

Progress Notes

A Publication of the Medical Staff of Valley Children's

JULY 2017



Valley Children's
**Residency
Program
LAUNCHES**

Story on page 8

LEFT TO RIGHT: Daniel Merriott, MD;
Cristina Vargas, MD and Juan Torres, MD

**BEST
CHILDREN'S
HOSPITALS**

U.S. News & WORLD REPORT

RANKED IN 3 SPECIALTIES

2017-18

NATIONALLY
RANKED and RANKED and RANKED

Regional Hospitalist Program Improves Care



John Kinnison, MD

Medical Director, Regional Hospitalists and Clinical Partnerships
Valley Children's Healthcare

In keeping with the Valley Children's Healthcare mission, creating access to expert pediatric care within 30 minutes or 30 miles throughout our 11-county service region is a geographically challenging but imperative goal. In partnership with numerous organizations throughout the Valley, the Valley Children's Primary Care Medical Group has established regional hospitalist programs in various locations. As part of the expanding Valley Children's network, Valley Children's doctors work closely with staff in multiple institutions in delivering local care to patients.

This stellar collaboration of Valley Children's physicians with our host organizations helps prioritize the best quality pediatric care in the patients' and their families' own backyard. The focus of our Regional Hospitalist Program is to enhance the quality and continuity of care provided, while keeping kids closer to home when feasible.

Currently, we have regional hospitalists at Emanuel Medical Center in Turlock, Bakersfield Memorial Hospital, and Kaweah Delta Medical Center in Visalia. Our team works closely with nursing, respiratory therapy, ancillary services, local providers and leadership to determine how we can collectively enhance pediatric services and improve outcomes for our shared patients. In some locations, the utilization of telemedicine can further enhance the medical capabilities

by providing access to Valley Children's specialty care for patients requiring a higher level of care. This connectivity provides further expertise to patients locally, which could otherwise lead to a transfer to another facility.

There is a seamless exchange between my role as medical director of both regional hospitalists and clinical partnerships. The goals of both programs align to ensure the focus of improving the capabilities and quality of care at our partner sites. Our partners' substantial level of engagement further underscores the importance of the mission.

While many of the locations had hospitalist programs or interest in programs in the past, recruitment of pediatric hospitalists to the Valley remains a constant challenge. With the scope and reach of the Valley Children's Healthcare brand and commitment, building a network of versatile programs is best met when connected to a pediatric organization. Many pediatric providers in the Valley feel isolated when working alone in another organization. The regional hospitalist program connects them to a larger group of physicians that fosters a sentiment of collaboration and family. Connecting the dots in the Valley drives us away from practicing medicine in silos and focuses improvement of pediatric healthcare on a larger scale.



TOP: Dr. Crystal Carney checks on a young patient at Bakersfield Memorial.



BOTTOM: Dr. Anthony Thomas is medical director of the Pediatric Hospitalist Program at Bakersfield Memorial.

NATIONALLY

RANKED and RANKED and RANKED

U.S. News & World Report's new 2017-2018 Best Children's Hospitals has ranked Valley Children's Hospital as one of the best children's hospitals in the country in **Pediatric Orthopedics, Pediatric Diabetes & Endocrinology and Pediatric Gastroenterology & Gastrointestinal Surgery**. The rankings highlight the top 50 U.S. pediatric facilities.

"U.S. News & World Report has recognized what we've known for a long time – that our pediatric specialists, nurses and everyone here at Valley Children's stack up with the best," says Valley Children's President and CEO Todd Suntrapak. "It is a great recognition and so richly deserved by our team. I'm so proud that they're being honored for the great work they've done in the service of children for decades and will continue to do for decades to come."

Valley Children's **Orthopaedic Surgery Department** delivers outstanding care to children facing everything from fractures to congenital deformities (including spinal problems and clubfoot) to neuromuscular diseases. Our **Endocrinology Department** conducts educational sessions on diabetes self-management and treats common problems such as short stature, early or late puberty, along with very rare and complex cases such as thyroid or pituitary tumors. Our expert team of **Pediatric Gastroenterologists** performs rare medical procedures such as endoscopic retrograde colangio pancreatography (ERCP), advanced motility testing and offer clinics dedicated to inflammatory bowel disease and obesity.



Comprehensive Wound Care



Karen Dahl, MD

Vice President, Quality and Patient Safety
Valley Children's Healthcare

Valley Children's is excited to welcome Dr. Michael Bohlman as a certified wound specialist (CWS) to provide wound management for children. Although Valley Children's has always provided care for wounds, whether through our inpatient wound nurses, plastic surgeons, general surgeons, infectious disease specialists, or physiatrists, we now have a dedicated resource for ambulatory wound management.

Dr. Bohlman is available both for new outpatient wound referrals and follow-up care of wounds identified during a hospital stay. He will also be a resource for our hospital-based, certified wound nurses as needed.

For wound referrals, contact
Dr. Bohlman's office:

1100 E. Almond Avenue,
Suite #101 Madera, CA
93637-5692

Phone: 559-675-1231
Fax: 559-395-0909



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Valley Children's Offers Valley Fever Program



By Chokechai Rongkavilit, MD
Medical Director, Pediatric Infectious Diseases
Valley Children's Healthcare

Every child gets sick every now and then. They get runny noses. They cough. They easily spread germs amongst each other.

When a child isn't feeling well, it is only natural for parents to worry. Children's immune systems are still developing and that makes them susceptible to infections. Most infections run their course without any big worries.

But what if a child has a lingering fever, cough or is in constant pain? Think twice – it might not be an ordinary infection.

Our region is a hotspot for an insidious fungus called *Coccidioides* – cocci for short. This fungus lives in the soil and thrives on the Central Valley and the southwestern U.S. climate where the alternating drought and rain promote its growth.

Cocci produce spores that can become airborne. Anything that turns up the soil including construction, ground digs, storms, an earthquake or agricultural activities create dust that could carry this invisible menace.

As winds blow, breathing in just one microscopic spore can lead to a human infection called Valley fever.

Valley fever can occur in children of all ages. The past couple of years, Valley Children's saw close to 500 cases each year. Because of the growing population in our region, we anticipate the number of pediatric cases to increase.

It is a tricky disease. A lot of children have the infection, without even knowing they have it. For most who contract it, infections never produce symptoms. But a smaller proportion of those infected may develop symptoms of Valley fever.

It starts with common symptoms including fever, cough, headaches and chest pain. Many think they just have the flu, bronchitis or pneumonia, so misdiagnosis happens.

If symptoms linger beyond the typical two weeks recovery of common virus infections, stay vigilant. Watch for other features such as night sweats, persistent headache, weight loss, extreme fatigue, and especially a specific rash called erythema nodosum on the legs. These indicate a high possibility of Valley fever. If suspicions run high, pediatricians can order blood tests to check for specific antibodies. A chest X-ray is also useful in aiding the diagnosis.

Treatment can range from three to six months with specific antifungal medications. The treatment could take longer for patients with complicated Valley fever. If untreated, it can spread to lymph nodes, bones, skin, or the brain and spinal cord causing meningitis. Treatment for meningitis is lifelong. If the patient's immune system is already low, it could even be deadly.

If a child contracts the disease, it is important that the child be monitored for one to two years even if not taking medications. Periodic blood tests for cocci antibody will be necessary every few months.

There is no permanent cure for Valley fever. A vaccine is still in the early stages. The key is not to ignore the symptoms and to manage them early before it gets worse. It should also be noted that Valley fever is not contagious from one person to another person.

More children are affected with Valley fever in the Central Valley than anywhere else in the state. To address this silent epidemic, Valley Children's board-certified pediatric infectious disease specialists and nurses within our Valley Fever Program see patients at our main campus in Madera, as well as during the dedicated Valley fever clinic days at our specialty care center in Bakersfield.

Our specialists have a special interest and expertise in taking care of children with Valley fever. In fact, Valley Children's own Dr. Fouzia Naeem presented her Valley fever research work at the Pediatric Academic Society Meeting in San Francisco in May.

Our Central Valley region is booming. This means new construction and more soil disruption activities. We can't avoid the potential cocci spore growth, but we can take precautions.

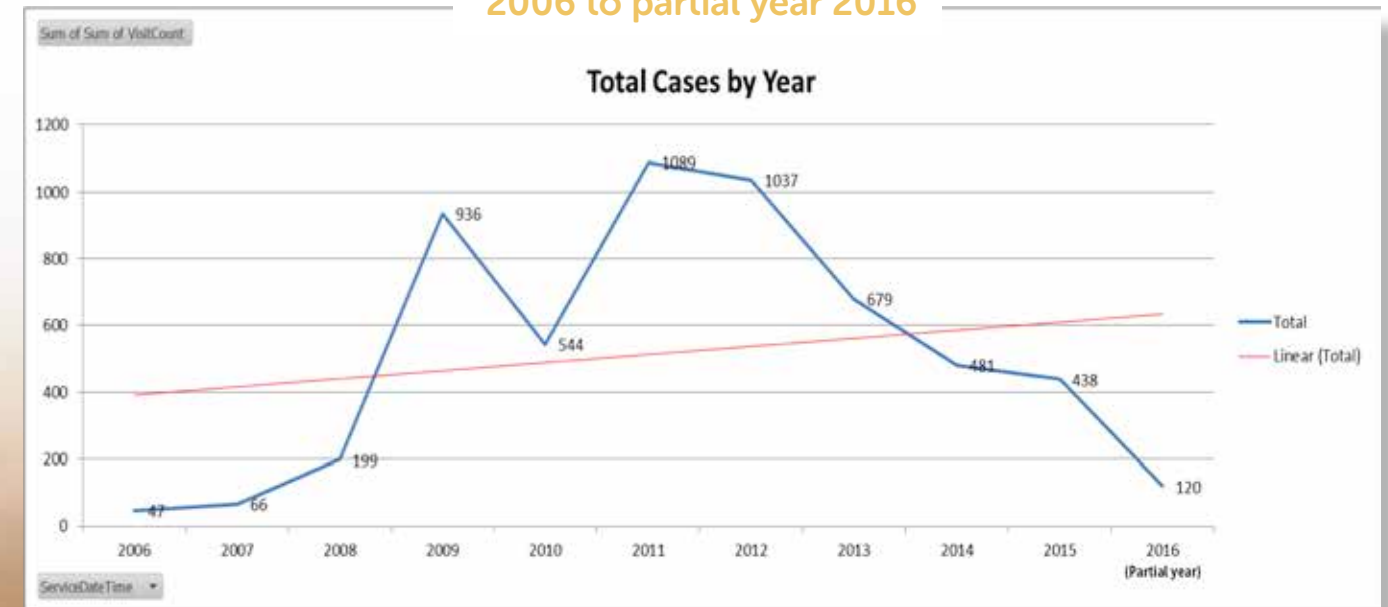
If dusty winds are blowing hard, avoid being outside. Families should stay educated on the disease and its symptoms. If a child's flu symptoms last longer than its usual course or unusual features arise, maybe it is not the flu after all.



When my daughter, Hannah, was diagnosed with Valley fever, we were happy when her doctors started seeing patients in Bakersfield. Now my daughter doesn't have to miss school.

– Carlo Magno
Bakersfield Parent

Number of Patients with Valley Fever being taken care of at Valley Children's Hospital 2006 to partial year 2016



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Improving Access to Care



Randy Guerrero
 Director, Clinical Partnerships and Telemedicine
 Valley Children's Healthcare

As part of an ongoing mission to continuously improve the health and wellbeing of children in Central California, Valley Children's Healthcare provides pediatric specialty care centers, neonatal intensive care units, primary care physician (PCP) offices, urgent care and partners with regional hospitals and outpatient facilities throughout the Valley. This ensures that wherever a child lives, from Modesto to Bakersfield to Santa Maria, families do not have to travel more than 30 minutes to find high-quality, comprehensive pediatric care.

Providing telemedicine at our specialty care centers and partner sites also increases access to high-quality care for many patient populations, especially those in rural areas. It becomes a means for providers and their patients to get support from pediatric subspecialists by using the latest telecommunication technologies. It prevents children from having to travel long distances or be transferred unnecessarily for their care. Telemedicine also helps to improve efficiency and productivity for Valley Children's specialists by serving as an adjunct to in-person care.

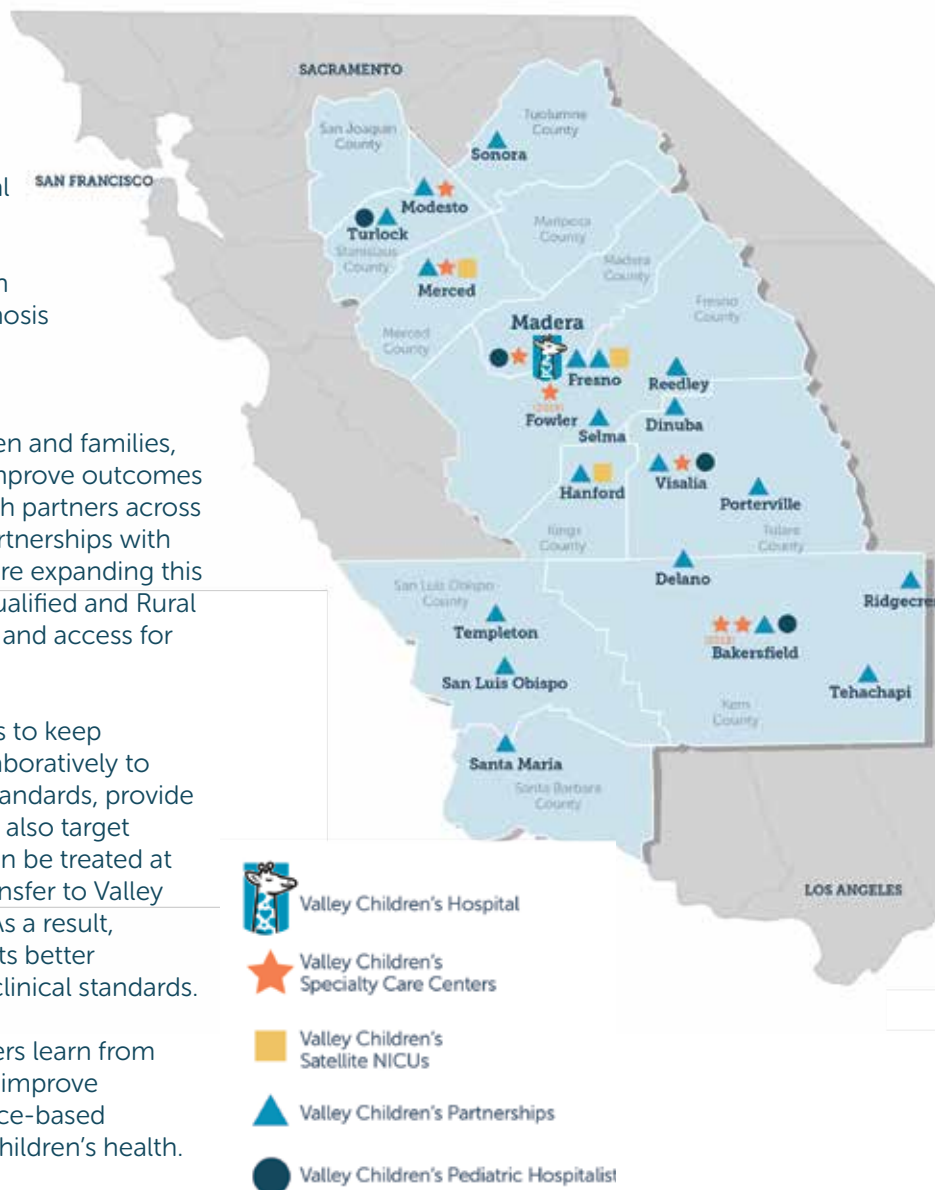
Our specialty centers in Bakersfield, Visalia, Merced and Modesto keep children and families close to home and near the people they trust most for their care – their own primary care physician. Offering subspecialties such as cardiology, gastroenterology, neurology, maternal-fetal medicine and more, we support local PCPs with advanced pediatric care, providing them with timely communication regarding patient test results, specific diagnosis and treatment information.

Expanding partnerships

As a healthcare network focused on children and families, Valley Children's is uniquely equipped to improve outcomes by providing local support and working with partners across our region. We have established clinical partnerships with regional hospitals and, in fiscal year 2017, are expanding this program to include outpatient Federally Qualified and Rural Health Centers to improve care, continuity and access for thousands of children.

The collective goal for these partnerships is to keep children in their community. We work collaboratively to identify opportunities, establish pediatric standards, provide clinical education and enhance quality. We also target specific pediatric patient conditions that can be treated at the partnering facility without having to transfer to Valley Children's or another higher level of care. As a result, continuity of care between our facilities gets better because we are practicing from the same clinical standards.

Valley Children's Healthcare and our partners learn from each other. The key is working together to improve processes, share best practices and evidence-based research, and stay on the cutting edge of children's health.



Partnership to Establish School-Based Health Centers

Randy Guerrero
 Director, Clinical Partnerships and Telemedicine
 Valley Children's Healthcare

Valley Children's Healthcare and Clinica Sierra Vista are long-time partners with aligned missions to provide high-quality care for children regardless of their ability to pay. Clinica and Valley Children's work closely to serve shared patients, as Clinica refers many of their pediatric patients to Valley Children's for specialty care.

As an extension of their ongoing alliance, Valley Children's and Clinica agreed to partner with Fresno Unified School District (FUSD) to establish six, school-based health centers (SBHCs) in a region of Fresno with limited access to healthcare services. In February, the FUSD Board of Trustees decided to establish the six SBHCs over a two-year period in collaboration with Clinica and their partner, Valley Children's Healthcare.

The primary objective of these SBHCs is to keep students healthy and in school, as well as to improve their access to healthcare. In addition, the centers will provide care to these children's families and the surrounding community. SBHCs are springing up across the country, with well over 2,000 nationwide and a growing number in our region. Fresno Unified and Clinica have experience with SBHCs, initiating one of the first in our area at Gaston Middle School in 2014.

The plan is to open the first three centers in the 2017-2018 school year, followed by three more in the 2018-2019 school year. The centers will be established at FUSD schools as follows:

- Year 1 – Addams Elementary, Bakman Elementary and Tehipite Middle School
- Year 2 – Duncan Polytechnical High School, Sunnyside High School and Sequoia Middle School

Through an agreement with Clinica Sierra Vista, Valley Children's will provide pediatric clinical expertise, medical oversight and midlevel practitioners for these centers. In addition, Valley Children's will provide the capital to build and equip the centers.

FUSD is clearly excited about the three-way partnership with Clinica and Valley Children's and is already promoting the next series of SBHCs in their district.

Valley Children's is also enthusiastic about the opportunity to invest in the community. Last year, Valley Children's treated more than 37,500 children within a 3-mile radius of the six planned School-Based Health Centers.

New Residency Program Launches



Jolie Limon, MD
Chief of Pediatrics and
Executive Director, Medical Education
Valley Children's Healthcare

Valley Children's has educated future physicians and pediatricians for decades. We have an established and nationally recognized medical education program that partners to train 186 residents, about half of whom are family medicine residents who will serve adults and kids.

Several years ago, our Board of Trustees decided to sponsor our own Valley Children's Pediatric Residency Program, Affiliated with Stanford University School of Medicine.

Two years of hard work, commitment and collaboration have paid off! We received our sponsoring institutional accreditation in October 2015, followed by our programmatic accreditation in May 2016. We received 342 applications for our 13 resident positions and interviewed 188 candidates from October 2016 to January 2017. On March 17, we announced our inaugural class to the network and community. We recruited 13 outstanding candidates from all over the country, including four Central Valley natives.

Now, our new program launched in June! This is a critical step not only for Valley Children's, but also the entire Valley. This innovative, interprofessional, educational program aims to train and retain pediatricians to



Valley Children's Pediatric Residency Program

Affiliated with Stanford University School of Medicine

serve our underserved and deserving children and families throughout our 45,000-square-mile service area.

All of this is important because our children's health is on the decline. Preventable diseases and illnesses like childhood asthma, obesity and diabetes run rampant in Central California, potentially shaving years off the lives of children who deserve so much better. The Fresno Bee reported last year that one in six children in the San Joaquin Valley has asthma, and 43 percent of children in Fresno, Madera, Tulare, Kings and Merced counties are overweight or obese, compared with 38 percent statewide and 33 percent nationally.

A major contributing factor to those numbers? The Valley is one of the most medically underserved areas in the country, according to the Medical Board of California. The shortage of primary care physicians, including pediatricians, means families lack the continuity of care that is so vital in keeping people healthy.

Raised in Sacramento, I consider myself from the Valley. Admittedly, I never envisioned living in Fresno.



My exposure here was limited to drab stretches of Highway 99, but my view expanded when I became a hospitalist at Valley Children's in 2000. I fell in love with the patients, the Hospital and the area's rich diversity, believing it deserves the best care possible.

“Valley Children's educates not just in our Hospital but throughout our communities.”

Unfortunately, people from outside California see stereotypes – palm trees and beaches to the south, tall buildings and iconic bridges to the north. The Valley is neither, so they do not see the benefits of being outside those highly priced areas.

We believe our inaugural class was inspired and drawn to Valley Children's for its commitment to clinical excellence and advocacy work for the Valley. Once our residents fall in love with Valley Children's, the populations we serve, and the area, my hope is many will want to stay and serve our communities, like I have. Our goal is to create outstanding clinicians, strong advocates and fearless leaders for future generations of our Valley communities.

We are especially excited about our ability to attract local students back home to the Valley. Doctors tend to practice



where they learn and become invested in the communities they serve, a likelihood that increases if residents are from the area.

Valley Children's educates not just in our Hospital but throughout our communities. Our resi-

dents will rotate through local partners such as Kaiser Permanente, Saint Agnes Medical Center, Dignity Health and local pediatrician offices.

I believe our program mission statement sums it up best: "The mission of the Valley Children's Pediatric Residency Program is to train physician leaders and scholars who will provide compassionate and collaborative interprofessional care as general or subspecialist pediatricians whether practicing in academic, public health or community practice settings."

This fight is personal for me – and Valley Children's. But it is up to our entire medical community to educate our future physicians and pediatricians to keep our kids healthy for generations to come.



LEFT: Dr. Jolie Limon with new residents, Dr. Daniel Ebbs, Dr. Rebecca Filbrandt and Dr. Devon Goossen.

OPPOSITE PAGE, LEFT: New resident, Dr. Juan Torres, examines a patient.

OPPOSITE PAGE, RIGHT: New resident, Dr. Erica Neuhaus, discusses a chart with one of our nurses.

Valley Children's Pediatric Residency Program

Affiliated with Stanford University School of Medicine

PGY-1 Class 2017-2018



Daniel Ebbs, DO, MS – A.T. Still University School of Osteopathic Medicine

As a Fresno paramedic, Daniel had frequent interaction with Valley Children's. He started a program called MGY, which trains people in rural communities to educate their population in health issues. He has a master's degree in community health from the University of New Mexico.



Rebecca Filbrandt, MD – American University – Caribbean School of Medicine

Rebecca is from Chico and has worked with her role model, her mother who is a pediatrician, in a rural health clinic in her hometown. She would like to employ her bilingual abilities in a clinic in an underserved community in the Central Valley.



Devon Goossen, MD – Saint Louis University School of Medicine

A Fresno native, Devon is dedicated to addressing critical health issues unique to the Central Valley. After graduating from Fresno State, she volunteered at Valley Children's. She takes a humanistic approach to medicine, meaning she views healthcare from the patient's point of view.



Theodore Gross, MD – Tulane University School of Medicine

Theodore, also known as Teddy, is from Washington and wants to educate parents and patients on health as a way to prevent future problems. After residency, he will fulfill his commitment to the U.S. Air Force.



Daniel Merriott, MD – Tulane University School of Medicine

A San Jose native, Daniel wants to be an advocate for children and an educator for families. He is also a musician, playing and teaching trumpet for several years. While in New Orleans, he was involved in organizing and performing in an outreach concert for HIV awareness.



Jessica Monk, DO – Rowan University School of Osteopathic Medicine

Jessica is from Livermore and has done multiple rotations at Valley Children's. She is participating in a research project, along with Dr. Mary Anne Tablizo and Dr. Janae Barker, which was accepted for presentation at a national medical society.



Erica Ortiz, MD – Ohio State University College of Medicine

Erica is from Santa Clara and has roots in the Valley as she attended UC Merced. She also founded the Neonatal and Maternal-Fetal Medicine Interest Group at Ohio State where she developed a NICU cuddler program. She says pediatrics is a "lifelong calling."



Thanh Huong Nguyen, MD – University of Colorado School of Medicine

Thanh says, "My world lies in pediatrics, where each smile, each triumph fills my heart." She was born in Vietnam, has a master's degree in public health and has tutored children at the Kumon Math and Reading Center for 11 years.



Tai Pham, MD – Tulane University School of Medicine

In addition to addressing physical issues, Tai strives to address social barriers to good health for families. She is from Milpitas, has a master's degree in public health and coordinated a clinic in a severely underserved area of New Orleans.



Juan Torres, MD – UCLA/Drew Medical Education Program

Juan has done extensive research on and is committed to the underserved Latino population. From La Mesa (San Diego area), he wants to focus on preventative healthcare initiatives. He developed a preventative care curriculum for high school students while in medical school.



Cristina Vargas, MD – UC Irvine School of Medicine

Cristina is a Stockton native and wants to empower, advocate for and assist families in need. She has a master's degree in biomedical and translational science and has completed diabetes and underserved Spanish-speaking patient research. She is part of KiPOW, which helps low-income schools meet diet and exercise requirements.



Albert Vu, MD – University of Colorado School of Medicine

Albert is from Irvine and has worked in a community clinic with a mentoring pediatrician for two years. The son of Vietnamese immigrants, he wants to learn from a diverse population to grow his knowledge and understanding of medicine while building rich relationships with the people he serves.



Zahia Zayed, MD – Frank H. Netter MD School of Medicine at Quinnipiac University

Zahia established health science education in the town of her medical school. She wants to study the effects of the biopsychosocial model on development, and how those changes impact health and how early intervention can prevent negative outcomes.

Residents Experience Continuity Clinics



Carmela Sosa, MD

Pediatrician, Charlie Mitchell Children's Center
Valley Children's Medical Group

Pediatricians have the unique opportunity to profoundly impact the lives of their patients and families through early and frequent preventive care visits. These visits provide physicians an opportunity to monitor children closely and screen early for signs of developmental delay, autism and disease states, and to provide education on accident, illness and injury prevention.

Each pediatric resident has the opportunity not only to experience, but also to provide this longitudinal care through their own "continuity clinic." Continuity clinic is an experience that begins the resident's first year and extends through their third and final year of training. Residents spend one-half day per week in their continuity clinic. They are assigned their own patient panel, whom they care for over their three-year training period under the direct supervision of an attending pediatrician.

During their clinic, residents see children for acute illnesses, routine "well child checks," and various types of follow-up visits. Residents learn to administer immunizations and routine developmental screenings, and provide anticipatory guidance. These physicians-in-training gain exposure to the spectrum and progress of normal development at all age levels, the initial presentation, and long-term management of children with special healthcare needs and chronic conditions.

Under graduated supervision, residents learn to be the primary care physicians and decision-makers for their patients through family-centered care, within the concept of a medical home. When residents complete their training, they are able to manage a variety of acute and chronic general pediatric conditions within healthcare systems. They also gain better insight into the patient-physician relationship, and how it evolves over time.

Continuity clinic sites for Valley Children's Pediatric Residency Program include: Charlie Mitchell Children's Center at our Madera campus; Sky Park Pediatrics and Dakota Pediatrics in Fresno; and our clinical partners at Kaiser, Fresno.



Peds Pall Strives to Improve Quality of Life



David Sine, MD

Medical Director, Palliative Care
Valley Children's Healthcare

Despite medical advances, unfortunately, some pediatric conditions still remain incurable. Technology may "prolong" life, but at what cost?

Peds Pall, the pediatric palliative care program at Valley Children's Hospital, strives to provide relief from the symptoms, pain and stress of a serious illness while improving quality of life for the child and family.

The program has grown significantly over the years. Susan Willoughby, RN, who previously worked at Hinds Hospice, headed Valley Children's administrative team that launched the program with the assistance of a First 5 grant. Every day, she performed compassionate consults with families, patients and staff. I later joined her. More recently, Sean Hunt, RN, Stephanie Fisher, NP, and Lynette Zimmerman, RN, came on board.

This dedicated team provides consults with children and their families hospital-wide to address the following and more:

- Review current diagnosis, care plan and prognosis of a child with a life-limiting or life-threatening condition
- Help the family make decisions regarding their child's treatment plan
- Facilitate communication between the child/family and healthcare team

Peds Pall collaborates with hospices throughout the Valley close to our patients' homes, including but not

limited to, Hinds Hospice (Fresno and Madera County), Tulare Hospice (Tulare County) and Hoffman Hospice (Kern County).

Some of our palliative care patients qualify for concurrent palliative care, which is provided by the above agencies. Concurrent care is different than hospice, the latter of which the physician must determine the child has less than six months to live. The child can continue curative treatment concurrently with pain and symptom management focused on quality of life and time home rather than in the hospital as much as possible. Nurses may visit the patient at home and assist in treatment.

Many heart-warming stories exemplify the importance of Peds Pall. For example, quality of life treatment changes along with concurrent care enabled Alex, a teenager with end-stage cystic fibrosis, to see her grandmother from Mexico at least one more time, and remain home several more months before returning to the hospital.

Or Rachel, who after admission to the pediatric intensive care unit for a fungal infection in her blood that complicated underlying heart and lung issues, went home with concurrent care and eventually celebrated the first time in eight years not being in the hospital for a full year.

Anyone on the child's healthcare team can request a palliative care consultation, including family members. The child's attending physician is always involved in the consultation process.

New Position Targets Obesity, Diabetes Prevention



Tim Curley

Director, Community and Government Relations
Valley Children's Healthcare

Valley Children's Healthcare recently hired Simran Kaur,

MPH, as our new community diabetes program coordinator, with the goal of expanding our work in the community to help build a healthier environment for all children.

The position focuses on childhood obesity and Type II diabetes prevention, and was made possible due to a generous \$1.25 million donation from River Park Properties and Lance-Kashian & Company. Childhood obesity has become a nationwide health crisis, more than tripling in the last 30 years. In the Valley, about 40 percent of

children are either overweight or obese and are developing diseases formerly seen only in adults.

To help identify our role in addressing this issue, Kaur is currently conducting an assessment of existing programs, services and initiatives in our region that target childhood obesity and diabetes prevention. Valley Children's understands a number of factors affect our children's health. As such, the conditions and policies in the social and physical environments in which children are born, live, work and age can significantly influence health outcomes. With the support of the Kashian Family donation, Valley Children's is committed to making a measurable improvement in the health and wellbeing of children throughout our region.



Valley Children's broke ground for its new specialty care centers in Modesto and Bakersfield. The new centers are opening in 2018 and will offer advanced pediatric care for families closer to home.



For information, please contact our Peds Pall Program at 559-353-8667 or 559-353-5270.



Dr. Allshouse Receives Dowain Wright Award



Fred Laningham, MD
Chief of Staff
Valley Children's Healthcare

In February 2016, Valley Children's established the Dowain Wright Patient Satisfaction Award, which annually recognizes a clinician who simultaneously provides excellent patient care and the highest level of customer service. Dr. Wright, medical director of pediatric rheumatology, exemplified these qualities excellently, inspiring us to dedicate this award in his honor after his untimely passing.

Peers, patients and families identify selected recipients. Dr. Michael Allshouse, Valley Children's medical director of pediatric surgery and trauma, received this year's award for his skill as a surgeon, exceptional patient care, and longstanding dedication to these values. Dr. Allshouse is well known in our healthcare network as a wise leader, and for his forward-thinking vision and programmatic successes.

Dr. Allshouse attended the U.S. Naval Academy in 1974 and spent 16 years as a surgeon on active duty serving at naval hospitals in Oakland, Guam and San Diego. While a fellow in pediatric surgery at Children's Hospital Colorado in Denver, he was awarded the Children's Choice Award in 1993, the first in that hospital's history. He was the first doctor of osteopathic medicine

to be boarded as a pediatric surgeon in the U.S., and he is a board examiner for young pediatric surgeons seeking Certificate of Added Qualification (CAQ) in the U.S.

Dr. Allshouse and his wife, Denise, have a special place in their hearts for children with Down syndrome. Both have served as liaisons for patients and families to the Down Syndrome Association of Central California. Dr. Allshouse is the only pediatric surgeon member of the Down syndrome medical interest group. He is Valley Children's Down syndrome medical expert and has provided a special service to so many children over the years.

In addition to pediatric trauma, Dr. Allshouse is an expert in repair and management of congenital malformations of the pelvis. He serves as a committee member in the Pull-Through Network, a support group for families with children with anorectal malformations and anorectal disorders. These are his technical areas of expertise, but we all recognize this man is much more.

Dr. Allshouse's peers admire him for his medical knowledge and skill, but equally for his humility, thoughtfulness and ability to spot key ways our healthcare network and Hospital can adapt to provide the highest quality care – all while making the experience the best possible for our patients and families. Congratulations, Mike, you deserve this! We are grateful for you spending so much of your career as a leader of pediatric healthcare in the Valley.



Medical Staff News



New practitioners who recently joined Valley Children's medical staff include:

Anesthesiology Ashley Eggers, MD

Dr. Eggers is a new member of Pediatric Anesthesia Associates Medical Group practicing as a pediatric anesthesiologist at Valley Children's.

Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Karen Fernandez, MD

Dr. Fernandez is a new member of Specialty Medical Group practicing as a pediatric hematologist/oncologist at Valley Children's.

Hospitalist Gary Bean, MD

Dr. Bean is a new member of Specialty Medical Group practicing as the medical director of the Hospitalist Program at Emanuel Medical Center in Turlock.

Julianne Randolph, MD

Dr. Randolph is a new member of Valley Children's Primary Care Group practicing as the medical director of the Hospitalist Program at Kaweah Delta Medical Center in Visalia.

Waleed Abbasi, MD

Dr. Abbasi is a new member of Specialty Medical Group practicing as a pediatric hospitalist at Valley Children's.

Pediatric Neurosurgery Melandee Brown, MD

Dr. Brown is a new member of Specialty Medical Group practicing as a pediatric neurosurgeon at Valley Children's.

Neonatology Marianne Anderson, MD

Dr. Anderson is a new member of Specialty Medical Group practicing as a neonatologist at Kaweah Delta District Hospital in Visalia.

Pediatric Cardiology Michelle Grenier, MD

Dr. Grenier is a new member of Pediatric Cardiology Medical Associates practicing as a pediatric cardiologist at Valley Children's.

Pediatric Emergency Medicine Geetanjali Srivastava, MD

Dr. Srivastava is a new member of US Acute Care Solutions practicing as the medical director of emergency medicine at Valley Children's.

Gail Bayliss, MD

Dr. Bayliss is a new member of US Acute Care Solutions practicing as an emergency room physician at Valley Children's.

Pediatric Pulmonology Carlos Milla, MD

Dr. Milla is a new member of Specialty Medical Group providing coverage in the cystic fibrosis clinic at Valley Children's.

Kristel Holmblad

Dr. Holmblad is a new member of Specialty Medical Group practicing as a pediatric pulmonologist at Valley Children's.

Pediatric Endocrinology Meenal Mendiratta, MD

Dr. Mendiratta is a new member of Specialty Medical Group practicing as a pediatric endocrinologist at Valley Children's.

Meera Ramayya, MD

Dr. Ramayya is a new member of Specialty Medical Group practicing as a pediatric endocrinologist at Valley Children's.

Dentistry Rojin Amiri, DDS

Dr. Amiri is a new member of Children's Dentistry and Orthodontics practicing as a dentist.

Jacob Weissich, DDS

Dr. Weissich is a new member of Children's Dentistry and Orthodontics practicing as a dentist.

Sanjetta Shergill, DDS

Dr. Shergill is a new member of California Kidds Pediatric Dentistry, practicing as a pediatric dentist.

Verne Nelson, DDS

Dr. Nelson is a new member of Powell Pediatric Dentistry, practicing as a pediatric dentist.

Pediatric Rheumatology Deepika Singh, MD

Dr. Singh is a new member of Specialty Medical Group practicing as a pediatric rheumatologist at Valley Children's.

Pediatric Urology Scott Berkman, MD

Dr. Berkman is a new member of Specialty Medical Group practicing as a pediatric urologist at Valley Children's.

Pediatrics

Robert Dimand, MD

Dr. Dimand is a new member of Specialty Medical Group practicing as a pediatrician in the McHenry Specialty Care Center in Modesto.

Alan Dakak, MD

Dr. Dakak is a new member of Valley Children's Primary Care Group practicing as a pediatrician at the new Pedi Center in Bakersfield.

James Sears, MD

Dr. Sears is a new member of Valley Children's Primary Care Group practicing as a pediatrician at the new Pedi Center in Bakersfield.

Marissa De Leon, MD

Dr. De Leon is a new member of Valley Children's Primary Care Group practicing as a pediatrician at the new Pedi Center in Bakersfield.

Marilou Veloso, MD

Dr. Veloso is a new member of Valley Children's Primary Care Group practicing as a pediatrician at the new Pedi Center in Bakersfield.

Family Practice

Richard Frelinger, DO

Dr. Frelinger is a new member of Valley Children's Primary Care Group practicing as a family practitioner at the Pedi Center in Bakersfield.

Hematology/Oncology

Christine Chang-Halpeny, MD

Dr. Chang-Halpeny is a new member of cCARE, practicing as a radiation-oncologist providing consultation for pediatric oncology patients transferring to adult care.

Jedidiah Monson, MD

Dr. Monson is a new member of Specialty Medical Group practicing as an oncologist/hematologist in the Adult Hematology Clinic at Valley Children's.

Diagnostic Radiology

Aron Gould-Simon, MD

Dr. Gould-Simon is a new member of Wishon Radiology practicing as a diagnostic radiologist at Saint Agnes Medical Center in Fresno.



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For more information or to share story ideas, please contact:

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