

Davidson Research Network Mentors and Sites 2022

1. Anil K. Sood, M.D. (Davidson Alumnus)

Professor and Vice Chair for Translational Research
Departments of Gynecologic Oncology, Reproductive Medicine, and Cancer
Biology

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Research Focus

Gynecologic Cancer

Projects

RNA Interference

Non-coding RNA work

Angiogenesis

Influence of stress hormones

Techniques

RT-PCR

Protein analysis

Animal work

Immunohistochemistry

2. John McDevitt, Ph.D.

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Research Focus

Development of lab-on-a-chip biosensors that will allow point of care diagnostic testing of human disease

Projects

- Bioengineering of lab-on-a-chip biosensors
- Biomarker discovery for various diseases
 - Cardiac disease
 - Various cancers
 - Substance abuse
 - Diabetes

Techniques

- Luminex assay for disease markers
- Engineering processes for nanochips
- Development of alpha and beta prototypes of chips and analyzers

3. Tom Patterson, MD

Division Head-Infectious Disease

Department of Medicine

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Contact through Spencer Redding, DDS, MEd (Davidson Alumnus '72)

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(Best contact is Dr. Redding's Email or phone)

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Research Focus

Medical Mycology (Fungal pathogens that cause human disease)

Projects

Diagnostic testing

Fungal resistance to current treatments

Animal models of fungal infections

Evaluation of new antifungal agents

Techniques

In vivo animal studies

RT-PCR

Antifungal susceptibility testing

4. Brett Ginsburg, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Pharmacology
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Research Focus

Biological Psychiatry/Pharmacology

Projects

Measuring biomarkers for psychiatric disorders

Analysis of drugs of abuse

Development of drug delivery solutions

Techniques

Mass spectrometry

Drug measurement

5. Andrew Bazemore MD MPH (Davidson Alumnus)

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Research Focus:

- Professionalism in Health Care
- Equity and Social Accountability in Health Workforce and Training
- Value-Based Payment and Measurement
- Access to Care, Geospatial Analytics
- Integrated Primary Care Practice and Delivery

6. Neil Alexis

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Research Focus

Biology of the central airways, specifically trying to understand the cellular and biochemical host defense functions that occur in that region of the lung.

Innate and acquired immune responses in normal healthy people as well in individuals with pre-existing airway diseases such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and cystic fibrosis (CF).

Immune-inflammatory pathophysiology of lung disease and how inhaled irritants affect patients with lung disease

Environmental exposure studies with the Environmental Protection Agency using state of the art exposure chambers

7. David Walker, MD (Davidson Alumnus)

Professor Department of Pathology
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Research Focus

Pathogenesis of tickborne infectious diseases
Immune function related to these infections with the goal of vaccine development

Techniques

- Western Blot
- ELISA
- PCR
- Animal studies

8. Clyde Wright MD (Davidson Alumnus)

Assistant Professor
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There are two applications for this position-one to the Davidson Research Network and one to the GEMS Program at the University of Colorado. They must both be completed to apply to this site. Information about both applications are on the Davidson Research Network page

Research Focus

The contribution of the innate immune response to the pathogenesis of bronchopulmonary dysplasia (BPD) in very low birthweight infants (infants born less than 1500 grams).

BPD, a chronic lung disease of infancy, affects 25% of the very low birthweight infants and leads to significant long term morbidity. BPD results in part from multiple inflammatory and oxidant insults encountered in the perinatal period. The innate immune response to these insults is thought to contribute to the pathogenesis of BPD. The major focus of the research is to further define how the neonatal lung responds to these toxic exposures. Over 100 genes orchestrating the cellular response to these insults are regulated by the transcription factor NF- κ B. Clinical studies have correlated NF- κ B activation in the preterm lung to an increased risk of developing BPD. This lab is working to define how NF- κ B activation contributes to neonatal lung injury and abnormal development.

9. Kelly Carter Nelson MD. (Davidson Alumnus)

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Research Interests: exploring barriers to and options for early melanoma diagnosis, including:

Cost of care impact of provider diagnostic accuracy for melanoma
Barriers to early melanoma diagnosis in the state of Texas
Providing dermoscopy education to enhance provider diagnostic education
Validating non-invasive diagnostic technologies to enhance early melanoma detection

10. Xu Wu, Ph.D (Tom Horn Davidson Alumnus and Contact)

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Research focus

Chemical biology, medicinal chemistry, cell signaling, and protein lipidation

Projects

Chemical approaches to study posttranslational protein lipidation and lipid metabolism in cellular processes

Chemical approaches to dissect signal cross-talking and
“rewiring” in degenerative diseases and cancers

Chemical and functional genomic approaches to explore cellular senescence and terminal differentiation

Techniques

Chemical biology
Functional genomics

11. Shadmehr (Shawn) Demehri, M.D., Ph.D. (Tom Horn Davidson Alumnus and Contact)

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<http://www.massgeneral.org/cancer/research/researchlab.aspx?id=1648>

Research Focus

The focus of the Demehri laboratory is to determine the role of the immune system in regulating the early stages of cancer development in order to harness its anti-tumor potential for cancer therapy.

Projects

Mechanisms of T cell activation against cancer.
Mechanisms of natural killer (NK) cell recruitment and activation against cancer.
Mechanisms of tumor promotion by the immune system.

Techniques

Immunohistochemistry
Flow cytometry
PCR / qPcr

12. Kevin O. Saunders, Ph. D. (Davidson Alumnus)

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Director, Laboratory of Protein Expression
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Research Focus

HIV-1 immunity and immunogen design

Projects

- Pathogen-specific monoclonal antibody repertoire analysis
- Antibody engineering
- Antibody recognition of glycans
- HIV-1 Envelope design
- B cell clonal persistence

Techniques

- Illumina MiSeq
- RT-PCR
- Fast performance liquid chromatography purification
- Luminex multiplex immunoassays for cytokines and glycans
- Cell culture and transfection
- Surface plasmon resonance
- ELISA
- Flow cytometry
- Site-directed mutagenesis

13. Stokes Peebles, M.D. (Davidson Alumnus)

Elizabeth and John Murray Professor of Medicine
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Research focus:

Lung Inflammation

Projects

Eicosanoid regulation of allergic airway inflammation
Glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor signaling in allergic airway inflammation
Respiratory syncytial virus pathogenesis

Techniques

Flow cytometry
Airway physiology
In vivo animal models of asthma and anaphylaxis
In vivo infection models

14. Richard M. Peek, Jr., M.D. (Davidson Alumnus)

Director, Division of Gastroenterology, Hepatology, and Nutrition
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Research Focus

Helicobacter pylori and gastric disease

Projects

Cell signaling/gastric inflammation and cancer
Microbial pathogenesis
Host pathogen interactions

Techniques

PCR/RT-PCR
Protein analysis
Cell and organoid culture
Molecular techniques
Cell imaging
Animal models of gastric cancer

15. Sallie Permar, M.D., Ph.D. (Davidson Alumnus)

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Research focus

The development of immunologic strategies to eliminate neonatal pathogens – with the ultimate goal of providing every child with a healthy start to life and includes:

Investigating the natural maternal and infant immune responses that contribute to impeding transmission of vertically transmitted viral pathogens, such as HIV, cytomegalovirus (CMV), and Zika, and how these effective immune responses can best be targeted by vaccine approaches.

Developing and utilizing nonhuman primate models of vertical virus transmission to perform proof of concept studies to determine whether the vaccine approaches that target the naturally protective immune responses are effective.

Focusing on both innate and adaptive immune responses at the maternal-fetal interface, including mucosal surfaces and the immunology of breast milk.

Contact Dr. Spencer Redding for questions: redding@uthscsa.edu