



## The Georgetown-Howard Universities Center for Clinical & Translational Science Mentored Career Development Core

**Announces:**

### **2019 KL2 Scholars**

After our 9th highly competitive application cycle, the Georgetown-Howard Universities Center for Clinical and Translational Science (GHUCCTS) announces the appointment of **Annie Kruger and Katherine Michel** as **KL2 Scholars**. These new awardees, their research projects, and training plans are emblematic of our program objectives in that they pair highly-promising scholar-trainees with mentor teams that include members from outside their own disciplines, departments, or institutions to pursue research that depends on collaborations and methods from outside the scholars' disciplines, departments, or past experiences.

The GHUCCTS KL2 program is analogous both to the original National Institutes of Health (NIH) "roadmap" K12 Clinical and Translational Research Scholars (CTRS) program and to individual K-series awards, providing up to three years of protected time and research support, focused on developing early-career faculty investigators through a multidisciplinary-mentored research experience so that they can become independent, extramurally funded investigators, preferably in programs of multidisciplinary, collaborative team science.

**Annie J. Kruger, MD PhD**, Assistant Professor of Medicine in the Division of Gastroenterology at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital will be *researching "Mechanisms of Chemokine Antagonism in Generating Reparative Macrophages and Inhibiting Hepatic Stellate Cell Activity."* She is evaluating the effects of chemokine receptor 2 and 5 antagonists in decreasing the pro-inflammatory and pro-fibrotic activity of macrophages and stellate cells, respectively, in non-alcoholic steatohepatitis, one of most prevalent liver diseases in the world today. She is mentored by Dr. Jill Smith from the Division of Gastroenterology at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital and Dr. Fung-Lung Chung from the Department of Oncology at Georgetown University Medical Center.

**Katherine G. Michel, PhD MPH**, Instructor of Medicine at Georgetown University will work on *"Quantifying immune functionality and crosstalk with the cervicovaginal microbiome among women who naturally control HIV infection"*. She seeks to understand the complex relationship between mucosal microbiota and the immune system among women living with HIV, to refine HIV therapeutics and prevention as well as improve women's health. She is mentored by Drs. Seble Kassaye and Dan Merenstein from the DC MACS/WIHS Combined Cohort Study and the Georgetown University Medical Center; Jacques Ravel at the University of Maryland; Daniel Douek at NIAID and the Vaccine Research Center, and Adam Ratner at New York University.

Dr. Kruger and Dr. Michel will join our continuing KL2 Scholars:

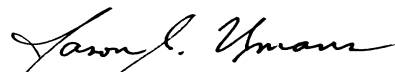
**Chukwuemeka Ihemelandu, MD, FACS**, Associate Professor of Surgical Oncology at Georgetown University will study *“Improving Detection of Microscopic Disease to Improve Survival of Patients with Gastrointestinal Cancers.”* He seeks to establish a proof of concept for the utility of intra-operative optical fluorescence imaging with NIR light using antibodies that specifically target cancer cells in colorectal cancer (CRC). Dr. Ihemelandu is mentored by Dr. Christopher Albanese from the Departments of Oncology and Pathology at Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center.

**Alejandra Hurtado de Mendoza, PhD**, Research Instructor of Oncology at Georgetown University, who is *“Testing a Culturally Adapted Telephone Genetic Counseling Intervention to Enhance Genetic Risk Assessment in Underserved Latinas at Risk of Hereditary Breast Cancer.”* She is adapting an evidence-based Telephone Counseling intervention to reduce disparities by broadening the reach and accessibility to genetic counseling while enhancing the quality of the service for underserved at-risk Latinas. She is mentored by Drs. Kristi Graves and Marc Schwartz from the Cancer Prevention and Control Program at Georgetown University and by Dr. Heidi Hamilton from the Department of Linguistics at Georgetown University.

**Matthew A. Edwardson, MD**, Assistant Professor of Neurology, and Rehabilitation Medicine at Georgetown University will study *“Plasma and exosomal markers of neural repair following stroke.”* He seeks to identify changes in the concentration of central nervous system lipids that make their way into the bloodstream and can signal the process of brain repair with a goal of identifying new targets for neurotherapeutics. Dr. Edwardson is mentored by Dr. Alexander Dromerick, of MedStar National Rehabilitation Hospital and Georgetown University Medical Center, and by Dr. Amrita Cheema, from the Departments of Oncology and Biochemistry at Georgetown University.

**Evgenia Gourgari, MD**, Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at Georgetown University, whose research is focused on *“The impact of insulin resistance and its treatment on cardiovascular risk in youth with type 1 diabetes.”* With co-mentorship by Drs. Alan Remaley of NHLBI, Kristina Rother of NIDDK, and Joseph Verbalis of Georgetown University, she is assessing the relationship of insulin resistance, and its treatment with metformin, with novel molecular and functional CVD risk markers in youth with T1DM.

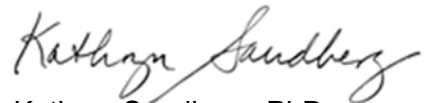
Please join us in congratulating our new scholars.



Jason G. Umans, MD, PhD  
Associate Professor and KL2  
Program Director



Charles D. Howell, MD  
Professor and Associate Program  
Director



Kathryn Sandberg, PhD  
Professor and Associate Program  
Director