



Ross Sullivan, MD '08

Ross Sullivan, MD '08, Upstate director of medical toxicology and founder of the Upstate Emergency Opioid Bridge Clinic, has co-authored a paper on the success of the program, published in the *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment*.

The article, "Bridge clinic buprenorphine program decreases

Sullivan Publishes Paper on Success of Upstate Emergency Opioid Bridge Clinic

emergency department visits," documents a 42-percent reduction in return visits to the emergency room among patients who completed a bridge clinic consultation. Sullivan estimates the clinic has seen about 1,000 patients since it opened, and the data published in the survey shows that the clinic and its treatment program are helping people decrease unsafe opioid use.

The paper "helps answer the question related to the biggest barrier, which is 'do patients come to the emergency department more if we offer them buprenorphine?'" Sullivan says. "Now this information is out there and can be used to build upon."

The Upstate Bridge Clinic, which is a division of the Department of Emergency Medicine, was founded to address opioid use disorder in the community. Opioid use disorder—of both illegal drugs, such as heroin,

and prescribed medication—has been a growing problem across the United States for many years. The pandemic has only increased those numbers, with lethal overdose cases rising again.

A buprenorphine treatment plan can help patients who are abusing opioids and at risk for overdose. The medication can help patients suffering from withdrawal and decrease cravings.

Patients can be referred to the bridge clinic from any department within Upstate, but most are referred through the Emergency Department, Sullivan says.

The clinic is augmented by social services support staff provided by Onondaga County called peers. "We work with phenomenal peers," says Sullivan. "We prescribe the medicine but having the peers is as important, if not more important, than anything else."

Upstate Launches Pediatric Hospitalist Fellowship Program

THE UPSTATE DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRICS has received ACGME accreditation for a new Pediatric Hospitalist Fellowship Program. In the works for about 18 months, the match process for this fellowship will begin this year with a plan to have a pediatric hospitalist fellow working at Upstate in July 2022.

Pediatric hospital medicine is a newly recognized subspecialty and a fast-growing field, according to program director Jennifer Myszewski, DO. Care for the hospitalized child has become more specialized and complex, Myszewski says. Pediatricians who practice outpatient care in a traditional medical office setting do not often come to the hospital to care for their patients, so there is an increasing demand for pediatricians who specialize in treating non-ICU pediatric inpatients.

About 60 institutions nationwide have created pediatric hospitalist fellowship programs, all of which have been working collaboratively to create the match program and develop curriculum.

"It's more collaboration than I've ever seen in medicine," Myszewski says. "It's just been a really cool thing to participate in."



Class of 2021 Celebrates Match Day

ONE OF THE MOST EXCITING and joy-filled days at Upstate Medical University—Match Day—returned in 2021 with a creative approach to celebrating while keeping everyone safe during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Match Day is an annual event celebrated simultaneously at medical schools across the country. In non-COVID times, Match Day at Upstate is celebrated with hundreds of students and their families gathered to celebrate the synchronized opening of envelopes with a cacophony of hugs and high-fives.

After last year's fully online Match Day at the start of the pandemic, Upstate students and staff planned a hybrid event for 2021, with students gathering in small groups on Friday, March 19 to learn of their matches together—either in an envelope or online through their smartphones. The students were then able to visit a larger space on campus in shifts to share their matches with Upstate leadership and with family and friends through a live broadcast.

The hybrid event was important to give students and others at Upstate something joyful and positive to look forward to. “These students have been through a lot,” said Julie White, PhD, dean of Student Affairs. “Their last couple of years of medical school have been like no other. They have shown great resilience over the last couple of years and have rolled with every punch so we’re excited for them to gather in community to celebrate with each other and with us.”

“Match Day is always one of the best days of the year at Upstate,” adds President Mantosh Dewan, MD. “These students have worked incredibly hard under very difficult circumstances so to see them succeed and be able to celebrate the next chapter in their medical careers is wonderful.”

Some statistics about the Class of 2021:

- 75 students (43 percent of the class) will enter primary care specialties, including family medicine, psychiatry, internal medicine, pediatrics, and OB/GYN
- 91 students (52 percent of the class) will remain in New York state
- 32 students will remain in Syracuse: 27 at Upstate and five at St. Joseph's Health
- One student matched in the military.



Graduating medical students celebrate their residency placements during Match Day festivities.



Dewan Honored with Syracuse University Chancellor's Medal

Upstate Medical University President Mantosh Dewan, MD, was honored during Syracuse University's 2021 Commencement Ceremony with the presentation of the Chancellor's Medal, SU's highest award. "Dr. Dewan and his team were great friends to this university and all of us throughout the pandemic," said Syracuse University Kent Syverud during the presentation. "They served Central New York and the Orange community faithfully and heroically. They were at the forefront globally of testing and vaccine development. And thanks to Upstate Medical University, under Mantosh Dewan's leadership, we were able to process 100,000 Covid tests on this campus during the fall semester—a key part of keeping us open in the fall."



Stephen V. Faraone, PhD



Ruth Weinstock, MD, PhD



Yanli Zhang-James, MD, PhD

Upstate Researchers Participate in International Study on ADHD and Cardiometabolic Diseases

THREE UPSTATE MEDICAL UNIVERSITY professors and researchers are involved in an international, multi-site study taking a closer look at the connections between Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and cardiometabolic diseases such as obesity and diabetes.

Stephen V. Faraone, PhD, is the principal investigator for the Upstate site for the TIMESPAN project. He is a distinguished professor and vice chair of research in Upstate's Department of Psychiatry. Dr. Faraone has studied ADHD in children and adults for three decades. Co-investigators at Upstate are Ruth Weinstock, MD, PhD, distinguished service professor and division chief of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism and Yanli Zhang-James, MD, PhD, associate professor of psychiatry.

TIMESPAN is a five-year project that kicked off April 1 and involves scientists and researchers from 17 institutions from 14 countries. Upstate is the only American site. "Emerging evidence points at a strong association and shared genetic traits between adult ADHD and cardiometabolic diseases like obesity, Type-2 Diabetes, and cardiovascular disease, which, when inadequately treated can lead to adverse outcomes and substantial costs for society," according to the study.

Upstate's TIMESPAN colleagues are from Denmark, Italy, Iceland, Estonia, Norway, Australia, and

Hong Kong among others; the overall principal investigator is Henrik Larsson, PhD, of Sweden. The study is funded by the European Union for 5.9 million Euro, or a little more than \$7 million.

TIMESPAN will use existing data and medical records from hundreds of thousands of patients from around the world. National guidelines of cardiometabolic disease stress the importance of concurrent psychiatric disorders, but how to manage cardiometabolic disease in ADHD is lacking, according to the study and Faraone, who says the study could help doctors offer additional treatment options for diseases such as obesity and diabetes, which in turn could help someone's ADHD symptoms.

"Very little is known about somatic (non-psychiatric medical) conditions and ADHD," Faraone said. "We do know there are emerging data that say there are very real associations both at the level of the clinic that go together and also at the level of biology that there's some shared genetics among these disorders. So, it's extremely important from the clinical point of view to understand these associations so that we can give advice to clinicians that have to screen, diagnose and treat both types of conditions."

Upstate Participating in Clinical Trial to Test Blood Pressure Medication to Treat Symptoms of Alzheimer's

UPSTATE MEDICAL UNIVERSITY is participating in a new clinical trial to test how a well-established blood pressure medication may help some patients with moderate to severe Alzheimer's disease.

The joint study is called PEACE-AD, which stands for Prazosin for Disruptive Agitation in Alzheimer's Disease. Prazosin has been used for several decades to treat high blood pressure but may be able to help Alzheimer's patients who have disruptive behavior due to the disease.

Upstate's Nappi Longevity Institute is participating in the study, which is being coordinated by the Alzheimer's Disease Cooperative Study (ADCS), a national academic research organization that specializes in clinical trials related to Alzheimer's. The study is funded by the National Institute on Aging/NIH and the Alzheimer's Association.

"Part of our mission with the Nappi Longevity Institute is to expand our research base with Alzheimer's Disease," says Sharon Brangman, MD '81, director and chair of the Department of Geriatrics. "We are always looking at new approaches for managing patients who have agitation."

Disruptive agitation is a common symptom of those suffering from Alzheimer's Disease. The behavior can include yelling, aggression, pacing, screaming, and not sleeping, behaviors that can interfere with essential care, disrupt living environments, and can be difficult and stressful for caregivers.



Sharon Brangman, MD '81

Dr. Brangman says studying an established medication like Prazosin could be very beneficial since it's already had FDA approval for a long time. "Once a drug is on the market you can use it any way you'd like," she says, noting that the clinical trial will help determine its effectiveness, dosage and how it may interact with other medications.

The Nappi Longevity Institute is dedicated to research on Alzheimer's disease, which affects more than six million Americans.

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Chuck Simpson Retires from Campus Activities Helm

WHEN CHUCK SIMPSON

accepted an entry-level position as an activities assistant at Upstate Medical University back in 1986, he never guessed he'd spend the entirety of his career with Upstate's Campus Activities Office.

But in May, Simpson retired after more than 34 years at Upstate, having served as director of campus activities for the Division of Student Affairs since 2008.

"I really love our small campus community and the way we are able to get to know students, help them develop leadership skills, and give them opportunities to find balance in their life, because whether they're here for two years or for seven, the students are all very driven and their academic programs are very rigorous," says Simpson of his tenure. "I never found a reason to leave."

Simpson was responsible for a broad range of responsibilities, including managing the Campus Activities Building; developing, implementing, and supervising the university's social, cultural,

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—Chuck Simpson

athletic and educational activities; and advising the Campus Activities Governing Board, the Upstate Student Government, and the university's yearbook, *The Auricle*. He was also in charge of major events including new student orientation programs, the annual white coat ceremonies, Match Day, and Commencement.

"We're among the first faces students see at student orientation and the last as they walk across the stage at Commencement," Simpson says of his role. But his favorite event was Match Day. "It's really wonderful to see medical

students discover and celebrate the next step in their journeys after they've worked so hard," he says.

Simpson holds a bachelor's degree from SUNY Geneseo and a master's degree in business administration from SUNY Oswego. He was active in the National Association for Campus Activities (NACA), having served as regional and national convention chair, regional coordinator for the states of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, and Washington, DC, and as a member of the association's national board of directors. In 2003, he received the association's highest honor, the Founder's Award.

Simpson says he remains in contact with many former students and was always humbled by those who stopped by to visit when they were back on campus. "It's really nice to see that the Upstate connection remains strong for a lot of students, even after they graduate," he says.

Following his retirement, Simpson caught up on some post-Covid travel with a two-week trip to Alaska. In July, he began a short-term remote role as the director of major campus events, continuing to coordinate White Coat ceremonies, Match Day, and Commencement. "I really appreciate the messages I've received from former students who have heard about my retirement," he says. "They are what made the job so worthwhile."



Chuck Simpson spent his career with Upstate's Campus Activities Office.

Upstate Cancer Center Launches Multidisciplinary Team for Brain Tumor Patients

The Upstate Cancer Center has recently introduced a new multidisciplinary team to help patients with brain tumors and those suffering from neurological complications related to their cancer treatments.

The new neuro-oncology multidisciplinary program will treat patients with primary brain tumors or central nervous system metastatic disease and cancer patients suffering neurological complications related to the disease or its therapies.

Upstate hired Ruham Nasany, MD, HS '18 in September 2020 to establish the program at the Cancer Center. Dr. Nasany completed her neurology residency at Upstate in 2018 followed by a neuro-oncology fellowship at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York City before returning to Central New York. The new program incorporates existing disciplines including radiation oncology, neurosurgery, and medical oncology. "Those used to live separately," Nasany says. "Now they work together as a team to determine a patient's course of treatment."

Multidisciplinary teams have become a standard practice in oncology medicine and have many benefits to patients. Upstate has existing multidisciplinary programs

for breast, thoracic and colorectal cancers. The new approach for neuro-oncology involves a team of doctors working together to determine a patient's course of treatment.

"Multidisciplinary teams help cut down on the number of visits the patients have to make to see different providers and help providers discuss cases and come up with a collaborative treatment plan," says Nasany.

The multidisciplinary neuro-oncology team at Upstate is the only one in Central New York.

"A huge part of the reason I came back was to build this program," Nasany says. "This is a good thing for us to be able to offer such specialized care for patients and helps put Upstate at the same level of big cancer centers nationwide."



Ruham Nasany, MD, HS '18

Upstate Receives Stevens Initiative Funding for Virtual COVID-19 Program

BRIDGING CULTURES To Defeat COVID-19, a virtual health sciences education program, is one of 19 2021 grant recipients from the Stevens Initiative. The Upstate program brings together American, Middle Eastern, and North African clinical and scientific trainees for collaborative scientific and medical education and for unique professional development and cultural exchange opportunities.

The Stevens Initiative is an international effort to build global competence and career readiness skills for young people in the United States, the Middle East, and North Africa by growing and enhancing the field of virtual exchange. It is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State with funding provided by governments of the United States, Morocco, and the United Arab Emirates, and the Bezos Family Foundation.

"People-to-people exchanges are critical to advancing global peace and understanding," says Matthew Lussenhop, acting assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. "Through early adoption of virtual exchanges, the Stevens Initiative has elevated technology to foster collaboration between students in the United States and counterparts in the Middle East and North Africa."

Bridging Cultures participants take part in seminars and workshops to learn the most current research and best-practices in COVID-19 medicine. They also engage with their international colleagues in networking, professional development, and cultural competence-building exercises. The program is open to any pre- and post-degree health science trainees with an interest in COVID-19 science and medicine.

Seth Perry, PhD, associate professor of psychiatry, neuroscience and physiology, neurosurgery, and public health at Upstate Medical University, is the principal investigator at Upstate Medical University. Dr. Perry says he wants to take things Upstate is already doing well—science, education, conferences, and more—and include young trainees from health sciences fields to learn from and engage with each other in meaningful ways across borders and cultures.

"We will recruit young trainees from any health sciences group or program. They might be medical, graduate, nursing, or health professions students from Upstate or other SUNY schools, as well as schools throughout the United States," said Perry. "Students will engage in this program with their peers from our partner institutions in Libya and the United Arab Emirates."

Upstate Graduates 171 New Doctors at Commencement 2021

The Upstate College of Medicine held a hybrid commencement ceremony on May 9, with graduates attending in person and the event live streamed for parents and families, as well as the Upstate community.

Degrees were conferred to 171 new MDs, including two students who earned combined MD/MPH degrees and four students who earned combined MD/PhD degrees.

Upstate Medical University also presented honorary doctoral degrees to three nationally renowned physicians who have dedicated their careers to advancing racial justice and health equity: Otis W. Brawley, MD; Camara Phyllis Jones, MD/PhD, MPH; and Augustus A. White, III, MD/PhD.

Dr. Brawley is a globally recognized expert in cancer screening, prevention, and treatment, and the design of trials to assess them. His work focuses on how to close racial, economic, and social inequities in the treatment of cancer. He worked at the National Cancer Institute as an oncologist and senior investigator as well as its director of the Office of Special Populations until 2001. From 2007 to 2018, Brawley was chief medical and scientific officer of the American Cancer Society, where he oversaw the largest private program funding cancer research in the United States.

Dr. Jones is a family physician, epidemiologist, and past president of the American Public Health Association. Her work focuses on naming, measuring, and addressing the impacts of racism on the health and well-being of the nation. Her work has sought to broaden the national

health debate to include universal access to high quality health care and also to increase attention to the social determinants of health and equity. She was an assistant professor at the Harvard School of Public Health from 1994 to 2000, before being recruited to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention from 2000 to 2014, where she served as a medical officer and research director on social determinants of health and equity. She is currently a Presidential Visiting Fellow at the Yale School of Medicine in the Department of Medicine and the Office of Health Equity Research; will serve as the 2021-2022 UCSF Presidential Chair at the University of California San Francisco; and was the 2019-2020 Evelyn Green Davis Fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University.

Dr. White is an internationally known physician and widely published authority on biomechanics of the spine, fracture healing, and spinal care. For the past five decades, White has committed himself to issues of diversity and is nationally recognized for his work in medical education and health care disparities. He was the first African American to graduate from Stanford Medical School in 1961 and became a surgical resident at Yale-New Haven Hospital in 1963. He has been a leading advocate for racial equality and cultural sensitivity training at Harvard, Brown University, Yale University and orthopedics nationally.



Otis W. Brawley, MD



Camara Phyllis Jones, MD, PhD, MPH



Augustus A. White, III, MD, PhD

