

WELCOME TO OUR

Governor's Newsletter



Thanks for the memories



ANKUSH K. BANSAL, MD
FACP FACPM SFHM

President's Message

The medical and public health landscape in the United States is undergoing significant changes, bringing new challenges to the healthcare community. Recent Executive Orders issued by the President have introduced policies, many not based on scientific evidence and restricting scientific inquiry, negatively affecting stakeholder inclusiveness, and likely impacting healthcare, medical research, and public health initiatives.

Continued...

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- 2024 ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING EARLY CAREER PHYSICIANS AWARDS
- DOCTOR'S DILEMMA FINALS
- ACP 2025 ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING

As of 15 February 2025, they include (among many other anti-medicine, anti-science orders):

1. Withdrawal from the United Nations Paris Agreement on Climate Change – Florida is the epicenter of the nation for the deleterious effects of climate change on human health. Miami and Tampa-St Petersburg are the top two most vulnerable cities in the U.S. Miami is the 7th most vulnerable on Earth.

2. Withdrawal from the World Health Organization. This has direct effects on us obtaining and sharing information about future pandemics. There are several epidemics currently around the world (including avian flu in the U.S.) that have the potential to become the next pandemic.

3. Shuttering USAID including PEPFAR. This has direct effects on our profession's ability to deliver healthcare to vulnerable populations around the world and prevent such infections from spreading to the U.S.

4. Shuttering NIH research funding and removing all diversity efforts in medical research. This is despite the fact that a federal court ordered to reinstate that. Cancer, cardiovascular, infectious disease, psychiatric & addiction medicine research are all affected. Diversity allowed us to recruit participants that reflect our future patient population, e.g. the advances in cardiovascular care in women since the 1990s. It has also already led to the closure of research departments nationwide and hiring freezes at universities.

Let's not forget our medical leaders in the Executive Branch who we will now need to work with:

1. RFK Jr to head HHS – a known anti-vaxxer responsible for several measles outbreaks including a devastating one in recent years in Samoa and who is neither educated nor practicing in a scientific discipline, medicine, or public health.

2. Impending confirmation of Dr. Mehmet Oz as CMS Director.

3. Impending confirmation of Dr. Jay Bhattacharya as NIH Director – a co-author of the Great Barrington Declaration – an anti-vaccine, anti-CDC, anti-masking manifesto that did great harm including in Florida during the COVID-19 PHE.

I mention all of this not to depress all of you but as a call to action among all of you individually to get active in advocacy – at your places of employment (when permitted to do so), in your communities, on social media,

and on traditional (TV, radio, print) when possible. Reliance on established medical organizations is insufficient, and actions thus far have been inadequate (including AMA and ACP). Congressional representatives have also taken notice as many of us experienced during Hill visits in mid-February in DC at the AMA advocacy conference. We will still work with organized medicine on issues of common interest, but your individual experiences, stories, concerns, values, and grassroots efforts are far more important to political leaders than any organization.

Thus, I call on all 9000+ members of the Florida Chapter of the American College of Physicians to collectively and individually advocate to your community, your colleagues, your patients, and political leaders from the local level to the national level. Visit district offices if you can't make it to Tallahassee or DC. Try to make at least one phone call directly to your state representative or senator and your U.S. representative to express your concerns about the harms being committed on physicians, patients, our research colleagues, and our profession by the Musk-Trump administration. Consider writing an editorial to your local newspaper or online to ensure a wide audience sees it. Look into getting involved with medical advocacy organizations if you have interest and bandwidth. However, as a disclaimer, if you act individually, you cannot say that you speak for ACP or the Florida Chapter. I also strongly recommend you review your employer's policy on advocacy as well (if employed). Together, we can steer the boat away from the impending waterfall. We are not here to change laws or be policy experts but rather advocate on behalf of our patients, fellow physicians, and communities.

Of course, please remain engaged or increase engagement with the Florida Chapter. Your chapter council (board) has created both Legislative and Health & Public Policy Committees. Mentor students, residents/fellows, and early career physicians. Keep your medical knowledge updated. And most of all, take care of yourself – wellness is paramount in these difficult times.

I look forward to seeing you on March 15 in Orlando at the Student and Residents Meeting and on November 7-9 in Orlando for the Scientific Meeting. I also invite you to the national ACP meeting in New Orleans on April 3-5.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or my Co-Governor, Elisa Sottile, with any questions, comments, or concerns.

Ankush K. Bansal, MD FACP FACPM SFHM DipABLM
President and Governor, Florida Chapter American College of Physicians.



2024 ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING CHAPTER AWARDS



LAUREATE AWARD

MANNING HANLINE, MD MACP



INTERNIST OF THE YEAR

CARMEL BARRAU, MD FACP



MASTERSHIP AWARD

MARIO MADRUGA, MD MACP



OUTSTANDING TEACHER OF THE YEAR

HERMES KOOP, MD FACP

2024 ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING CHAPTER AWARDS



OUTSTANDING TEACHER OF THE YEAR

ABDO ASMAR, MD FACP



TULISA LARocca WELLNESS CHAMPION AWARD

LUIS ISEA MERCADO, MD FACP



EARLY CAREER PHYSICIAN AWARD

LUIS DANIEL LUGO, MD



COMMUNITY BASED TEACHER

HUSMAN KHAN, MD FACP

2024 ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING CHAPTER AWARDS



**OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO
ADVANCING THE CAREERS OF
WOMEN IN MEDICINE**

Natalia Solenkova, MD PhD FACP



**JOHN LANGDON AWARD FOR
VOLUNTEERISM IN MEDICINE**

NAUSHIRA PANDYA, MD FACP



CHAPTER SERVICE AWARD

KAREN ECHEVERRIA-BELTRAN,
MD FACP

**CONGRATS
TO ALL
WINNERS**

**NEXT: 2024 ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC
MEETING RESIDENT AWARDS**

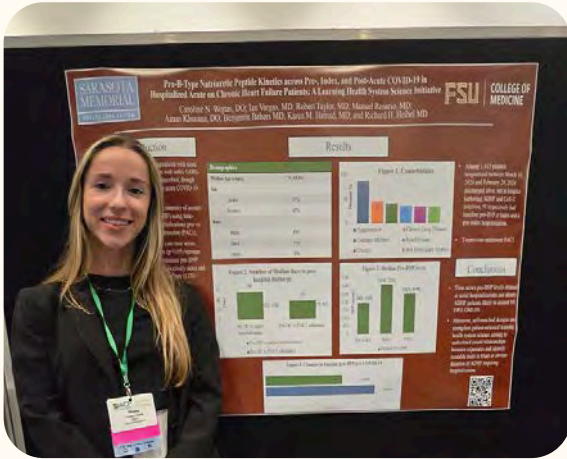
2024 ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING RESIDENT AWARDS

HIGH VALUE CARE



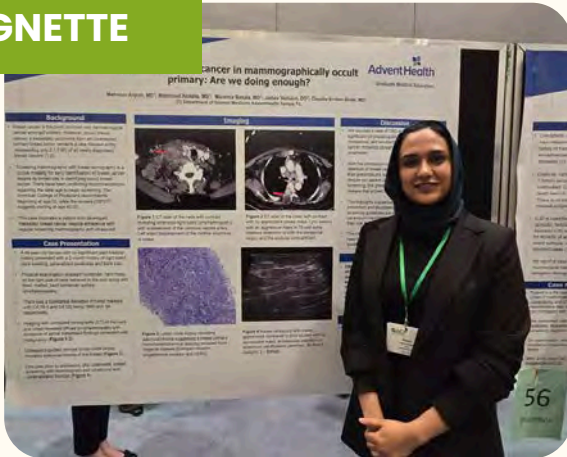
CONGRATULATIONS, IMAN SQUIRES, DO / HCA OSCEOLA

HIGH VALUE CARE



CONGRATULATIONS, CAROLINE WOJTAS, DO / FSU SARASOTA

CLINICAL VIGNETTE



CONGRATULATIONS, MAHNOOR ANJUM, MD / ADVENTHEALTH TAMPA

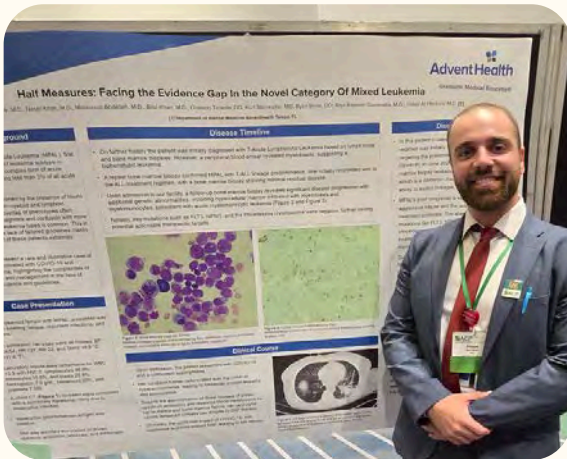
2024 ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING RESIDENT AWARDS

CLINICAL VIGNETTE



CONGRATULATIONS, BRIAN SHAW, DO / ORLANDO HEALTH

CLINICAL VIGNETTE



CONGRATULATIONS, BAKR ALHAYEK, MD / ADVENTHEALTH TAMPA

CLINICAL VIGNETTE



CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL WINNERS!

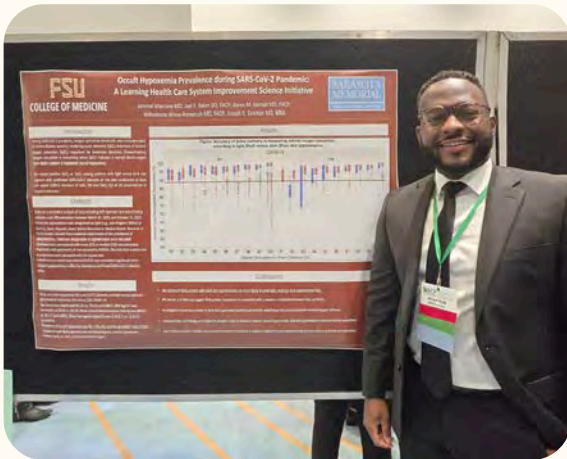
2024 ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING RESIDENT AWARDS

CLINICAL RESEARCH



CONGRATULATIONS, SUSET ALMUINA DE ARMAS, MD / MEMORIAL HEALTHCARE

CLINICAL RESEARCH



CONGRATULATIONS, JAMMAL MARCANO, MD / FSU SARASOTA

BASIC RESEARCH



CONGRATULATIONS, HUSSAIN HUSSAIN, MD / HCA KENDALL

2024 ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING MEDICAL STUDENT AWARDS

HIGH VALUE CARE



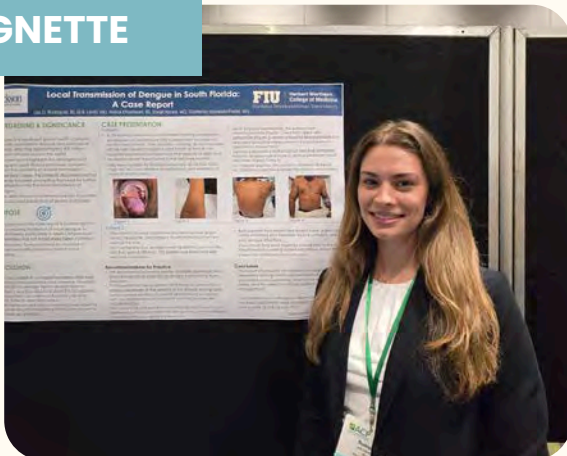
CONGRATULATIONS!

CLINICAL VIGNETTE



CONGRATULATIONS, VASILIKI BELERY / UCF

CLINICAL VIGNETTE

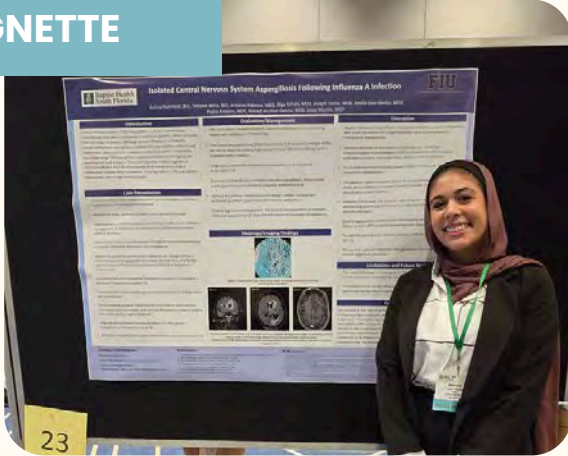


CONGRATULATIONS, LIZIS RODRIGUEZ / FIU



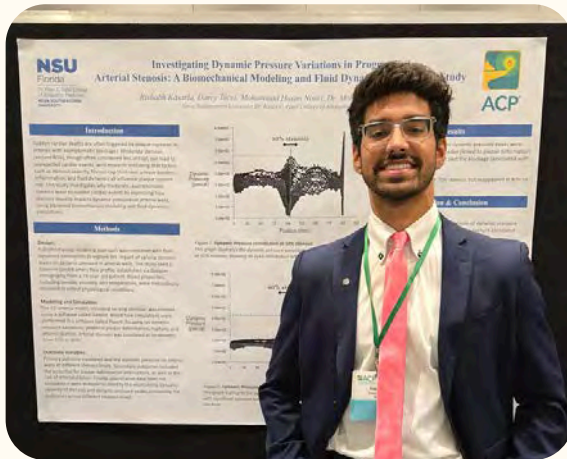
2024 ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING MEDICAL STUDENT AWARDS

CLINICAL VIGNETTE



CONGRATULATIONS, AMINA NAMROUTI / FIU

CLINICAL RESEARCH



CONGRATULATIONS, RISABH KASARLA / NOVA

CLINICAL RESEARCH



CONGRATULATIONS, RICHARD SIRARD / USF

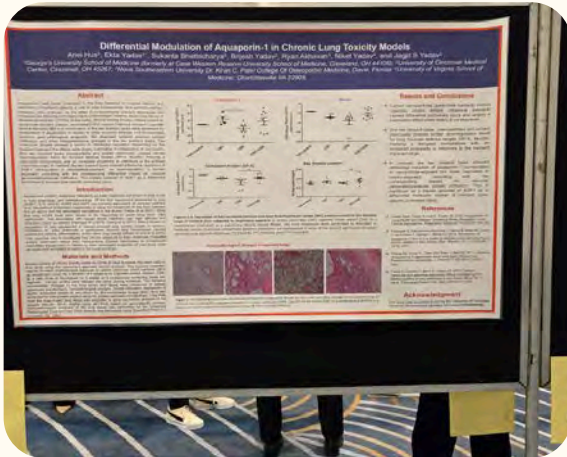
2024 ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING MEDICAL STUDENT AWARDS

CLINICAL RESEARCH



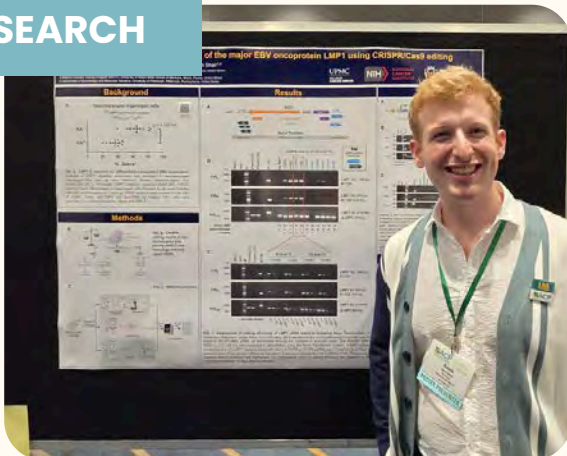
CONGRATULATIONS, JACKLYN SAMAHA / UM

BASIC RESEARCH



CONGRATULATIONS, ARIEL HUS / NOVA

BASIC RESEARCH



CONGRATULATIONS, ALEX REZNIK - UM

2024 ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING EARLY CAREER PHYSICIANS AWARDS

**BASIC
RESEARCH**



**CONGRATULATIONS,
SIMONA IONESCU, MD**

**CONGRATULATIONS,
ASHLESHA CHAUDHARY, MBBS**



**BASIC
RESEARCH**

NEXT: DOCTOR'S DILEMMA FINALS



Doctor's Dilemma Finals



2024 State Champion: AdventHealth Orlando

Swotantra Gautam, MD
Ahmed Ibrahim, MD
Jordan Lebron, MD

They will proudly represent Florida in the upcoming ACP 2025 Annual Meeting in New Orleans! Best of luck!



FSU CAPE CORAL



HCA FL WESTSIDE



ORLANDO HEALTH



UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

NEXT: WALKING TOGETHER

WALKING TOGETHER

Zein Barakat, DO
PGY-2, Lakeland Regional Health
Co-chair Council of Residents/Students



Leadership is not found in a solitary figure at the front, but in the steadfast footsteps that join every beat of a shared heart. I remember my first taste of responsibility as a child—a humble line leader in kindergarten. I learned then that leadership begins by checking the rear, ensuring every small hand is held, every timid voice is heard, and every step is in sync. This simple act, so innocent yet profound, became the cornerstone of my journey in medicine.

Within the halls of our hospitals and during the long, purposeful nights, our true power emerges in being present. In these moments of genuine dialogue; of listening, speaking, advocating, and engaging, we transform every interaction into an opportunity to heal, to connect, and to rise.

As residents, medical students, and medical professionals, we are more than just caretakers. We are architects of a legacy that thrives on collective strength. Together, we craft conversations that matter, conversations that break the silence of isolation and replace it with a unified melody of shared purpose. Every discussion, every collaborative effort, is a step toward a future where no one is left behind.

I have walked many paths and with each step, I have learned that true leadership is not about dominating the spotlight. **It is about moving as one,** ensuring that every member of our team feels valued and empowered. It is the art of checking on those at the back of the line, of inviting every voice to join the song, and of tunneling the strength that comes from unity.

In medicine, where each life entrusted to us is a story, every patient is a reminder that our mission transcends mere clinical intellect. It is about the gentle rhythm of empathy, the persistence of advocacy, and the transformative power of conversation. When we come together, our collective impact is nothing short of miraculous; a mosaic of resilience, passion, and boundless compassion.

Let us then lead not by standing apart, but by walking together. Let us be present, let us be involved, and let us continuously advocate for one another. For in this journey, our true legacy is forged not by individual accolades, but by our commitment to lift each other up. In every heartbeat, in every shared step, we pave the way toward a brighter, kinder future. A future where every resident, every medical student, every patient finds a home in the power of our collective unity.

This is our calling. This is our promise. And together, we will continue to walk forward, side by side, as a community defined by empathy, resilience, and the enduring power of unity.

*In unity and gratitude,
Zein Barakat, DO
Co-chair of ACP FL Council of Residents and Medical Students*

NEXT: DO NOT STOP MOVING

"THE SUN DOES NOT FORGET A VILLAGE JUST BECAUSE IT IS SMALL." – AKAN PROVERB

Joseph Ayim Zamora
MS4 - Trinity School of Medicine
Council of Residents/Students
President, TSOM Rotaract



There is wisdom in this Ghanaian saying—a reminder that no matter how small or insignificant something may seem, it is never overlooked by the forces that give it life. The sun does not ask whether a village is grand or humble; it simply rises and shines upon it, giving it warmth, light, and the energy to thrive. **And so it is with movement.** Whether your steps feel big or small, whether you are brimming with confidence or barely holding on, the simple act of moving forward brings life, possibility, and transformation.

As I stand on the threshold of my journey as a fourth-year medical student, I have come to understand the quiet, unwavering power of movement. **Motion is not just an action—it is resilience in its purest form.** It is the decision to step forward, even when the weight of doubt is heavier than the will of the heart. It is the courage to move, not only in moments of confidence but in times of uncertainty, exhaustion, and fear.

So I say this to you—**Move.**

Move when you are unsure. Move when the path is unclear. Move when the voices within and around you shout louder than your faith. Move when you are tired, when you are nervous, when you feel like an imposter in rooms you have rightfully earned a place in. Move when you feel accomplished, and move when you feel lost—because the simple act of motion, no matter how small, is the greatest gift we possess.

To my fellow medical students, this is my offering to you. I am a testament to the power of movement. Last year, I hesitantly submitted my ACP membership and attended my first conference, trusting that if I moved forward with faith, doors would open.

A year later, I am living proof of what happens when you take a single step. From nervously walking into that conference room to standing on stage as a keynote speaker at the AAMC Leadership Conference, from signing up as a member to serving on the ACP's Advocacy Council—**all of it was set in motion by a simple act: I moved.**

So I urge you to Join me. **Join us. Move.**

Move forward, despite the odds. Move forward, despite the fear. The road will always remain the same length, but the choice is yours—will you walk it, or will you stand still?
Pace yourself, but no matter what, do not stop moving.

*Best Regards,
Joseph Ayim Zamora*

NEXT: ACP INTERNAL MEDICINE MEETING 2025

WELCOME TO OUR

Mark your calendar!

ACP INTERNAL MEDICINE MEETING 2025

New Orleans, LA April 3-5, 2025

**ENHANCE YOUR PRACTICE, EXPAND YOUR NETWORK,
AND STAY AHEAD IN INTERNAL MEDICINE WITH:**

- CUTTING-EDGE CLINICAL UPDATES
- INTERACTIVE, HANDS-ON LEARNING SESSIONS
- CME & MOC CREDITS
- CELEBRATE OUR MEMBERS AND NEW FELLOWS

Join us for the FL Chapter Reception

New Orleans Marriott – Grand Ballroom – Salons F-H

Friday, Apr 4th 7:00 – 8:30 pm



Florida
Chapter



From Florida to the Forefront

THE ACP FLORIDA CHAPTER PROUDLY CELEBRATES OUR MEMBERS WHO WILL BE HONORED AND RECOGNIZED DURING THE ACP INTERNAL MEDICINE MEETING 2025



Jason Goldman, MD FACP
ACP President



Mario Madruga, MD MACP
ACP Mastership Award



Cheryl Holder, MD FACP
W. Lester Henry Award for
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

17 ACP Florida Chapter members will be presenting as faculty at the ACP Annual Scientific Meeting, sharing their expertise and advancing medical education.