



# THE SCALPEL

## October 2023 Newsletter

Exactly one year ago to the day, I assumed the leadership of this storied department. What a year it has been! Abraham Lincoln once said, “The best way to predict the future is to create it” That is exactly what we have been doing this past year, creating our future. We have been creating a future that provides excellent training for our learners. Creating a future that seeks to ensure quality and compassionate care for all our patients regardless of their station in life. Creating a future that accentuates research and innovation and helps our trainees to be lifelong learners. Creating a work environment that is welcoming, fair and seeks to promote everyone.

Over the course of this year, we have revamped our residents’ education curriculum and sharpened the education vision for the department. We have not only promoted research but provided true support for it, and we have seen significant results with the number of residents and faculty engaging in research and a significant increase in the number of national research presentations from the department. We have also restructured the clinical divisions and focused on strategic access, growth, and quality outcomes. At the same time, we have been fiscally responsible but still invested in faculty development.

The achievements of this first year would not have been possible without the incredible support of the staff, faculty, residents, and the School of Medicine and hospital administration support. I am truly grateful for this support and continue to count on it. In the years to come, we will continue to predict the future of this department by intentionally creating it ourselves. Our possibilities are endless.

**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



## ***Dr. Allen hits 5000 Diep Flaps!***

Robert J. Allen, M.D., is the pioneer of the muscle sparing DIEP/SIEA/S-GAP/I-GAP perforator flaps, and on September 27, 2023 he completed his 5,000th Diep Flap procedure.



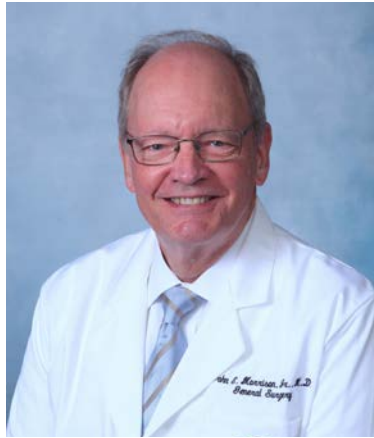


# Academy of Master Surgeon Educators

*Congratulations to our four faculty members that were inducted into the Academy of Master Surgeon Educators this past weekend. Thank you for continuing to represent LSU Surgery's commitment to education.*



Kurt Davis, MD



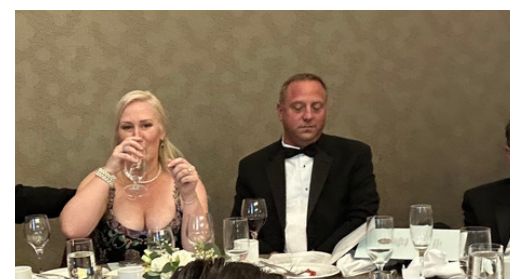
John Morrison, MD



John Paige, MD



Lance Stuke, MD



# Castle Connolly Top Doctors 2023

*Congratulations to our faculty that were named Top Doctors according to Castle Connolly's 2023 rankings!*



**Kelly Babineaux, MD, FACS**  
Hand Surgery



**Fabienne Gray, MD, FACS**  
Pediatric Surgery



**Shawn McKinney, MD, MPH, FACS**  
Surgical Oncology



**Valentine Nfonsam, MD, MS, FACS, FASCRS**  
Colon & Rectal Surgery



**Timothy Pettitt, MD, FACS**  
Pediatric Cardiothoracic Surgery



**Malachi Sheahan III, MD, FACS**  
Vascular Surgery



**Hugo St. Hilaire, MD, DDS, FACS**  
Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery



**Jessica Zagory, MD, FACS**  
Pediatric Surgery

*And special shout out to Dr. Bevier-Rawls on being named one of 2023's Rising Stars!*



**Elyse Bevier-Rawls, MD, FACS**  
Colon & Rectal Surgery



# ***Trauma/Critical Care Surgery Match Day***

*Welcome our newly matched Critical Care Fellows for the next academic year!*

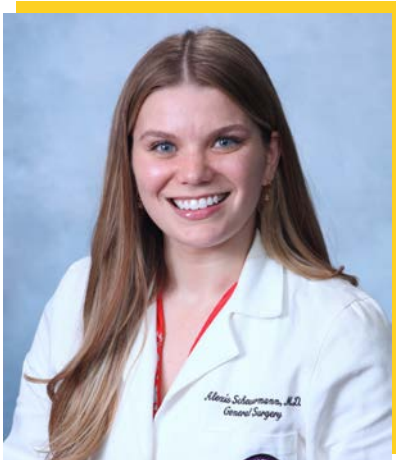


**Roslyn Alexander, DO**  
*St. Luke's University Health Network*



**Jennifer Brewer, MD**  
*University of Connecticut*

*And congratulations to our own chief residents that matched into Trauma/Critical Care Surgery fellowships!*



**Alexis Scheuermann, MD**  
*Univ. of Alabama Medical Center  
Birmingham, AL*



**Griffin Brown, MD**  
*Thomas Jefferson University  
Philadelphia, PA*

# Education Updates

October is vascular month for the Department of Surgery, and we have several events planned.



LSU will be hosting the annual meeting of the Gulf Coast Vascular Society on Saturday October 14 at the Roosevelt Hotel. Breakfast starts at 7am, and the meeting will run until noon in the 2nd Floor Orpheum Room. All General Surgery and Vascular residents are expected to attend.

Our visiting professor this year will be Kellie R. Brown, MD, FACS of the Medical College of Wisconsin. Dr. Brown is the current Chair of the Vascular Surgery Board.

Her Grand Rounds will be on October 19, 2023 at 7:30am at the Human Development Center.



# Alumni Spotlight



## **Lea Blackwell, MD FACS**

Breast Surgeon

Precision Health Care, Fort Myers, FL

Hometown: Panama City, FL

Medical School: LSU Shreveport

Residency: General Surgery at LSU New Orleans

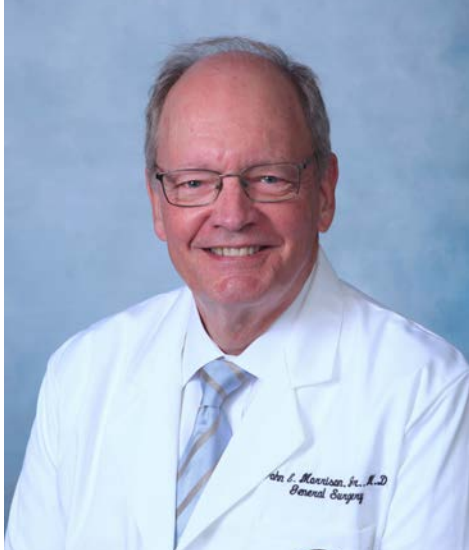
Fellowship: Washington Hospital Center,  
Washington, DC

Dr. Blackwell always wanted to be a resident at LSU. “I knew it was going to provide me with the absolute best training, and I knew graduates from the program that were outstanding.” She is proud of how well LSU Surgery prepared her for a career in surgery. She’s proud to see all the extraordinary things accomplished by her fellow residents that she trained alongside with.

Currently, she’s working on providing surgical care for the patients in her local community, and she’s working on the bra project. Dr. Blackwell, designed the Blackwell Bra to maximize patients’ post-op comfort throughout their healing journey. The Blackwell Bra was designed to make her patients happy and their post-op recovery more comfortable. It features front clasps to make them easier to adjust, pockets to hold post-op drains, and mesh panels to allow breathability.



# Faculty Spotlight



## **John E. Morrison, MD, FACS, DrHC, MAMSE**

Professor of Clinical Surgery

Division of General Surgery

Joined Faculty: November 2007

Hometown: New Orleans, LA

Medical School: LSU School of Medicine

Residency: LSU Department of Surgery

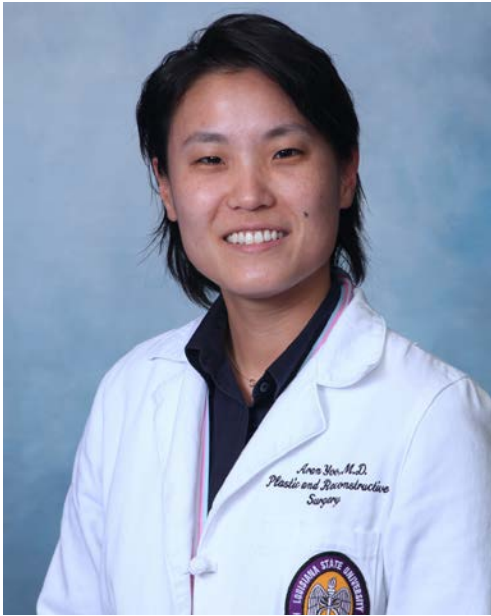
Dr. Morrison is a longtime beloved figure in the LSU Department of Surgery. He chose to join our faculty as a way to give back to the program. “After being in private practice for 25 years, it was an opportunity to give back to the institution that had given me so much in training and experience that prepared me for practice.” He’s proud that our department still produces residents that are capable of caring for surgical patients regardless of institution. He knows that our trainees are prepared to provide services to patients of large institutions or rural villages with a high level of skill. Dr. Morrison hopes that LSU Surgery continues to prepare these surgeons for a future of delivering quality surgical care.

Currently, Dr. Morrison is developing our outreach to help train medical students and surgical residents in Romania and Bulgaria in conjunction with the Society of Laparoscopic Surgeons. He’s also busy reaching out to medical schools in Puerto Rico to teach medical students and increase their interest in surgery. Dr. Morrison is also working on a long term project that focuses on reentry from incarceration and providing assistance for incorporating them back into society as well as violence reduction strategies.

“Being in private practice or being in academia, delivering good surgical care is and should be the goal of our medical students, residents, and faculty. We should do everything we can to make certain that this happens.”



# Resident Spotlight



## **Aran Yoo, MD**

PGY-5, Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery  
Resident

Hometown: Champaign, IL

Medical School: University of Illinois  
College of Medicine

Dr. Yoo chose LSU Department of Surgery for the diversity and challenge of cases, expertise in reconstructive microsurgery and the camaraderie amongst residents. She's proud that LSU Surgery always works at the goal of providing better patient care and resident education, and she hopes that LSU continues to provide the camaraderie and provision of excellent patient care.

Right now, she will be finishing up research projects looking at the incidence of fat necrosis in DIEP flaps as well as preparing for a career in gender affirmation surgery.

After graduation, Dr. Yoo is joining a practice to perform gender affirmation surgery.

# Wellness Corner



## *October 10 is World Mental Health Day*

The overall objective of World Mental Health Day is to raise awareness of mental health issues around the world and to mobilize efforts in support of mental health. This day provides an opportunity for all stakeholders working on mental health issues to talk about their work, and what more needs to be done to make mental health care a reality for people worldwide. **For surgeons, the importance of mental health may not be regularly discussed, but it should be:**

Doctors are dying by suicide at higher rates than the general population. Somewhere between 300 to 400 physicians a year in the US take their own lives, **the equivalent of one medical school graduating class annually.** Surgeons have some of the highest known rates of suicide among physicians. Of 697 physician suicides reported to the CDC's national violent death reporting system between 2003 and 2017, 71 were surgeons.

**[Read more >>](#)**

# Mark Your Calendars!



**CLINICAL CONGRESS 2023**  
BOSTON, MA  
OCTOBER 22-25

ACS / AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

RSVP at » [tinyurl.com/rsvp-lsusurg](https://tinyurl.com/rsvp-lsusurg)

**LSU Health** NEW ORLEANS **Department of Surgery**

You are cordially invited to our

## Alumni Reception

Tuesday, October 24, 2023  
Aloft Boston Seaport Hotel  
Boston, MA  
Room: Mann 2 and 3  
5pm – 7pm

*Co-Hosted by the Departments of Surgery  
Tulane University  
University of Mississippi*

## State of the Department



**Thursday, November 9, 2023**

**7:30am - 8:30am**

**Human Development Center  
1st Floor Auditorium**

*411 S. Prieur Street  
New Orleans, LA 70112*

All faculty, staff,  
residents, and fellows  
are required to attend



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