



AU/UGA Medical Partnership, St. Mary's fill all positions in Internal Medicine Residency Program amid COVID-19

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Athens, GA – March 23, 2021 – The Augusta University/University of Georgia Medical Partnership Internal Medicine Residency Program at St. Mary's has filled all openings for its new class of medical residents for the seventh time in its seven-year history.

The new residents will begin practicing at St. Mary's Health Care System on July 1 under the supervision of advanced resident physicians and physician faculty from the Medical College of Georgia at Augusta University, as well as area community-based teaching faculty. In addition to providing supervised patient care in Athens, their 3-year residency involves ongoing education and rural healthcare rotations in Greene County.

Residency is the final step in a physician's education before becoming a fully licensed and independent practitioner.

"This is the second class of residents who are entering the practice of medicine during an ongoing pandemic," said Jason Smith, M.D., St. Mary's Chief Medical Officer. "Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, these new physicians in our Class of 2024 will have a unique perspective that will be with them for their entire career."

The AU/UGA Medical Partnership Internal Medicine Residency Program (IMRP) is Northeast Georgia's first modern graduate medical education program and received full accreditation from the Accreditation Council of Graduate Medical Education in October 2016.

"We are honored once again to have received so many truly exceptional applicants to our program," said Dr. Andy Albritton, Interim Program Director for the IMRP. "The supportive medical community, dedicated volunteer faculty, exceptional staff, and commitment of St. Mary's Health Care System to quality care truly make this an excellent program to learn and train physicians in Northeast Georgia."

2 | New Internal Medicine Residency Program residents announced

The IMRP Class of 2024 and the schools at which they completed their undergraduate and medical education are:

- **Mohana Laasya Cherukuri, MD.** Undergraduate and medical school: Rangaraya Medical College
- **Yoonhee Choi, MD.** Undergraduate and medical school: Eulji University School of Medicine
- **Vinh Dong, MD.** Undergraduate: University of Georgia. Medical school: American University of the Caribbean School of Medicine
- **Rahim Fazal, MD.** Undergraduate: Emory University. Medical school: St. George's University School of Medicine
- **Jalessa Graham, MD.** Undergraduate: La Salle University. Medical school: American University of Antigua College of Medicine
- **Lauren Holland, DO.** Undergraduate: Connecticut College. Medical School: Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine.
- **Alexandria Hoy, MD.** Undergraduate: University of Toronto Mississauga. Medical school: University of Medicine and Health Sciences, St. Kitts
- **Juan Vigo Matos, MD.** Undergraduate: University of Puerto Rico – Mayaguez campus. Medical school: University of Medicine and Health Sciences, St. Kitts
- **Kevin Moriles, DO.** Undergraduate: University of Georgia. Medical school: Nova Southeastern University, Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine
- **Caroline Musa, MD.** Undergraduate: Kennesaw State University. Master's degree: Emory University. Medical school: Washington University of Health and Sciences
- **Manal Zafar, DO.** Undergraduate: Emory University. Medical school: Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine

In addition, the program matched a preliminary year intern, Shelby Sweat, DO, who will complete one year of training with the program. She completed her undergraduate education at Georgia Institute of Technology and earned her medical degree from the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine.

"We are proud to have these physicians join our residency program. They truly impressed us with their maturity, compassion, scholarly achievements, and dedication to improving the community," said Dr. Albritton.

As the Class of 2024 arrives, the Class of 2021 graduates. Two of the physicians, Dr. Jamila Pham and Dr. Joshuam Ruiz Vega, will remain with the program a fourth year to serve as the 2021-22 Chief Residents.

"This is another exciting year in the history of the Internal Medicine Residency Program," said Montez Carter, St. Mary's President and CEO. "We are confident this next class will continue the tradition of compassion and excellence demonstrated by their predecessors. St. Mary's is proud to be an integral part of the IMRP and its success in bringing more medical doctors to Georgia and to the Athens region."

3 | New Internal Medicine Residency Program residents announced

"I am so excited to have this group of residents join us. Their experiences, diversity, and talent will continue to strengthen the Internal Medicine program" said AU/UGA Medical Partnership Campus Dean Michelle Nuss, MD. "I look forward to seeing what these young physicians will do in our community over the next three years."

The IMRP is a joint effort by the AU/UGA Medical Partnership and St. Mary's, the program's Major Participating Site. The program's goal is to address the physician shortage in Georgia. Residents are medical school graduates who are entering the final stage of their medical education: a three-year, hands-on program with progressive levels of responsibility that ends in certification by the American Board of Internal Medicine.

In addition to the care they provide at St. Mary's Hospital, the residents work hand-in-hand with physician faculty at Community Internal Medicine of Athens, located in the Resource Medical Center at 1500 Oglethorpe Ave, Building 200D, Athens. This full-fledged outpatient practice provides primary wellness care, sick care and chronic disease management for adults, and accepts most major forms of insurance, Medicare and Medicaid, and self-pay, with financial assistance available to those who qualify.

Third-year medical residents also complete clinical rotations in Greensboro, Ga., where they provide inpatient care at St. Mary's Good Samaritan Hospital. For more information, visit www.stmarysmeded.com.

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