Welcome to Our New Fellows

As a new year begins, we are excited to welcome six new Cardiovascular Disease fellows and five new fellows in our subspecialty programs for the 2022-2023 year! We are also delighted to have old friends in new roles in Advanced Heart Failure and Electrophysiology.

Our incoming class is a very accomplished group! We are so excited to welcome them and know they will all be great additions to our Section. To get to know each of our new fellows, please see their photos and read their bios on subsequent pages. Here’s to a great 2023-2024 year!

A Year for the Books: 2022-2023 Fellowship Year

We have just completed a remarkable 2022-23 fellowship year. Our fellows made us proud with many accomplishments and contributions. They dedicated countless hours to our Section, providing incredible patient care, all while growing as leaders, teachers and scientists. On behalf of all Cardiology faculty and staff, we thank you all for your hard work and offer big congratulations to our graduates.

HAIL TO THE CHIEF

We’d like to welcome Dr. Giancarlo Saldana as the new Chief Fellow for the 2023–2024 fellowship year! Giancarlo has hit the ground running and will do an outstanding job. Big thanks to Maxine Tang for her incredible work as Chief Fellow for the past year!!
The New Faces of Cardiology Fellowship

Mary Acosta
I was born in Miami, Florida and grew up in West Palm Beach, Fl. I journeyed to the Midwest to pursue a degree in Science-Business at the University of Notre Dame. Go Irish! Subsequently, I returned home for medical school at Florida Atlantic University. I completed my internal medicine residency at University of Chicago and was honored to spend a fourth year serving my program as a chief resident. I am excited to spend the next three years at University of Chicago as a cardiology fellow. In my free time, I enjoy exploring the many restaurants in Chicago with my husband. We welcomed our daughter, Elizabeth, in March 2023 and look forward to introducing her to the city of Chicago!

Kevin Chang
I was born and raised in Taipei, Taiwan. At the age of 18, I moved to the United States for college at the University of California, Davis where I majored in biochemistry and molecular biology. I attended medical school at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, followed by internal medicine residency and an additional chief year at the University of Minnesota. Outside of medicine, I enjoy sports (tennis, pickleball, HIIT, Peloton), traveling, trying out new restaurants, spending time with family and friends, as well as my two dogs (Oscar and Roo). I am thrilled to start my cardiology fellowship at the University of Chicago and looking forward working with everyone!

Collin Gallagher
I was born and raised in Woodridge, IL with my two sisters and multiple chocolate labs. I stayed close to home for my undergraduate degree and attended Loyola University Chicago, where I studied biochemistry and met my wife, Jessica. I traveled south(ish) to Saint Louis University for medical school, where I discovered my passion for internal medicine and cardiology. I was happy to return home to Chicago for residency at University of Illinois Chicago. I’ve spent the past year serving as the UIC Scheduling and Jesse Brown VA Chief Resident. In my free time I enjoy spending time outdoors with my wife and our rescue dog Max, playing basketball (and begrudgingly being a Chicago Bulls fan), and exploring Chicago’s excellent food scene. I am thrilled to have matched at University of Chicago and am looking forward to meeting all of my co-fellows and faculty!
Alejandro Plana

I grew up in Southern California. I went to Columbia University in New York for undergrad, where I studied US History and played rugby. Upon graduating, I joined the Teach for America corps, teaching high school chemistry and physics for two years in Miami, FL, while I applied to medical school. I attended the University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine, taking an additional year to pursue a Masters of Biomedical Informatics from the Graham School at UChicago, and then here stayed for residency. Outside of medicine, I have moved on from constantly injuring myself on the rugby pitch - focusing on running and golf. I also enjoy cooking with my wife Olivia, reading fiction, being overly invested in Chicago politics, and exploring the city with friends.

Maria Poonawalla

I was born and raised in Mount Prospect, IL. I attended the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign for undergrad where I majored in molecular and cellular biology and minored in political science. I went back to Chicago for medical school at Loyola University and loved the city too much so I stayed for internal medicine residency at University of Chicago. When I am not in the hospital, I love spending time with my niece Leila, cooking new recipes and exploring the food scene in Chicago, going on runs, traveling to new places, and winding down with essentially any HBO show.

Christian Selinski

I was born and raised in the suburbs of Baltimore, Maryland and, until now, have spent my life on the east coast. From Maryland I traveled north to Providence, RI where I completed my undergraduate studies in Biology and Spanish. I would then start a transition south to complete medical school in Philadelphia, PA and residency at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, VA. Outside of work you can find me in the gym, being overly competitive at board games, or trying out new restaurants with friends. I am extremely excited to start this next stage of life and training at the University of Chicago!
New Advanced Fellows of 2023-2024

Maria Latz - Cardiac Imaging
Hello everyone! I was born and raised in and around Chicago and love this city! I was a Spanish Language and Literature major in undergrad and went on to complete my pre-medical studies before attending medical school at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine in Cleveland, OH. I came back to Chicago for Internal Medicine and Chief Residency at Loyola University Medical Center. I recently completed my General Cardiology fellowship at the University of Southern California in sunny Los Angeles, CA. I am interested in structural and interventional echocardiographic imaging and cannot wait to join the University of Chicago team! When not working, I love trying new restaurants with my husband, Ian, and our infant daughter, Quinn. Despite just starting solids, she is quite the foodie!

Iva Minga - Cardiac Imaging
I was born in Albania and moved to the US when I was 18. I completed my undergraduate studies at Loyola University in molecular biology and biophysics. I went to University if Wisconsin for medical school and then completed my internal medicine and cardiology fellowship at Northshore University Healthsystem. In my free time I like to explore different coffee shops and restaurants in Chicago and spend time with my family. I am excited to start my imaging fellowship and I am looking forward to meeting and working with you.

Leo Gozdecki - Advanced Heart Failure
I was born and raised in northwest Indiana. I attended Indiana University for undergraduate where I studied microbiology and subsequently traveled west to Kansas City where I completed medical school at Kansas City University. I came back to the Chicagoland area for internal medicine residency at Loyola where I served as chief resident. Most recently, I completed cardiology fellowship at Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee. Outside of cardiology, I enjoy watching any and all IU sports (go hoosiers!), backpacking/camping and cooking with my wife, Michelle. I'm excited to meet and work with everyone!
Brian Conway - Interventional
I was born in Mt. Clemens, Michigan but moved to Bettendorf, Iowa when I was four. I attended the University of Iowa for undergrad majoring in Biomedical Engineering and continued this into grad school at Case Western Reserve University. I developed an interest in medical device design while in grad school and decided to return to the University of Iowa for medical school in hopes of pursuing a procedural field of medicine. I continued my education in upstate New York, completing residency at the University at Buffalo and cardiology fellowship at Albany Medical Center before coming back to the Midwest to complete my training in interventional cardiology at the University of Chicago. I’ve never lost sight of my love for sports and continue to support the Sox/Bears/Bulls and my Iowa Hawkeyes. I’m looking forward to immersing myself in all things interventional and ultimately combining my love for engineering and device design within cardiovascular medicine.

Adham Karim - Interventional
I was born in Joliet, IL and raised in Chicago and the southwest suburbs. With a Bachelor’s degree in Molecular Biology from Loyola University and a medical degree from the UIC College of Medicine. I left Chicago to complete my residency at Case Western Reserve University, followed by a cardiology fellowship at the University of Kentucky. While I had originally planned to pursue a combined cardiology-critical care fellowship, my passion for interventional cardiology led me to the University of Chicago for advanced training. Throughout my career, I have developed a keen interest in nutrition and its impact on patients with cardiovascular disease. This passion stems from my own personal experiences and struggles with obesity during my formative years. I am deeply committed to exploring the role of nutrition in improving the health outcomes of individuals with cardiovascular conditions. Beyond my professional pursuits, I am a lifelong fan of the Bears and Bulls, and when I’m not at the hospital, I enjoy traveling with my wife and kids or learning jiu jitsu. As I return home to the city where I grew up, I am thrilled to continue my research and make a meaningful contribution to my community.

Old Friends in new advanced fellowship roles....
We didn’t ask them to submit new bios/pictures, but we are thrilled that 2 of our 2023 general fellowship graduates are staying on as advanced fellows in Heart Failure and Electrophysiology!! See more about our graduates below…

Anthony Kanelidis
Advanced Heart Failure

Jeremy Treger
Electrophysiology
Let’s Get Personal!!

Fellowship Class of 2047 – New Recruits

• Anthony and Jess welcomed Lilah Elle on October 14, 2022.
• Jeremy and Melissa welcomed Lily on February 27, 2023.

Married!

• Chris Fernandez and Lauren Kloepinger were married on November 27, 2022!!
• Linda Liu and CJ were married on October 22, 2022!!
• Ryand Sanderson and Kristin Powers were married on September 2, 2022!!
Did You Know?

The Section of Cardiology was founded in 1950 at the University of Chicago.

Congratulations to the 2023 Graduates!

**Dr. Anthony Kanelidis** will be an Advanced Fellow in Heart Failure at the University of Chicago.

**Dr. Steven Mazzone** will be an Assistant Professor at the Medical College of Wisconsin.

**Dr. Ryan Sanderson** will be an Advanced Fellow in Electrophysiology at Case Western/University Hospitals in Cleveland.

**Dr. Patrick Miller** will be a Non-Invasive Cardiologist at St. Luke’s Cardiovascular Consultants at St. Luke’s Health System in Kansas City.

**Dr. Jeremy Treger** will be an Advanced Fellow in Electrophysiology at the University of Chicago.

**Dr. Nicole Prabhu** will be an Assistant Professor at the University of Colorado.

**Congratulations to our Graduating Advanced Fellows too!**

**Advanced Heart Failure and Transplant Cardiology**

- Akash Rusia will be a Advanced Heart Failure Cardiologist at Baylor Scott & White The Heart Hospital.
- Stanley Swat will be an Assistant Professor at The University of Chicago.

**Clinical Cardiac Electrophysiology**

- Swati Rao will be a Assistant Professor at Tulane University.

**Interventional Cardiology**

- Abdul Abutaleb will be an Interventional Cardiologist.
- Rishi Pandya will be an Interventional Cardiologist at Ascension Health.

**Cardiac Imaging**

- Linda Lee will be a Assistant Professor of Medicine in the Division of Cardiology at Northwestern University.
- Eisha Wali will be a Clinical Cardiologist at NorthShore University HealthSystems.

**Cardiovascular Prevention**

- Pallavi Pradeep will be a primary care physician at ChenMed in Chicago.
Dr. Childers came to the University of Chicago in 1963 as a Cardiology fellow and remained here for 50 years. He became a renowned authority on the movement of electrical impulses within the beating heart and the use and interpretation of electrocardiograms. He lectured widely and received many honors. He was awarded the teaching award by the fellows so many times that the award was named after him.

Each year the fellows have the difficult task of choosing a faculty member to give the prestigious Rory Childers Teaching Award. It goes to a faculty member who the graduating class feels has inspired them and provided and outstanding mentorship and teaching.

This year, The Rory R. Childers Cardiology Teaching Award was presented to Dr. Andrew Beaser

Congratulations, Dr. Beaser!
Morton Arnsdorf Cardiovascular Research Day

The symposium highlights the research within the Sections of Cardiology, Cardiothoracic Surg, Vascular Surgery, Cardiac Anesthesiology and Interventional Radiology. This day is named in honor of our esteemed friend, mentor and colleague who we continue to miss greatly.

Our Arnsdorf Research Day has been on hold as we emerge from COVID, but plans are already in the works for it to come back strong in 2024!!

Fellows Graduation Pictures
Other Activities, Achievements and Honors!

- Martin Gruca was selected as a finalist for the 2023 American Society of Echocardiography Sessions, Weyman Young Investigator Award!!

- Shirlene Obuobi will be this year’s commencement speaker for UCSD medical school!

- Shirlene also started writing a regular column in the Washington Post!!! - Congratulations Shirlene!

We are thrilled to announce our fellowship has received the AHA’s Second Century of Science Clinical Fellow Research Education Grant!! This grant provides funding to allow fellows in our program to attend the AHA Scientific Sessions!! Thanks to our irreplaceable APD Francis Alenghat for spearheading our successful application!
Our fellows have had a very impressive academic production this year.....

**Publications and Abstracts**


- Han J, Dela Cruz M, Lin H, et al. Pre-transplant sensitization is associated with lower levels of immunomodulatory metabolite concentrations after heart transplantation. Mini-oral presentation at ISHLT 2023, Denver, CO.

- Han J, Grinstein J, DiSanto P et al. Changes in pulse pressure after 24 hours of initiation of inotrope therapy in cardiogenic shock is associated with adverse outcomes. Poster presentation at ISHLT 2023, Denver, CO.
• **Han J, Nguyen A, Zhou M et al.** Association of early testing of donor derived cell-free DNA with the risk of antibody mediated rejection in heart transplant recipients. Mini-oral presentation at ISHLT 2023, Denver, CO.


• **Han J, Moayedi Y, Henricksen EJ, et al.** Primary graft dysfunction is associated with development of early cardiac allograft vasculopathy, but not other immune-mediated complications, after heart transplantation. Transplantation. Published online February 20, 2023:e004551


• **Effects of Sedation on Right Heart Catheterization Hemodynamic Measurements in Advanced Heart Failure Patients** J. Lattell, J. Han, A. Kanelidis, S. Kalantari, M. Belkin, J. Grinstein, (496) Effects of Sedation on Right Heart Catheterization Hemodynamic Measurements in Advanced Heart Failure Patients, The Journal of Heart and Lung Transplantation, Volume 42, Issue 4, Supplement, 2023, Page S226.


• **Cotella JI, Mor-Avi V, Lee L, Srivivick JA, Radosavljevic T, Hipke K, Johnson R, Asch FM, Lang RM: 3D relative myocardial volume: An alternative to relative wall thickness for the definition of left ventricular remodeling and hypertrophy.** Submitted to American Society of Echocardiography 2023, Washington DC.


• Treger, JS and Upadhyay, GA. What Intracardiac Tracings Have Taught Us About Left Bundle Branch Block. Cardiac Electrophysiology Clinics (2022); 14(2): 203-211. PMID: 35715078


Fernandez CM, Nathan S; High Risk TAVR and Left Main PCI; ACC IL Virtual Cath Conference; May 15, 2023; Chicago, IL.

Fernandez CM; Dobutamine Dependent Shock in Severe AS and Left Main Stenosis; 5th Annual Houston Shock Symposium; April 16, 2023; Houston, TX.

Fernandez CM; Prevention and Treatment of Access and Coronary Complications; 6th Annual Interventional Cardiology Fellows Program, Cardiovascular Institute of Philadelphia; Feb 4, 2023; Philadelphia, PA.


