability to continue to make an impact to train the next generation of medical students and surgical residents was also appealing. I was recruited to develop the LSU Breast Program, and I do feel that we have a group of specialists who provide the best care to our patients. We regularly collaborate to deliver evidenced based care to each patient.

The department is composed of very talented surgeons who are experts in their field who I feel have respect for each other. Our department has had a reputation of physicians who have a heart for the community, and this continues to this day. I am proud to be a part of training residents who I feel will be very capable compassionate future surgeons.

Looking towards the future, our goals are to increase access to breast care, as well as expand community education. There are large breast cancer disparities that exist in this State and our goals are focused on making sure that our program is the model for delivering excellent breast care. As the Vice Chair for Quality and Safety, future goals are centered around creating divisions of excellence in our various departments while making sure that each of them adhere to standard quality measures.

Currently I am working to increase our breast cancer research efforts in both the clinical and basic science arena focusing on decreasing the disparities associated with breast cancer. Our program partners with the LSU Department of Public Health and Xavier University of Louisiana to actively create educational seminars for both the lay community and physicians, an effort that we will continue to expand. I am actively involved in the American Society of Breast Surgeons and hold positions on two of their national committees. To impact more patients on a larger scale I am involved in advocacy efforts in the State by being a member of the Cancer Advocacy Group of Louisiana (CALGA) whose goal is to engage the legislature to implement laws that improve the care of all cancer patients.

# Resident Spotlight



## **Angelle Hogan, MD**

PGY-5, General Surgery Resident

Administrative Chief Resident

Hometown: Thibodaux, LA

Medical School: LSU Health - New Orleans

Fellowship: Vascular Surgery at University of Tennessee (August 2023)

I chose LSU because of everything it has to offer! LSU is a historic institution that has taught many of the surgeons that now treat patients in South Louisiana. As a local from Louisiana, I was looking to treat patients from my community. At LSU, I was promised a large case volume and varied clinical experience. In addition, I really enjoyed my time as a medical student learning from the faculty and residents.

I am proud to be an LSU Surgery resident. I have been given the opportunity to learn from dedicated and innovative faculty, staff, and co-residents in a diverse set of clinical environments. I am proud to say that we have true resident run clinics and graduated autonomy with upper level residents teaching lower level residents. LSU prepares its residents for anything, whether that be independent practice or additional training in competitive subspecialties. In the future, I hope that LSU Surgery continues to provide diverse clinical patient experiences for its residents, and I hope that subspecialty services like endocrine, thoracic and surgical oncology will continue to grow. I hope that residents will continue to participate in clinical research and quality improvement projects to improve the care we provide to our patients.

I have completed and recently published my research project "Palliative care reduces emergency room visits and total hospital days among patients with metastatic HPB and GI cancers" while working as a clinical resident. I am a member of several societies including SVS, ACS, along with many others. I am currently looking forward to graduation in 1 month and starting my Vascular Surgery fellowship in August! I am also excited to celebrate my daughter, Aubrey's first birthday in August!



# Wellness Corner



## ***Addressing Surgeon Burnout Through a Multi-level Approach: A National Call to Action***

Physicians experience more burnout and dissatisfaction with work-life balance than the general population, and it is the only field in which individuals feel they have worse work-life balance the further they advance in their professional career. Surgeons exhibit some of the highest rates of burnout and stress in the field of medicine. In a 2021 online Medscape survey of over 12,000 physicians, 42% of all respondents and 35% of general surgeons reported symptoms of burnout. Other studies demonstrate the prevalence to be as high as 50% in attending surgeons and nearly 70% in surgical trainees. Further, it is reported that burnout, stress, and distress are 2–5 × higher in surgery residents compared with the general population. In the trauma surgery population, only 43% were satisfied with their work-life balance and 61% reported symptoms of burnout. Looking past the nuances of each of these studies, the bottom line is that (1) rates of burnout are on the rise and (2) it is a systemic issue that should be remedied.

[Read more >>](#)

# Mark Your Calendars



## DEPARTMENT OF SURGERY GRADUATION

JUNE 24, 2023

*7pm - 10pm*

*New Orleans Marriott*

*Warehouse Arts District*

*859 Convention Center Blvd.*

*New Orleans, LA 70130*

It's that time of year! Graduation is right around the corner. This year, we are holding graduation on Saturday, June 24, 2023 at the New Orleans Marriott Warehouse Arts District. Pricing for graduation is below. We are also asking our supportive alumni to help sponsor a table for graduation. Your donation helps us be able to celebrate this momentous achievement for our residents. You can use the link below to purchase tickets and sponsor a table.

### Pricing

Graduating Residents — \$0 (plus 5 guests)

Graduating Fellows — \$0 (plus 2 guests)

Current Residents — \$25/each (plus \$50 for one optional guest)

Faculty and other Guests — \$150/each

Sponsor a Table of 12 — \$1,500

[Purchase Tickets Here](#)

# NEW HEADSHOTS

This is the **LAST** scheduled day for headshots. We will also be doing headshots of the incoming interns.

New headshots are **REQUIRED** for all faculty, staff, and residents.



CALS Building – 8th Floor

Monday, June 26  
11am - 1pm

**\*\* WHITE COATS REQUIRED \*\***

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