

**UT Southwestern**  
Medical Center

Department of Physical  
Medicine & Rehabilitation

# P M & R

C O N N E C T I O N



FALL 2023



## Heakyung Kim, MD

**Chair of Physical Medicine  
and Rehabilitation  
Kimberly-Clark Distinguished  
Chair in Mobility Research**

We have so much to be proud of in this year. Our department has been ranked 15th in the Best Rehabilitation Hospital category by the US News and World Report, becoming the highest ranked clinical department at UT Southwestern Medical Center, and we proved that the UTSW Inpatient Rehabilitation Unit is highly qualified by being awarded a 3-year Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) accreditation ([page 7](#)).

Dr. Karen Kowalske, former chair of our department and world expert in psychiatry and burn rehabilitation, received the 2023 Patricia and William L. Watson Jr., M.D. Award for Excellence in Clinical Medicine ([page 10](#)).

Two of our spine physiatrists were selected to serve as leaders over UTSW multidisciplinary centers—Dr. Kavita Trivedi as the Interim Director of UTSW Multidisciplinary Spine Center, and Dr. Ankit Patel as Medical Director of Las Colinas Regional Center ([page 8](#)).

Our department has also excelled in research, with Dr. Shanti Pinto receiving the O'Donnell Brain Institute (OBI) Research Scholar Award (\$1M) and R01 from NIH-NINDS (\$2.1M) on “Sympathetic Activation and Cerebrovascular Pressure Reactivity after Traumatic Brain Injury” ([page 3](#)).

Dr. Kent Simmonds, PGY-3, received several prestigious awards for his stroke rehabilitation research under the mentorship of Dr. Nneka Ifejika, and he and Dr. Timothy Olivier, PGY3, received OBI Travel Award to present their research at the International Society of Physical Rehabilitation Medicine (ISPRM) conference in Cartagena, Colombia ([page 4](#)).

Furthering our department’s research excellence, Dr. Nitin Jain received the Carolyn Braddom Ritzler Research Award from the AAP as well as the PASSOR Award from the American Academy of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation (AAPM&R) ([page 11](#)).

Dynamic changes are ongoing in medical education as well. As Dr. Kim Barker stepped down as the Program Director (PD) for our residency program, Dr. Kelly Scott took over as our new PD. We thank Dr. Kim Barker for 7 years of tireless work on our residency program which has made it one of the premier programs in the nation and look forward to Dr. Scott continuing the legacy and uplifting our residency program ([page 5](#)).

Dr. Benjamin Nguyen, a fearless leader, has been heading the Joint Admission Medical Program (JAMP) to provide a mentoring pathway for economically disadvantaged Texans to pursue medicine. Dr. Fatma Gul, a recognized physiatrist in the field of spasticity management, has opened a new Spasticity Fellowship program that is one of only three in the nation and has welcomed its first fellow.

I would like to ask the UTSW PM&R Family to continue to “shoot for the stars.” We aim high, set high goals, and challenge ourselves to accomplish our goals on building the department into a highly regarded and top-ranked PM&R department.

# PM&R

## CONNECTION

FALL 2023

### FEATURE

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for Traumatic Brain Injury Research

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### ON THE COVER

Title: “Bearing Fruit”

Artist: Talia Collier, MD,  
Associate Professor, PM&R

This is a mixed media art work reflecting a time of sacrifice and/or offering. It is meant to represent movement and flow and in the end, gifts or fruit are presented as evidence of the sacrifices made to reach an end goal. The women bear fruit under the tree of life.

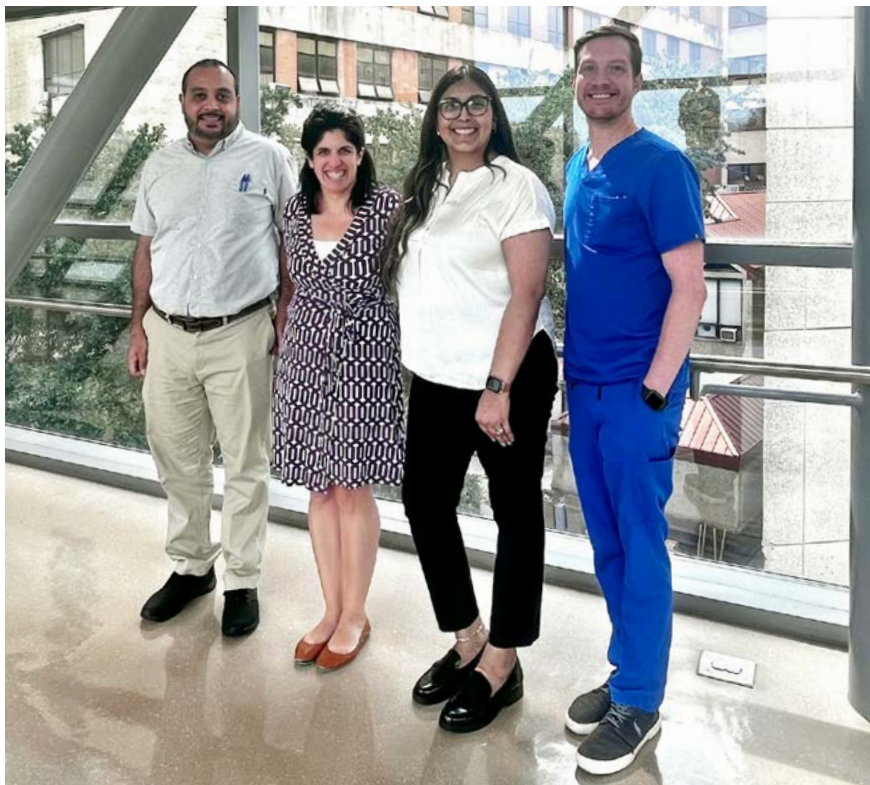
# Pinto Lab Receives R01 and OBI Grant for TBI Research



Shanti Pinto, MD  
Assistant Professor

Dr. Shanti Pinto is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and an O'Donnell Brain Institute Clinical Neuroscience Scholar. Her research focus is on long-term outcomes and autonomic nervous system dysfunction after traumatic brain injury (TBI). She is the co-project director for the North Texas Traumatic Brain Injury Model Systems, which is one of 16 centers funded by the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR). The TBI Model Systems is one of the largest prospective cohort studies of individuals with moderate to severe TBI. Individuals are enrolled during inpatient rehabilitation admission and complete follow-up

interviews at 1, 2, 5, and every 5 years thereafter to assess long-term physical, cognitive, emotional/behavioral, and health outcomes after TBI. Dr. Pinto serves as the chair of the TBIMS Chronic Brain Injury Special Interest Group (SIG). The goal of the Chronic Brain Injury SIG is to better understand the needs and improve the clinical care of those living with chronic brain injury. Dr. Pinto has a particular interest in understanding why individuals with TBI are at increased risk for chronic medical conditions, such as cardiovascular disease, in order to best develop comprehensive management plans to prevent these long-term health complications.



L to R: Carlos Arauz, clinical research coordinator; Shanti Pinto, principal investigator; Petra Gonzalez, clinical research assistant; Charlie Kundig, clinical research coordinator

In July, Dr. Pinto and her colleague Dr. Gilbert Moralez in the Department of Applied Clinical Research at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center were awarded a five-year \$2.1 million R01 grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) for their project titled “Sympathetic Activation and Cerebrovascular Pressure Reactivity after Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI).” This collaborative project investigates the pathophysiology of autonomic nervous system control of the cerebrovascular blood flow and how this contributes to long-term outcomes following moderate to severe traumatic brain injury. This will be the first study to utilize muscle sympathetic nerve activity (MSNA) to objectively measure sympathetic nervous system activity after TBI. Dr. Pinto is mentoring one of the PGY-3 PM&R residents, Dr. Kristin Bristow, on a small project entitled “Feasibility of non-invasive cerebrovascular pressure reactivity in patients with moderate to severe TBI admitted to acute inpatient rehabilitation units” that is funded through the Department of PM&R’s annual resident Shark Tank competition. Dr. Bristow’s study will be the first to utilize a non-invasive measure of cerebrovascular pressure reactivity in patients admitted to inpatient rehabilitation after TBI. Dr. Pinto is also supported through the O’Donnell Clinical Neuroscience Scholar Award, which provides \$1 million over five years to support her growing research program.

Dr. Pinto’s research would not be possible without her excellent research team. Charles Kundig is her lead research coordinator and has been with the lab since July 2022. Two new staff members recently joined the lab, Petra Gonzalez (Clinical Research Assistant) and Carlos Arauz (Clinical Research Coordinator).

## RESIDENT RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

**Dr. Kent Simmonds, PGY-3** received several prestigious awards for Stroke Rehabilitation research, including the Stroke Rehabilitation Award from the American Heart Association (AHA), the AHA/International Stroke Conference Paul Dudley Winter International Scholar Award for the highest scored abstract across all categories in the United States, and an award for the second highest research abstract at the International Society of Physical Rehabilitation Medicine (ISPRM) conference in Cartagena, Colombia under **Dr. Nneka Ifejika**’s mentorship. Dr. Kent Simmonds and **Dr. Timothy Olivier, PGY-3**, received OBI Travel Awards to present their research work at international conferences. Dr. Olivier also presented his research at the 3rd Joint Congress of the International Neuromodulation Society European Chapters in Hamburg, Germany. His work was mentored by **Drs. Surendra Barshikar and Chaitanya Konda**.

# Residency Program Leadership Change



Kim Barker, MD  
Associate Professor

Former PM&R  
Residency Program  
Director 2016–2023

It was a wild 7 years! In the first couple of years, I definitely felt like I was drinking from a fire hose! And about the time that I felt like I had my bearings, the pandemic hit and the world, healthcare, and medical education hit a very large speed bump.

I could not have done this job without the help of my tirelessly enthusiastic co-faculty and the hard work of all the program coordinators that have been in our department. The residency program would be nothing without our bright and inquisitive residents. I want to take this time to thank Dr. Bell for entrusting the residency with me and Dr. Kim for continuing that trust and her unfailing support. I have endless gratitude for Terri and her wealth of GME knowledge and unfailing work ethic. Lastly, I wanted to thank all the residents. Mentoring y'all and watching you grow into wonderful, thoughtful psychiatrists has been the most rewarding part of my time as program director. I know the program will continue to evolve and improve under the new leadership of Dr. Kelly Scott. I'm excited to see what lies ahead!



Kelly Scott, MD  
Professor

Current PM&R  
Residency Program  
Director, 2023–

I am very honored to be taking over the direction of the UTSW PM&R Residency Program. Dr. Kim Barker has done an amazing job improving so many aspects of this program over the years, and I am looking forward to continuing this trajectory of excellence.

I have been at UTSW since 2008, and the education of the residents has always been one of my top priorities. Over the years I have been involved in many aspects of resident learning, including physical examination teaching, oral boards preparation, teaching of billing/coding, anatomy, and the teaching of EMG through the rotations that I run at Parkland Hospital. Improving the quality of the education of the residents will continue to be my top priority as Program Director. Residents who have been with me on my rotations know that I value a structured learning approach, with clear goals and expectations. I hope to bring that educational structure to more of our rotations in the future as well as to our formal didactic curriculum on Fridays. We have already made some positive changes in the past few months, including instituting a



new MSK/Pain/Spine weekly lecture series. We have also taken steps to protect lecture time to give the residents the ability to concentrate on their learning.

Another one of my main goals for this residency program is to bring back the spirit of engagement that took a hit during the pandemic. I know that our residency program is not alone in this endeavor to restore culture to our community, as isolation became the norm in the past few years of the pandemic. We are blessed in this residency program to have a fantastic group of residents who are committed to both their education and each other. I am impressed by them every single day! My goal is to do whatever I can to encourage further cohesiveness to foster their growth. Lectures are back to being mostly in person and we have greatly approved attendance. We have plans to have increased

faculty engagement at events like Grand Rounds and Journal Club. I plan to support the individual residents and the Resident Wellness Committee in any way that I can to ensure that the residents feel that their needs are being met.

I am grateful to Dr. Kim for giving me this opportunity to serve the residents in this capacity and I am looking forward to working together with them to make this program the best it can be!

# GO → PMR

*The future of medicine, today.*

Giving back to promote residency development (GO-PMR) was created to enhance the educational experience for residents and fellows of the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. GO-PMR provides an opportunity for those who have benefited from outstanding training at UT Southwestern to give back to the program, and for faculty to support our trainees.

**CONTRIBUTE TO GO-PMR**



To contribute, scan the QR code above or go to <https://engage.utsouthwestern.edu/donatego-pmr>.



This year, for the first time, UT Southwestern received the honor of being named as a member of the *U.S. News & World Report's Best Hospitals Honor Roll for 2023–2024*, standing among the top 20 hospitals from among more than 4,500 hospitals nationally!

Within UT Southwestern, 11 specialties were nationally ranked, of which 8 were within the top 25. The Rehabilitation department was the **highest ranked** among these specialties at UT Southwestern, at number 15! Congratulations on this national recognition, and thank you all for your commitment to delivering excellent care to our patients!

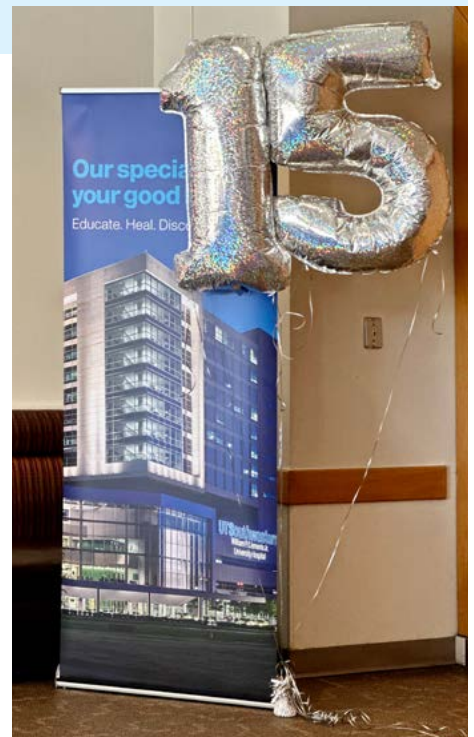


**Kim Barker, MD**

@KimDoBarker

@utswnews @UTSW\_PMR

#1 hospital in Texas and top 15 nationally in Rehabilitation Care!



## CARF Accreditation

UTSW Inpatient Rehabilitation has been awarded a 3-year accreditation in all surveyed areas including Comprehensive Integrated Inpatient Rehabilitation (CIIRP) Adult, CIIRP Adolescents, Stroke, Brain Injury, and Spinal Cord Injury.

*“This is the outcome of tireless work of inpatient team, the rest of the PM&R team, and UTSW leaders. To all involved—we cannot thank you enough for your hard work to bring this amazing news to us despite a lot of changes in leadership and staff as well as the Zale renovation.” —Heakyung Kim*



# PM&R Leads in Clinical and Academic Endeavors at UTSW



Kavita Trivedi, DO  
Associate Professor

Kavita Trivedi, an associate professor in the department of PM&R, has been named Interim Medical Director of the Multidisciplinary Spine Center as of May 2023. We are proud to have PM&R at the helm of this multidisciplinary center!

“The opportunity afforded me as a PM&R physician to head the UTSW Spine Clinic defines the goal of a bona fide multidisciplinary spine clinic: expert care across all disciplines.”

The Multidisciplinary Spine Center is a collaboration between PM&R, neurosurgery, and orthopedic surgery, aligning to offer a full spectrum of spine care from an operative and non-operative perspective.



Ankit Patel, MD  
Associate Professor

Earlier this year, Dr. Ankit Patel, an associate professor in the department of PM&R and Director of Interventional Spine and Musculoskeletal Fellowship programs, was selected as the Medical Director of the UT Southwestern Las Colinas Medical Center, overseeing the medical operations of the various clinics offered at this location, including Digestive Disease, Internal Medicine, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Orthopedic Surgery, and the Spine Center.



Nneka Ifejika, MD  
Professor

Dr. Nneka Ifejika, professor in the departments of PM&R and Neurology, was invited to be a member of the Promotion and Tenure Committee at UT Southwestern, a prestigious committee on which Dr. Nitin Jain, another professor in our department, also serves. Dr. Ifejika, who also serves as leader of the Stroke Outcomes and Continuum of Care Research (SOCCR) Lab, was selected by the President’s Research Council (PRC) of UTSW to present her research work to its members.

## RESIDENCY UPDATES

### CLASS OF 2027



David Cotton Jr.,  
MD



Sophia Kiernan,  
MD



Warona Matuba,  
MD



Grace Meehan,  
DO



Victoria Noel,  
MD



Niran Vijayraghavan,  
MD

### 2024–25 ADVANCED PGY-2 RESIDENTS



John Hunton, MD



Ammar Khan, MD



Jeremiah Ling, MD

### 2023–24 ADVANCED PGY-2 RESIDENT



Amanda Seeman, DO



## Congrats to UTSW PM&R Class of 2023

This summer, we celebrated the graduation of the amazing UTSW PM&R residency class of 2023. We miss them and are proud of all of the wonderful things they are accomplishing!

Three of our current residents have now matched into their future fellowships! Congratulations to Dr. Olivier (Pain, WVU), Dr. Stephen (Pain, Michigan), and Dr. Sloan (SCI, Emory) for matching into their future fellowships!

Check out [@utsw.pmr.residents](https://www.instagram.com/utsw.pmr.residents) on Instagram to see what else our residents have been up to!

### NEW DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATOR



Earlier this year, we were happy to welcome Kristina Clements, M.Jur., as our new Department Administrator! She came to us after previously working as an administrator in

the Department of Radiology at UTSW, and prior to that had worked at MD Anderson Cancer Center for 15 years. We are grateful to have her on board!

### NEW FACULTY

Ravi Prakash, PhD, Instructor

Yanlong Song, PhD, Assistant Professor

Yu-Chen Chung PhD, Instructor

Denizen Kocak, MD, Assistant Professor

Amanda Wise, DO, Assistant Professor

Nikesh Patel MD, Assistant Professor

Minh Ngyuen, DO, Assistant Professor

Roozbeh Ahmadi, MD, Assistant Professor

Saylee Dhamdhare, MD, Assistant Professor

### FACULTY PROMOTIONS

Weibin Yang, MD — Full Professor, Clinician track (Clinical Professor)

Heather Adair, MD — Full Professor, Clinician track (Clinical Professor)

Wei-Han Tan, MD — Associate Professor, Clinician-Educator track (Associate Professor)

Renie Guilliod, MD — Associate Professor, Clinician track (Clinical Associate Professor)

## Dr. Kowalske Receives Watson Award

Our very own Karen Kowalske, professor and past chair of the department of PM&R and President of the Association of Academic Physiatrists, had the honor of receiving the prestigious Patricia and William L. Watson Jr., MD Award for Excellence in Clinical Medicine. This award, UT Southwestern's highest honor in clinical care, recognizes a UT Southwestern clinician who exemplifies excellence in patient care and leads in advancing clinical innovation. It honors a faculty member who has had a profound impact on patients, students, trainees, and colleagues through the quality of his or her clinical work. All who know her and her work can attest that is incredibly well deserved. Her

outstanding accomplishment was celebrated in a ceremony on November 9, 2023.



To read more about this amazing honor, please click or scan the QR code.



PM&R faculty members, residents, and administrators standing alongside Dr. Kowalske at the reception celebrating her momentous achievement. L to R: Kim Barker, Alejandro Rodriguez, Heakyung Kim, Surendra Barshikar, Karen Kowalske, Kelly Scott, Sasha Manouchehripour, and Susan Murphy.



Nitin Jain, MD, MSPH  
Professor

## Dr. Jain Receives PASSOR Legacy Award

Nitin Jain, MD, MSPH, a professor in the department of PM&R and Director of the Musculoskeletal Research Program at UT Southwestern, was selected as a recipient of the 2023 Physiatric Association of Spine, Sports and Occupational Rehabilitation (PASSOR) Legacy Award and Lectureship through the AAPM&R. This award recognizes a mid-career physician who has advanced musculoskeletal physiatry through clinical care, education, service, or scholarship and research. As the recipient of this prestigious award, Dr. Jain will be presenting a lecture at the AAPM&R Annual Assembly this year. Dr. Jain is a nationally and internationally recognized researcher and leader in shoulder pathology and genetics, and an outstanding educator and mentor.

An invitation graphic for the AAPM&R Alumni Reception. The background is a photograph of a restaurant interior with tables set with white linens, glassware, and floral centerpieces. The text is overlaid on the image. At the top right, it says "You are invited to". In the center, "AAPM&R Alumni Reception" is written in large, bold, white letters. Below that, "NOVEMBER 16, 2023" is written in a smaller font. At the bottom, the event details are listed: "6:00 PM - 8:00 PM", "Antoine's Restaurant", "713 St Louis Street", "New Orleans, LA 70130". The UT Southwestern Department of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation logo is at the bottom center. On the right, there is a decorative wavy line. At the bottom left, there is a dark button with "RSVP BY TUESDAY 11/14" and two email addresses: "Terri.Isbell@utsouthwestern.edu" and "Kristina.Clements@utsouthwestern.edu".

You are invited to

# AAPM&R Alumni Reception

NOVEMBER 16, 2023

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM  
Antoine's Restaurant  
713 St Louis Street  
New Orleans, LA 70130

UT Southwestern Department of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

RSVP BY  
TUESDAY 11/14

Terri.Isbell@utsouthwestern.edu  
Kristina.Clements@utsouthwestern.edu

# 2023 AAPM&R UTSW Presenters

## November 14–19, New Orleans

PRE-CONFERENCE		
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14		
8 am – 5 pm	<b>Step One:</b> Ultrasound Clinical Applications of the Extremities Course (Day 1)	Heakyung Kim, MD
8 am – 5 pm	Step Concussion Course (Day 1)	Kathleen Bell, MD Surendra Barshikar, MD
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15		
8 am – 5 pm	<b>Step One:</b> Ultrasound Clinical Applications Of The Extremities Course (Day 2)	Heakyung Kim, MD
	Step Concussion Course (Day 2)	Kathleen Bell, MD Surendra Barshikar, MD  <b>Online:</b> Willa Vo, PsyD Nyaz Didehbani, PhD Shelby Halsey, MD Amy Mathews, MD
CONFERENCE		
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16		
9:45 – 11 am	<b>Sports Medicine Community Panel:</b> Insight into Covering Various Levels of Sport	Donald Kasitnon, MD
2:15 – 5:15 am	<b>Skill Lab:</b> 1801: The Art of Treating Spasticity — US Workshop	Heakyung Kim, MD
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17		
8:15 – 9:15 am	<b>Learning Centers:</b> Best Evidence-Based Clinical Practices in Shoulder Pain: Combination of Physical Exam and Point of Care Ultrasound for Diagnosis and Treatment	Nitin Jain, MD
9 am – 12 noon	<b>Skill Lab:</b> Practical Applications in Adaptive Sports Medicine	Donald Kasitnon, MD
9:15 – 10:30 am	<b>Concurrent Sessions:</b> Essential Updates in Physiatric Management of Post COVID Conditions: Fatigue, Cardiovascular, Pulmonary and Pain Disorders	Surendra S. Barshikar, MD, MBA
9:15 – 10:30 am	<b>Concurrent Sessions:</b> Finding Joy in Physiatry at Different Career Stages	Heakyung Kim, MD
12:15 – 1:45 pm	<b>Learning Centers:</b> Hands-On Ultrasound Guidance for Upper and Lower Limb Chemodeneration Procedures	Heakyung Kim, MD
1:45 – 3 pm	<b>Concurrent Sessions:</b> Understanding & Demonstrating Your Worth: What is the Value of Physiatry in Health Care	Heakyung Kim, MD
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18		
9 am – 12 noon	<b>Skill Labs:</b> US Guided Extremity Nerve Blocks with Alcohol and Botulinum Toxin Injections in Head & Neck Muscles for Spasticity Management	Heakyung Kim, MD
10:45 am – 12 noon	<b>Concurrent Sessions:</b> Pearls for Managing Common Pelvic Pain Conditions	Rupali Kumar, MD Kelly Scott, MD
12 noon – 1:30 pm	<b>Learning Center:</b> Hands-On Ultrasound Guidance and Review of Functional Anatomy for Head and Neck Botulinum Toxin Injections	Heakyung Kim, MD
1:30 – 4:30 pm	<b>Skills Lab:</b> A Pain in the Rear: Ultrasound Evaluation of Chronic Gluteal Pain	Donald Kasitnon, MD
3 – 4:15 pm	2023 Nadler / Passor Awards	Nitin Jain, MD

## PUBLICATIONS

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**Sinn CN**, **Rinaldi RJ\***, McLaughlin MJ. Botulinum Toxin Type A Outcomes in Infants with Refractory Congenital Muscular Torticollis. *J Ped Rehab Med* (2023) Mar 28

Tenforde AS, Alexander J, Alexander M, Annaswamy T, Carr C, Chang P, Diaz M, Iaccarino MA, Lewis S, Millett C, Pandit S, Ramirez C, **Rinaldi R\***, Roop M, Slocum C, Tekmyster G, Venesy D, Verduzco-Gutierrez M, Zorowitz R, Rowland T. Telehealth in PM&R: Past, Present and Future in Clinical practice and Opportunities for Translational Research. *PM R*. 2023. Jun 24. e-pub ahead of print

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