

# PULSE

## High-Tech, High-Touch Care

Using the Best of Technology to  
Deliver Patient-Centered Care

PAGE 6

PHILANTHROPY IN ACTION  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA HEALTH SYSTEM  
FALL 2018 | VOL 25, ISS 1





Dear Friends,

This issue marks a special anniversary of *PULSE*, UVA Health System's philanthropy magazine. For 25 years, we have brought you stories about exciting discoveries, inspiring caregivers, tireless researchers, and brilliant students who want to change the face of medicine and nursing.

Many of the novel treatments we previewed years ago are now the gold standards of care. Those young women and men we interviewed became leaders and mentors to the students who followed. The medical questions we answered in our labs years ago opened up new pathways for discovery and innovation.

We have come far in 25 years, and there's still much to be done.

This newly redesigned *PULSE* will showcase not only what UVA Health System is today, but what we are striving to be—a place that's reimagining how care is delivered, where students are empowered to think big, and where the toughest questions are being asked and answered each day.

We are here, at this moment, because of all of you.

Our people and our patients are proof of what we can do. Our donors are the key to what we can become. Thank you for being a part of our journey.



Best,  
  
**Karen B. Rendleman**  
*Executive Director, UVA Health Foundation*  
*Associate Vice President, UVA Health System*  
*Development*

Please let us know what you think about the new *PULSE*.  
Email us at [pulse@virginia.edu](mailto:pulse@virginia.edu).

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# PATIENT CARE

## IT TAKES GUTS TO GROW

UVA'S MOORE LAB  
SEEKS SOLUTIONS FOR  
PEDIATRIC DIGESTIVE  
HEALTH DILEMMAS

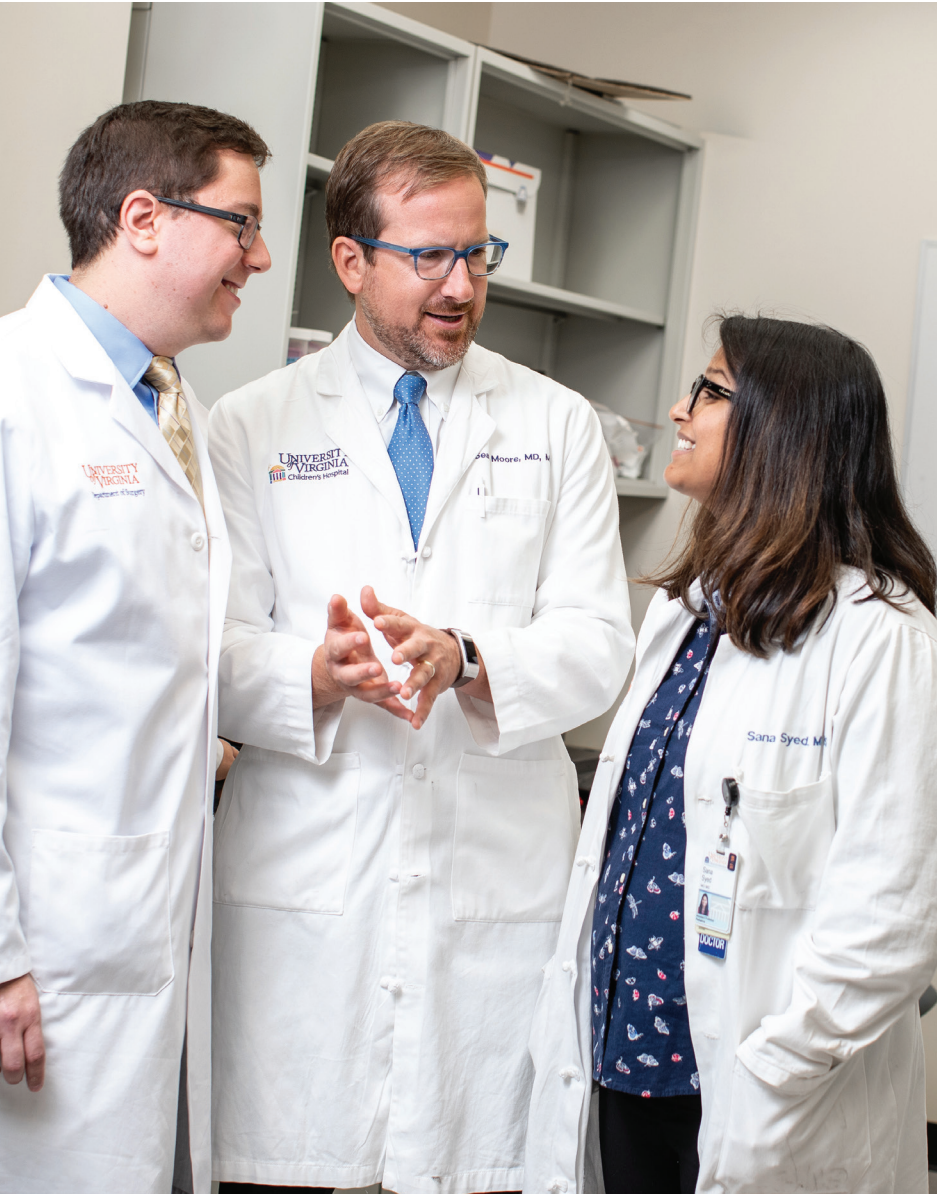
**CHILDHOOD NUTRITION**—easy to take for granted, devastating when a child's body isn't absorbing food. The Moore Lab at UVA is bridging that gap by working at the intersection of nutrition, microbes, and the gut.

"We want to help children achieve their full growth and developmental potential, even when their intestines are failing, whether from poor diets, infection, immune disorders, imbalances in the gut, or surgical removal," explains Dr. Sean Moore, director of research for the Division of Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology, and Nutrition at UVA's Child Health Research Center.

Moore's research has taken him from UVA to Brazil to Pakistan and back again, but his initial inspiration can be traced back to his time as a student. Moore loved working with children and their families—because it didn't feel like work.

"Children are resilient, honest, unscripted, and bring ➔

Dr. Sean Moore with his junior faculty mentees, Drs. Daniel Levin (left) and Sana Syed (right).





SIDEBAR

Next Up

**DR. DANIEL LEVIN**  
PEDIATRIC SURGERY

**DR. SANA SYED**  
PEDIATRIC  
GASTROENTEROLOGY

When Dr. Sean Moore talks about the next generation of physician-scientists, he's talking about doctors like Daniel Levin and Sana Syed. He mentors both UVA junior faculty in his lab, and highlights their incredible contributions and potential.

**DR. LEVIN** came to UVA from Johns Hopkins University, where he completed his pediatric surgery training. Levin is pioneering novel techniques to grow engineered small intestinal tissue in the laboratory and ultimately transplant this engineered tissue into children with intestinal failure.

**DR. SYED** is a global health scientist on faculty at UVA with an adjunct faculty appointment at the Aga Khan University in Karachi, Pakistan. Her research focuses on understanding why some children living in low- and middle-income countries around the world develop stunting and a poor response to vaccines from a gut condition known as Environmental Enteric Dysfunction.



Dr. Sana Syed, pictured here in Matlari, Pakistan, works with children who experience slow growth and vaccine failure in low- and middle-income countries around the world.

out the best in us,” Moore says. “It’s an awesome privilege and responsibility to help young people grow and thrive.”

Currently, Moore and his team are studying a group of children in Pakistan who fail to grow despite access to good nutrition and modern medical therapies due to gut dysfunction—a condition that a sizeable number of U.S. children share. Finding cures and improved therapies for such conditions requires a combination of education, research, patient care, and basic science that UVA is uniquely poised to accelerate.

“Our division recently launched the only pediatric gastrointestinal fellowship program in Virginia dedicated to helping train the next generation of physicians and researchers,” he explains. “We are also part of ImproveCareNow, a nationwide quality improvement network for pediatric inflammatory bowel disease. And, we continue to make great strides in pediatric liver transplant, eosinophilic gastrointestinal diseases, and functional gastrointestinal disorders.”

Moore is quick to point out that this success is the result of an incredible collaboration of people, places, and ideas. There’s division faculty, a lab of dedicated researchers, investigators across Grounds, and INOVA, as well as his partners Dr. Aldo Lima of the Federal University of Ceará in Brazil and Dr. Asad Ali of the Aga Khan University in Pakistan, who he’s worked alongside in both the best and worst of circumstances.

“To paraphrase a mentor, you never fully recover from those first trips to the developing world. I’ve encountered unacceptable disparities in health and living conditions, witnessed profound human resilience in the face of inequality, and learned that health is a universal human value.” ■

CHILDREN ARE RESILIENT, HONEST, UNSCRIPTED, AND BRING OUT THE BEST IN US. IT’S AN AWESOME PRIVILEGE AND RESPONSIBILITY TO HELP YOUNG PEOPLE GROW AND THRIVE.

— DR. SEAN MOORE

RESEARCH  
REVERSING AGING’S  
TERRIBLE TOLL ON THE MIND

UVA BRAIN DISCOVERY PUBLISHED IN NATURE

The research team behind the latest discovery includes, from left, Antoine Louveau, Jonathan Kipnis, and Sandro Da Mesquita.



**A** AGING LYMPHATIC VESSELS connecting the brain and the immune system play critical roles in both Alzheimer’s disease and the decline in cognitive ability that comes with time, new research reveals. By improving the function of these vessels, scientists at UVA have dramatically enhanced the ability of older mice to learn and improve their memories. The work may provide doctors an entirely new path to treat or prevent Alzheimer’s disease, age-related memory loss, and other

neurodegenerative diseases. The research is the latest from the lab of pioneering neuroscientist Jonathan Kipnis, chair of UVA’s Department of Neuroscience and director of its Center for Brain Immunology and Glia. His team discovered in 2015 that the brain is surrounded by lymphatic vessels—vessels science textbooks insisted did not exist. Kipnis’ work gives us the most complete picture yet of the role these vessels play in the brain’s ability to cleanse itself—and highlights their tremendous im-

portance for brain function and healthy aging. This new discovery may offer a way to delay the onset of Alzheimer’s to the point that treatments are unnecessary—to delay it beyond the length of the current human lifespan. “If we can make old mice learn better, that tells me there is something that can be done,” Kipnis says. “I’m actually very optimistic that one day we could live to a very, very, very old age and not develop Alzheimer’s.” ■





# EDUCATION

## OPENING DOORS FOR NURSING STUDENTS

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ACCESSIBLE

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Conways since 2013

160+  
NURSES

to be supported over  
the next 5 years

18  
MILLION

estimated number of lives  
a nurse will touch over the  
course of a 30-year career

FOR JANE MUIR (Nurs '16), pursuing a graduate nursing degree meant making tough decisions. Was she willing to take on student loans that would take years to pay off? Muir knew she wanted to take her nursing education to a new level, but could she handle the cost?

In July, she opened a letter that changed everything. She learned that she had been awarded a Conway scholarship to pay for her first year at the UVA School of Nursing.

"It was an immense relief," says Muir. "One of the biggest stressors for going back to school is figuring out how to pay for it. The scholarship lets me be fully engaged as a student, able to hone in on my studies instead of feeling unbalanced and stressed. It also acknowledges the importance of advanced education to the nursing profession."



Muir's Conway Scholarship is helping her earn her Family Nurse Practitioner certificate and her Doctor of Nursing Practice, both qualifications that are increasingly in demand in today's healthcare environment.

Support for these graduate scholarships is the latest in a series of gifts—now totaling \$15 million—from Washington, DC-area philanthropists Joanne and Bill Conway. The couple's first \$10 million supports the school's Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL)

THESE ARE TRULY GAME-CHANGING GIFTS,  
NOT ONLY FOR THE SCHOOL, BUT FOR THE  
STATE, THE REGION, AND THE COUNTRY.

— DORRIE FONTAINE, DEAN OF UVA SCHOOL OF NURSING

Andrea Valdez is one of 110 UVA School of Nursing students who received their Clinical Nurse Leader degree thanks to support from philanthropists Joanne and Bill Conway.

program, an advanced degree for students from other disciplines. That early Conway support is already funding the education of 110 new CNL nurses, including Andrea Valdez (CNL '18), who just began a career in labor and delivery at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital.

"The Conway Scholarship was extremely helpful to me," says Valdez. "Beginning a new job, I don't have such a big debt burden hanging over me. I see the Conways as investing in a profession that spreads out into the world."

The most recent Conway funding supports undergraduate students, with the first recipients just arrived on Grounds this fall. The overall impact of these scholarships will be in reducing student debt, fostering diversity, and motivating new individuals to join the profession. Over the next five years, new Conway scholarships will provide tuition assistance for at least an additional 50 nursing students from across the school's undergraduate, master's and post-master's, and Doctor of Nursing Practice degree programs.

"There are many ways to impact citizens' health and wellness," says UVA School of Nursing Dean Dorrie Fontaine, "but the Conways recognize that supporting nursing students across the board helps us do an even better job of contributing to our nation's supply of exceptionally prepared nurses. These are truly game-changing gifts, not only for the school, but for the state, the region, and the country." ■





# HIGH-TECH

IN-DEPTH



# HIGH-TOUCH

USING THE BEST  
OF TECHNOLOGY TO  
DELIVER PATIENT-  
CENTERED CARE



# CARE



# W

We live in a connected world. Our phones and our watches are powerful mini-computers that give us access to vast amounts of information. Look around and you'll find many people wearing wristbands to record the number of steps they take, the hours they're sleeping, or how fast their heart beats during exercise. These tools empower individuals to take charge of their health.

That same drive inspires UVA doctors, nurses, engineers, and students to develop technology that is changing how healthcare is delivered. From managing medications to monitoring life-threatening complications, the following stories are just a few of the high-tech solutions developed at UVA that provide our patients and their families with what they need to live healthier lives—not just in the doctor's office, but in their homes and communities.

#### MANAGING CANCER PAIN

Patients in advanced stages of cancer can often experience severe, persistent pain. Luckily, mobile and wireless technology may hold the clues to more effectively managing their discomfort.

Three UVA researchers—a nursing professor, a palliative care doctor, and an engineering professor—have partnered on a pilot project to develop and deploy in-home wireless sensing technology to shed light on the triggers and circumstances that affect pain levels.

Finding the best solution for pain can be a challenge. As a palliative care doctor, Leslie Blackhall tries to figure out what environmental or lifestyle factors may worsen a patient's pain.

"The goal is to get people up and about, and leading as normal a life as possible," Blackhall says. "That can be a challenge because once patients are in the clinic, they have difficulty answering questions about their pain—especially if they aren't experiencing it at the moment. They're overwhelmed by everything that's going on, and they can't always report the details that might help us figure out how to manage it."

The technology comprises two components. The first, a device resembling a wristwatch, constantly monitors physiological factors, such as heart rate and movement, and provides an interface to deliver information to the wearer. Second, a room sensor gathers information about the environment, such as lighting

and noise levels, humidity, and temperature. It even assesses social stimulation by monitoring how frequently people come and go into a particular room.

"The idea is to get these devices into people's natural living environments to better understand the context of the patient and caregiver experiences," says John Lach, a UVA electrical and computer engineering professor who developed the technology and first used it to monitor agitation in patients with dementia. Nursing and engineering graduate students are also working on the project.

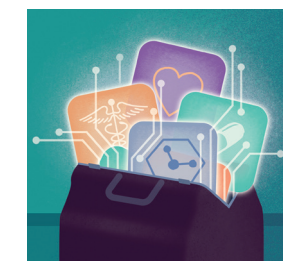
"This technology is not just for patients—caregivers benefit, too," explains nursing professor Virginia LeBaron, who led the project. "Watching someone you love suffer is very traumatic. If we can help the patient feel better, we can often make the caregiver feel better and vice versa. If we can relieve the stress for both parties that would be a wonderful outcome."

#### HEALTHCARE BEYOND THE HOSPITAL

People heal faster when they are surrounded by loved ones in their own homes and communities. UVA's Karen S. Rheuban Center for

**AS THE COMPLEXITY OF PATIENT CARE INCREASES AND RESOURCES BECOME MORE CONSTRAINED—NOT JUST FINANCIAL RESOURCES, BUT ALSO INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL—WE HAVE TO REFRAME THE WAY CARE IS DELIVERED.**

**— DR. ARTURO SAAVEDRA**



John Lach, Virginia LeBaron, and Leslie Blackhall are working together to minimize cancer pain in the home.

Telehealth has more than 20 years' experience building connections between specialists and patients across the Commonwealth, the nation, and the globe. The program has saved telemedicine patients the expense and time of long distance travel, giving them access to the expert care they need close to home.

UVA's Department of Dermatology is experimenting with different forms of telemedicine, using equipment that allows doctors to virtually touch and feel skin lesions on patients located at a distance from Charlottesville. The department also plans to launch a clinical trial using Google Glass, which can take pictures of suspicious skin lesions and use artificial intelligence to calculate their risk of being cancerous.

Dermatology Chair Arturo Saavedra says these kinds of innovations in healthcare not only improve efficiency but also meet patient demands by using everyday technology.

"As the complexity of patient care increases and resources become more constrained—not just financial resources, but also intellectual capital—we have to reframe the way care is delivered," he explains. "In the dermatology department, we're trying to be the platform where we test technology that's available in other areas of the world and incorporate them into the fabric of medical operations. These things →





## SIDEBAR

## Turning Data to Action

**MODERN MEDICINE** requires healthcare providers to interact with detailed patient information on a daily basis. If there's an emergency, interpreting such data can turn into a life-or-death situation. But what if a caregiver could predict, before an emergency occurs, which patients were at high risk for life-threatening complications?

UVA is using predictive analytics—statistical methods that analyze data from a variety of inputs—to predict the risk for needing a breathing tube, hemorrhaging, or developing sepsis for patients in adult surgery and the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit. The models, which update every 15 minutes, build on work by UVA cardiologist Randall Moorman and colleagues.

“By using Big Data, we’ve changed how we can glean information from different data sources and combine them in a novel way through advanced mathematical models,” says pediatric nurse and assistant professor Jessica Keim-Malpass, a Translational Health Institute of Virginia (Thriv) scholar. “We can use it in real time to act on risk and possibly prevent a patient from experiencing clinical deterioration.”



In children especially, dangerous glucose levels may go undetected overnight, forcing parents to wake their children several times a night to test their levels. UVA's artificial pancreas, developed by Boris Kovatchev, will soon bring invaluable peace of mind to parents and children like Joshua Davis, pictured here.

can alleviate physician burnout and improve the quality of the patient-doctor interaction.”

### POWERFUL TECHNOLOGY RIGHT AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

Nearly half of people diagnosed with HIV in the U.S. never establish regular care, and that can lead to serious consequences and even death. HIV specialist Rebecca Dillingham is leading a team that created a mobile app to enhance HIV care and improve patient outcomes.

The PositiveLinks app offers a powerful mix of engagement, social interaction, and access to care providers. It provides appointment reminders, important health information, and daily questions about stress, mood, and medication adherence. In addition, it features a virtual support group where users can interact anonymously to ask questions, share

their stories, and find strength in the journeys of others.

Users of the app showed marked improvement in sticking to their treatment programs. So much so that Dillingham's team received substantial support from the Virginia Department of Health to implement this program with other clinics across the Commonwealth, especially in Southwest Virginia.

Why do some apps work when similar ones fail? In a paper outlining the success of the HIV app, researchers credit the app's collaborative design that emphasized the development of connections to care and to others with a shared experience.

“We believe in designing ‘warm technology,’ technology that is personal, facilitates human contact, and helps patients to build a path to better health and well-being.” ■

# SPOTLIGHT

## RESTORING PERFORMANCE & QUALITY OF LIFE

NEW ORTHOPEDIC FACILITY WILL BE AN INVALUABLE RESOURCE FOR ATHLETES, COMMUNITY MEMBERS ALIKE



The Ivy Mountain Project will be the only orthopedic care facility of its kind between New York City and Atlanta.

**THIS SEPTEMBER,** UVA Health System broke ground on an extraordinary new orthopedic and sports medicine facility. This world-class complex will offer nationally-ranked expertise and care found in few other places—all in one easily accessible setting. Complete with walking gardens and outdoor therapeutic spaces, the Ivy Mountain Project will offer on-site diagnosis, imaging, surgery, physical therapy, and rehabilitation. Unique opportunities for ongoing research and

education also exist.

“We have the people, the technology, and the expertise,” says Dr. Bobby Chhabra, chair of orthopedic surgery. “What we’re missing is a single location, a physical home, so that we can offer our community and region comprehensive care in one convenient building.” The new facility will offer same day joint replacement, as well as expert care in a number of specialties, including hand, spine, sports medicine, foot and ankle, ortho-

pedic trauma, sports concussions, and prosthetics and orthotics.

Philanthropic support from community members has already begun, including a generous gift from Nancy McCue, widow of Dr. Frank McCue. Dr. McCue was a nationally recognized orthopedic surgeon who cared for UVA athletes for more than 40 years. The McCues have long been champions of student athletes and their special healthcare needs. ■



# IMPACT

## WITH GRATITUDE TO OUR DONORS

THE PATIENT CARE, EDUCATION, AND RESEARCH ADVANCES described in this magazine are made possible thanks to the generosity of UVA Health System alumni, friends, grateful patients, and other benefactors.

These friends of the Health System share an ongoing commitment to improving healthcare today and for generations to come. We are honored to recognize their partnership.

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\* Denotes Compass Rose Members who have made gifts totaling more than \$100,000 in this fiscal year. The Compass Rose Society honors donors who have given \$250,000 or more cumulatively to UVA Health System during their lifetimes.

# IMPACT

## AGING IN PLACE

GRATEFUL PATIENT'S GIFT  
MAKES PILOT PROJECT POSSIBLE



Dr. Carol Angle knows great patient care when she sees it. Her gifts to UVA Health System will help improve access to care for patients across Central Virginia.

TO BE A GOOD DOCTOR, you need more than a knowledge of medicine. You need a knowledge of people.

For Dr. Carol Angle, this belief is embodied by retired UVA physician Danny Becker. Becker met Angle in 2000, and the two quickly formed a warm friendship as he cared for her over the years.

Angle would know what makes a great doctor. A pediatric nephrologist and toxicologist who taught and conducted research at the University of Nebraska Medical Center's College of Medicine for 45 years, she conducted groundbreaking studies on the effects of lead poisoning in the 1950s and co-founded the nation's first poison control center in 1957.

Her career taught her how important it is for a caregiver to place themselves in their patients' environment—after all, lead wasn't being placed into medicine. Lead was found in her patients' own homes.

Now at the age of 90, Angle lives independently and gets up several mornings a week to ride her horse Tigger, a routine made possible thanks to Becker's care. In gratitude, Angle made a gift of \$1 million last year to endow a faculty fund in UVA's Biomedical Center for Ethics and the Humanities. The center was co-founded by Becker to teach students and faculty how to care for patients holistically.

That fellowship helped recruit Dr. Justin Mutter (A&S '03, Med '13), an Echols scholar as an undergraduate, a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford, and now a UVA geriatrics faculty member. Becker and Mutter quickly got to work developing "Virginia at Home" (VaH), a pilot project that aims to re-humanize care for homebound older adults in Central Virginia. The idea immediately resonated with Angle, who made a second gift of \$1.5 million to support the project.

"Dr. Angle's very generous gift has enabled us to start building the foundation for a comprehensive house calls program at UVA," Mutter explains. "We have found that when we wrap medicine around patients in their own homes and communities, the quality of our care improves and becomes more cost effective."

Mutter will lead the pilot project with Becker's retirement this past July. With Angle's support, he hopes to establish a permanent at-home care program that could dramatically improve the quality of life for older patients and their caregivers.

"That's the advantage of medical research and supporting medical research—it has a ripple effect," Angle notes. "It affects people immediately in the pilot program, and it has repercussions far beyond that in terms of population and time." ■





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