

DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRICS *GOOD NEWS BULLETIN*

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In this issue, we highlight several impressive faculty and trainee achievements, additions of new faculty and staff members to our UM/HCH family, publications, and platform and poster presentations at major meetings. Kudos to all!

AWARDS AND HONORS



Jennifer Muñoz Pareja, MD, has been elected as a member of the American Pediatric Society (APS). APS is the first and most prestigious academic pediatric organization in North America. Nearly 1,800 members strong, APS is dedicated to advancing child health through the promotion of pediatric research, recognition of achievement, and cultivation of excellence through advocacy, scholarship, education, and leadership development. Members of APS are recognized as academic leaders in pediatrics, and they continue to contribute to the overall progress of child health, while inspiring the next generation of child-health professionals.



Meghan McCormick, MD, MS, was nominated to be a member of the Section on Hematology/Oncology of the American Academy of Pediatrics. The mission of the Section on Hematology/Oncology is to promote the health and well-being of children affected by cancer and blood disorders through policy, education, and advocacy for patients and their providers, with a commitment to address overt and implicit biases at the personal, systemic, and structural levels, which interfere with equitable care for all children.



Indrani Mukherjee, PDA, received the Panchi Postdoctoral Award 2026. This award is bestowed by the University of Miami and established in memory of Dr. Francisca “Panchi” Díaz to honor her scientific excellence, resilience, and dedication to supporting fellow researchers. It recognizes postdoctoral fellows who have overcome challenges while continuing to pursue their scientific careers.

WELCOME, NEW FACULTY AND STAFF!



Arlein Peña, RN, BSN, joined the Pediatric Mobile Clinic as a Registered Nurse (RN). She grew up in Hialeah Gardens and graduated from Hialeah Gardens Senior High School with her Medical Assistant Certificate. She worked as a Medical Assistant for nine years before earning her RN and BSN from Chamberlain University.

Her clinical experience spans Neurology, Orthopedic Surgery, Urology, Family Medicine, and Pediatrics, where her passion for caring for children first began. As an RN, she has worked in the Progressive Care Unit, Labor and Delivery, and School Health. During nursing school, Arlein served as Vice President of the Maternity and Pediatrics Club, helping lead community outreach events. When the opportunity arose to work with the Pediatric Mobile Clinic and Shotz-2-Go program, she was excited, due to her strong passion for pediatrics and community outreach.

Outside of work, Arlein enjoys playing in an adult softball league, going to the beach, and being an avid sports fan who loves attending games.

FEBRUARY RESIDENT AND ATTENDING AWARDS

Fellow of the month goes to ...

DR. RUBI ROMERO

Rubi was my fellow in the NICU and she is the absolute best. She is great with all the patients and their families and has so much love for what she does. She is compassionate, hard working, and kind. She made the rotation a great experience, even when the NICU was very busy. She knows everything about the patients and helps the residents a ton.

Working with Rubi is always a pleasure, but having her as part of my NICU team last month was the best!! You can tell she was made for it. She is so detail-oriented with patients, very good with parents!! GO RUBI!!!

Seeing her passion for tiny babies was amazing to witness and it was so contagious!!

Rubi was a great help and support while on NICU. I'm grateful for her help while on NICU, and it was awesome to see her interact with patients; you can tell she really cares.



Attending of the month goes to ...

DR. NARES

At the beginning of my PICU rotation, I was a little nervous. When I knew he was the attending on service my first week, I was REALLY nervous. But he was AMAZING!! He is the best of the best. He makes it look so easy just because of how good he is. He is very passionate about his patients and about what he does!

Dr Nares will forever be one of my favorite attendings to work with. Despite a long and complex list, he always takes the time to teach during rounds, making it educational while keeping track of the time. He is very thorough and allows the team to express their ideas inviting everyone for open discussions. Honestly, one of the best experiences in residency has been learning from him!

Dr Nares is an amazing PICU attending! He holds so much knowledge and is always eager to share it with his team. He has high expectations, and truly motivates residents to do their best. He is also great with patients and their families.

Dr. Nares is an incredible physician; his way of caring for patients is admirable. He's a great teacher, and explains things at a way easily understood by all. Thanks for a great week!



Intern of the month goes to ...

SCARLETT MARIA ALMONTE

Scarlett was amazing on Red Team! She was thoughtful, independent, great with families, and showed exceptional clinical knowledge. She is wonderful to work with and a team player through and through. On the way to become an amazing senior!

What a stellar intern. Although she covered Green Team for just one day, she quickly learned all the patients and took ownership of their care, despite a very busy list. She consistently demonstrated initiative, responsibility, and excellent clinical awareness, all while maintaining a positive attitude. Truly a pleasure to work with.

Scarlett was an excellent intern on red team! She was compassionate about her patients, a team player, and always willing to learn and teach. She always advocated for her patients. She will make a great senior!

Scarlett is a great intern! With quiet energy and calm demeanor, she gets things done and always helps the team strive forward. She's a great teammate and is always present for everyone! I have high hopes for her as a senior!

It was amazing to work with Scarlett! She is so thoughtful, organized, efficient, and calm! She really cares and did an amazing job taking care of her patients!



Resident of the month goes to ...

DR. JONATHAN MARTINEZ

Jonathan is an incredible co-resident. He is always so kind and patient and has a special way of making everyone feel welcome. He is a great model of how to be a great senior and how to work through challenging situations with wisdom and collaboration.

Jonathan is a fantastic senior! He always looks out for others and checks in regularly. I look forward to him being chief next year.

Jonathan was an amazing senior on blue team! He was patient, helpful, and kind. I'm so grateful I was able to work with him!



KUDOS



On Tuesday, February 10, 2026, the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council hosted the 20th Annual Developmental Disability Awareness Day at the Capitol in Tallahassee. Representing the UM Family Navigator Program, **Silvia Calderón-Frontana** had the opportunity to address members of the Florida House during the Education & Employment Committee meeting in support of HB 859 – Cameras in Classrooms.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

1. Adelekan T, **Walton JR**. Prioritizing psychosocial interventions for disruptive behaviors. *Pediatrics*. February 1, 2026. PMID: 41525990 DOI: [10.1542/peds.2025-072595](https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2025-072595)
2. **Coto J, Morris JA**, Yunis V, Sanchez CM, Zhong Liu X, **Cejas I**. Increasing genetic testing uptake through workflow optimization: a quality improvement study in pediatric hearing loss. *Children*. February 9, 2026.
3. **Delamater AM, Pulgaron ER**, Guevara G, Washington SA, Franz DZ, Gomez R, Felipe D, Bhat J, Chalew S. African American youth and parent perspectives on advanced insulin delivery technologies in diabetes management: Challenges to closing the loop on health disparities. *The Science of Diabetes Self-Management and Care*. February 2026. PMID: 41454686 DOI: [10.1177/26350106251397906](https://doi.org/10.1177/26350106251397906)
4. Batalha M, Filigrana P, Perreira KM, McClain AC, Pirzada A, Daviglius M, Cordero C, **Delamater AM**, Gallo LC, Isasi CR. Intergenerational socioeconomic mobility and cardiovascular health among Hispanic/Latino youth and caregivers living in the United States. *Journal of the American Heart Association*. December 2, 2025. PMID: 41294090 PMCID: [PMC12748529](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/PMC12748529/) DOI: [10.1161/JAHA.125.042972](https://doi.org/10.1161/JAHA.125.042972)

5. Siega-Riz AM, Vladutiu C, Cordero C, **Delamater A**, Isasi C, Gallo L, Van Horn L, Daviglius M, Stuebe A, LeCroy M, Grove M, Highland H, North K, Sotres D. Association of preconception cardiometabolic markers with early childhood weight in a study of Hispanic dyads. *Obstetrics and Gynecology*. December 18, 2025. PMID: 41411659 DOI: [10.1097/AOG.0000000000006149](https://doi.org/10.1097/AOG.0000000000006149)
6. Gonzalez-Nahm, S., Sotres-Alvarez, D., Isasi, C.R., Gallo, L.C., Cordero, C., **Delamater, A.M.**, Daviglius, M.L., Van Horn, L., Siega-Riz, A.M. (2025). Effects of maternal feeding style and child eating behaviors on BMI in young children in the Hispanic Community Health Study /Study of Latinos Family Lifestyle Outcomes Research Study. *Current Developments in Nutrition*. November 29, 2025. PMID: 41532144 PMCID: [PMC12794496](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/PMC12794496/) DOI: [10.1016/j.cdnut.2025.107611](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cdnut.2025.107611)
7. Gillenson CJ, Malik J, **Mali L**, Klages KL, Noser AE, Shroff Pendley J, Sanchez J, McGrady M, Dolan L, **Delamater AM**. (2025). Self-management behaviors mediate the relationship between distress and glycemic control in adolescents with type 1 diabetes. *Journal of Pediatric Psychology*. PMID: 41370130 DOI: [10.1093/jpepsy/isaf106](https://doi.org/10.1093/jpepsy/isaf106)

PRESENTATIONS



Mailman Center faculty and staff were active contributors at the 2026 Assistive Technology Industry Association (ATiA) Conference in Orlando, sharing their work in effective augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) practices. Austin Garilli, PhD, Michelle Schladant PhD, Cristina Pujol, MS, CCC-SLP, Tina Givner, MS, CCC-SLP, and Ana Nevares represented the Center.

Dr. Michelle Schladant, Tina Givner, and Cristina Pujol presented “Family Functioning Patterns in Children Who Use AAC,” exploring how family experiences shape AAC use and outcomes. Drs. Garilli and Schladant also shared a research poster, “AAC in the Preschool Classroom: Scalable Coaching to Build Team Capacity,” highlighting practical strategies to strengthen inclusive classroom support.

The conference provided opportunities to share Step Up AT resources, connect with partners, and bring back new ideas to support children, families, and educators.



Pankaj Agrawal, MD, MBBS, MMSc, was a guest presenter at the Shine Conference in Orlando, FL. January 21-23, 2026, where he presented “Advancing genetic diagnoses and therapies in the NICU.”



Teresa Del Moral, MD delivered Grand Rounds at Institute of Gynecology Obstetrics and Neonatology in Barcelona, Spain on January 27, 2026, entitled “Initial Respiratory Support.”

Please send your good news to Managing Editor Rosa Tamayo at rxp352@med.miami.edu, so that we may feature it in future *Bulletins*.