The George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences Division of Rheumatology provides state-of-the-art rheumatologic care in the heart of Washington, D.C. Our faculty focuses on the future of rheumatology, including mentoring and educating students, residents, and fellows. Our team conducts research into scleroderma, lupus, hidradenitis suppurativa, myositis, immunology, education and health care transitions. The GW Rheumatology Division also hosts the internationally recognized Cure JM Myositis Center, which is focused on care and research into myositis.
These are exciting times for GW Rheumatology. The division continues to grow and expand clinical operations, while we focus on our mission to advance clinical care, education, and research in the field of rheumatology.

GW Rheumatology faculty members are engaged in educating GW students, residents, and fellows both in small group and didactic formats, as well as providing bedside clinical experiences in the rheumatology elective.

Philanthropic support has been incredibly important for our growth. The inaugural Stuart S. Kassan, MD ’72, Endowed Lecture in Rheumatology has allowed us to start a new tradition at GW. Through this annual lecture, we hope to educate our students and colleagues about our exciting field. Other philanthropic donations have been used to support faculty development and research.

Moving forward, our division priorities are focused on ongoing growth. Rheumatologic disease remains the number one cause of disability in the United States. By educating future physicians, advancing research, and excelling in clinical care in rheumatology, we hope to improve outcomes for our patients.

Victoria K. Shanmugam, MRCP, MBBS, FACR, FACP
Director, Rheumatology
FOCUSING ON NEW FACULTY

Marc Phillpotts, MD

A graduate of our own GW Rheumatology Fellowship Program, we were delighted to promote Marc Phillpotts, MD to assistant professor of medicine. He is actively engaged in teaching our fellows, residents, and medical students, and has a special interest in seronegative spondyloarthritis and inflammatory eye disease.

Gelareh Atefi, MD

New faculty member Gelareh Atefi, MD completed a research fellowship at the University of Michigan, and her clinical rheumatology fellowship at the Harvard University Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center Rheumatology Program in Boston. Dr. Atefi specializes in osteoarthritis, inflammatory arthritis, and osteoporosis.
SAIRA BILAL, MD CERTIFIED IN ULTRASOUND

Saira Bilal, MD recently received the coveted American College of Rheumatology Musculoskeletal Ultrasound Certification. Dr. Bilal is an assistant professor of medicine at the George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences. She is engaged in teaching in the Clinical Skills and Reasoning course and focuses her clinical and research interests on musculoskeletal ultrasound in the diagnosis and management of rheumatoid arthritis, seronegative arthritis, gout, and osteoarthritis.

WELCOME CATHERINE HOOD, DNP, FNP-C

Catherine Hood, DNP, FNP-C, received her Bachelors of Science in Nursing from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and her Doctor of Nursing Practice degree from the University of Maryland. She enjoys helping patients with complex rheumatic diseases through their lifespan.
Derek Jones, PhD, is a postdoctoral fellow in the Division of Rheumatology. He completed his PhD in biomedical engineering at Case Western Reserve University, and is involved in research in Myositis, Hidradenitis Suppurativa, Scleroderma and Systemic Lupus Erythematosus. Among his current projects, Dr. Jones is investigating the use of mass spectrometry to study metabolomics in Hidradenitis Suppurativa.

The GW Rheumatology Fellowship is a two-year ACGME-accredited training program that prepares physicians to become board certified in Rheumatology. As a senior fellow, Erica McBride, MD is currently receiving dedicated training in musculoskeletal ultrasound. Junior fellow, Ishita Aggarwal, MD joins us this year from California and is enjoying teaching our residents and medical students.

Post Doctoral Research Fellow

Derek Jones, PhD, is a postdoctoral fellow in the Division of Rheumatology. He completed his PhD in biomedical engineering at Case Western Reserve University, and is involved in research in Myositis, Hidradenitis Suppurativa, Scleroderma and Systemic Lupus Erythematosus. Among his current projects, Dr. Jones is investigating the use of mass spectrometry to study metabolomics in Hidradenitis Suppurativa.
The Mark Millen Award is presented annually to a member of the SMHS graduating class who has demonstrated exceptional proficiency in the field of Rheumatology. Spencer Frost was an enthusiastic and engaged participant in the Rheumatology Elective and we hope he considers a career in the field of Rheumatology.

This year, internal medicine resident Mayce Haj Ali, MD won several awards for her work investigating prognosis in patients with ANA negative scleroderma. This work was presented at the D.C. Rheumatism Society meeting, the D.C. chapter of the American College of Physicians meeting, and will be presented at the American College of Rheumatology annual meeting in October 2018.

As a testament to her boundless enthusiasm for education and passion for rheumatology, the 2018 class of graduating residents selected Erica McBride, MD, senior fellow in rheumatology, to be the 2018 Fellow of the Year. The award was presented during the SMHS Department of Medicine’s annual award ceremony.
BUILDING GW RHEUMATOLOGY

EDUCATION

- Rheumatology Student-Faculty Publications
- Rheumatology Elective

DISCOVERY

- 9 Presentations at National Meetings
- 21 Publications
- 1 Patent Application
- 4 New Proposals Submitted
- 9 Active Research Studies
The inaugural Stuart S. Kassan, MD ’72, Endowed Lecture in Rheumatology featured V. Michael Hollers, MD, presenting on Genetics and the Environment in Rheumatoid Arthritis. Through his generosity and support, Kassan established this endowed fund to further education and awareness into the field of rheumatology.
My GW medical training basically changed my life and launched my career in rheumatology. Funding this endowed lecture series in rheumatology is the perfect way for me to give back. Dr. Shanmugam has created an outstanding Division of Rheumatology at GW. I am thrilled to support their work and to promote and enhance this important discipline at GW. As a graduate of the George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences, and as a rheumatologist, I could not think of a better way to promote and enhance this important discipline for patient care and teaching than by funding the endowed lecture series in rheumatology at GW.

- Stuart S. Kassan, MD ’72

PHILANTHROPY
ADVANCING RESEARCH

Philanthropic donations to the Rheumatology Research Fund support investigations into autoimmune disease, educational research, and faculty development. Many of these donations come from grateful patients, whose lives have been changed by our work.

When we give to Dr. Shanmugam and her research team, we know exactly how our contribution is being used and its importance to helping others who live with Lupus and other autoimmune diseases. Research funding is so important. Because of cutting-edge research, my doctors have been able to develop an amazing treatment plan. My husband and I strongly believe in funding Lupus research, not just because it helps me and my family, but because it benefits so many others who have autoimmune issues. We give to the GW program because we believe this research will be life changing for many.

- Ceci and Dennis Wraase, MS ’75
Directed by Rodolfo Curiel, MD, the Cure JM Myositis Center is a multidisciplinary clinical center focused on the evaluation and treatment of inflammatory muscle diseases. The center provides clinical consultation to patients with established or suspected inflammatory muscle diseases, and conducts research into Juvenile Dermatomyositis.

Gulnara Mamyrova, MD presented research from the Cure JM study at the 62nd Annual General Assembly and Scientific Meeting of the Japanese College of Rheumatology. Her presentation was titled: Distinguishing Features of Clinically Hypomyopathic and Amyopathic Juvenile Dermatomyositis.

In 2018, the Cure JM team hosted the Annual Patient Education Conference at GW and the conference drew almost 100 participants and experts from the United States and Canada.
Scleroderma is an immune disease characterized by inflammation, vasculopathy, and fibrosis. Our team is working to understand the causes of scleroderma so that we can identify new treatments for this debilitating disease.

STOP SCLERODERMA
THE SCLERODERMA BIODEPOSITORY AND PATHOGENESIS STUDY

Through the STOP Scleroderma study we are investigating various biomarkers that predict disease progression in scleroderma, and trying to understand factors that predict prognosis in patients with early disease.

CONQUER REGISTRY
COllaborative, National QUality and Efficacy Registry for Tracking Disease Progression in in scleroderma is supported by the Scleroderma Research Foundation. This multicenter collaborative study focuses on investigating multiple disease features and correlating them with molecular predictors to investigate response to therapies in a cohort of patients with early scleroderma.
The GW Lupus Study was initiated with philanthropic support from our patients and their families. The goal of this study is to investigate predictors of Lupus activity and outcomes. Systemic Lupus Erythematosus is a chronic autoimmune disease in which the immune system becomes active against parts of our own cells. The causes of Lupus are not well understood, and there is a great need to improve outcomes for patients with Systemic Lupus Erythematosus.

Immunologic Discoveries in Hidradenitis Suppurativa

Through the Wound Etiology and Healing Study, we have developed a longitudinal cohort of patients with Hidradenitis Suppurativa (HS). We are investigating the interplay of the host immune response with the microbiome in HS. Our work has found that the bacteria Prevotella is commonly found in HS lesions. We have also found that skin from HS patients shows reduced expression of the naturally occurring antimicrobial peptide Dermcidin. This suggests that defective innate immune responses may play a role in pathogenesis of HS and identifies potential new treatments for this devastating condition.
Thank you for your support of the GW Division of Rheumatology.

This year we have been honored to receive significant gifts supporting the WE-HEAL Study, the GW Lupus Study, the STOP Scleroderma Study, and the Cure JM Myositis Center. Philanthropy is critically important for the growth of GW Rheumatology and helps us focus on the future. We want to thank all of our supporters including alumni, faculty, and grateful patients as we continue to focus on improving care for patients with rheumatic disease and educating the future rheumatology workforce.

Donations to support the GW Division of Rheumatology may be made online at:

[go.gwu.edu/Give2Rheumatology](go.gwu.edu/Give2Rheumatology)