

VASCULAR PATHWAYS

News for fellows and friends of the vascular surgery residency and fellowship program of the UPMC Division of Vascular Surgery

Welcome to *Vascular Pathways*, the biannual e-newsletter for the UPMC Division of Vascular Surgery Residency and Fellowship Program. This publication aims to keep program graduates and friends up to date about program news and accomplishments.

A Message from Chief Resident, Dr. Jason Wagner

"That Excel spreadsheet looks fun and all, but why don't you come down to the operating room and see what we do." To my recollection, this was my first conversation with Dr. Leers, and at the time, I had no idea quite how significant of an impact it would have on my life. At the time (10 years ago), I was spending the summer between my M1 and M2 years with the Division of Vascular Surgery doing clinical research with Drs. Chaer, Marone, Makaroun, and Rhee.

I took Dr. Leers' advice and came to observe a fem-tibial bypass. His assistants were Drs. Atul Rao and Ted Yuo.

Two days later, after sitting through my first Wednesday morning conference, one thing crystallized in my mind: I wanted to be a Pitt-trained vascular surgeon. I spent the remainder of my summer continuing my clinical research with Dr. Chaer, and observing/assisting in the operating room. I was fortunate to have been both inspired by, and taken under the wings of, Drs. Nathan Fernandez, Donald Baril, Georges Al-Khoury, and Atul Rao (the fellows at that time). A few weeks into my summer of research, after I figured out that I wanted to be a vascular surgeon, a conversation with Dr. Ryan McEnaney further gave my future a more focused direction: he described the integrated residency pathway.

Though all of my mentors and role models in vascular surgery up to that point in time had been trained through the traditional 5+2 pathway, as I watched Ryan and Ted (the inaugural residents of the program) work alongside the fellows and attendings, I became acutely aware of the strength of the Pittsburgh training program, and how such a focused effort in vascular training could create a consummately trained vascular surgeon.

A few years later, I came back for an acting internship rotation, and was worried that the experience would not live up to the romanticized notion I had of the program as a rising second year medical student. In fact, the division and training program had only grown stronger. I ranked Pittsburgh first in my match list and was elated when I found out I matched at UPMC.

Over the years our program has maintained its presence at all of the major UPMC hospitals, with the third year residents still splitting time between UPMC Presbyterian and UPMC Shadyside. Presby, with its two hybrid rooms, still provides cases never found in any textbook, with Shadyside and UPMC Passavant filled with a strong volume of limb salvage and complex aortic work. UPMC St. Margaret has evolved into a bastion of fem-distal bypasses by Drs. Leers, Hager and Eid. The experience at UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital, while still rooted in clinic, veins, and access procedures, provides the full spectrum of vascular care from endarterectomies to mesenteric bypasses by Dr. Sachdev. A new addition has been the development of a "flex" position for the first-year fellows/sixth-year integrated residents. The trainee on this rotation now serves as a pinch-hitter to cover a third (or fourth) room at Presby, fill-in for chiefs/fellows when they are away for interviews or vacation at all of the sites, and covers alternate weekends at Passavant. The creation of this flex position has opened up an enhanced opportunity at Passavant for second year vascular, CT, and categorical general surgery residents who rotate there every month. The VA, under Dr. Tzeng's leadership, is as busy as ever, with strong utilization of the fully-functioning hybrid suite.

The dynamic nature of our division, and the focused efforts of Drs. Chaer, Makaroun, Tzeng, Singh, and Sachdev, to constantly improve the traditional and integrated pathways, is a welcome tenet of our program.

Over the past seven years I have been fortunate to work and train as a vascular surgeon alongside 25 residents and 16 fellows (which, if you stop and think about it from a scope and scale perspective, is astounding). As I am entering my final six months of training at UPMC, I have found myself reconnecting to alumni from all periods of my tenure for career advice post-training. The most consistent message I have received is that everyone has felt they were given an incredibly strong foundation with which to succeed both early and later on in their careers. The number one component they cite: the very same Wednesday morning conference experience that drew me to this program and my future as a vascular surgeon.

Sincerely,

Jason K. Wagner, MD (PGY-5)
Chief Resident, Division of Vascular Surgery

Accomplishments



[Richard Redlinger, MD](#), was the winner of 2018 Excellence in Patient Experience Award. Of the more than 7,000 physicians and advanced practice providers within UPMC, Dr. Redlinger was one of only 50 recipients of this award.

Save the Date – 16th Annual Pittsburgh Vascular Symposium

Thursday to Saturday, May 30 – June 1, 2019
Fairmont Pittsburgh Downtown
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Join us this spring for the 16th Annual Pittsburgh Vascular Symposium! We will return to the Fairmont Pittsburgh Downtown Hotel May 30 to June 1 for the symposium and hope to see you there as well.

This year's program will include discussion, case presentations, and care demonstrations from presenters from academic and clinical settings who will cover such topics as extremity arterial diseases, aortic aneurysms, thoracic aortic diseases and dissection, carotid artery stenosis, varicose veins, and vascular ultrasound.

We will also have a multidisciplinary panel of national and international speakers from vascular surgery, vascular medicine, cardiology, interventional radiology, and nephrology who will provide a state-of-the-art update on the treatment of vascular disease and discuss new innovations in the field. Questions and answer sessions, panel discussions, and a dedicated vascular ultrasound course will also be incorporated.

Registration is available. For more information, please visit the [Vascular Symposium website](#).

Share Your Publication News

Have you had an article published recently? Share this news with the UPMC Heart and Vascular Institute for inclusion in a new section of the [Our Research](#) page on the HVI website! Email the link to your article, along with a brief description, to HVIpublications@upmc.edu.

Request for Updates

Please email Mark Byrne at byrnome@upmc.edu with your current email address and any updates that you might like to share with your colleagues.

We invite your input as we develop this newsletter, as well. *Vascular Pathways* is your publication and we want to highlight all of the great work you continue to do since your residency and fellowship with the UPMC Division of Vascular Surgery.



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