



# Translational Research Academy

Cohorts 2024 & 2025



**Wake Forest University**  
**School of Medicine**



## **Asma Ahmed, PhD, MD, MPH**

**Assistant Professor, Epidemiology and Prevention**

[Asma.M.Ahmed@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Asma.M.Ahmed@advocatehealth.org)

**TRA Cohort 2024**

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/faculty/a/asma-mohamed-ahmed>

**How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

2 years

### **Background and Research Interests**

I am a perinatal/pediatric epidemiologist with a strong methodological background and a trained physician with clinical experience in pediatrics. My research utilizes routinely collected administrative data, causal inference methods, and life-course approaches to investigate how maternal exposures during pregnancy affect maternal and child outcomes over their life course.

**What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

Baking/cooking, walking, and spending time with my family.



## **Aynur Aktas, MD**

**Assistant Professor, Supportive Oncology**

[Aynur.Aktas@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Aynur.Aktas@advocatehealth.org)

**TRA Cohort 2024**

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Aynur-Aktas>

### **How long have you been at Atrium Health?**

6 years

### **Background and Research Interests**

I am a Research Scientist in the Department of Supportive Oncology at Atrium Health Levine Cancer, an Adjunct Assistant Professor of Medicine at Wake Forest University School of Medicine, and an Affiliate Member of the Wake Forest Comprehensive Cancer Center. I did my Hospice and Palliative Medicine Research Fellowship at the Cleveland Clinic. My research on symptom clusters, malnutrition, inflammation, and cachexia in advanced cancer integrates themes in Oncology and Palliative Medicine, focusing on patient-reported outcomes.

### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

Painting, drawing, dancing, and playing music.



## **Supriya Chakraborty, PhD**

**Research Assistant Professor, Hematology  
Oncology Translational Research**

[Supriya.Chakraborty@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Supriya.Chakraborty@advocatehealth.org)

**TRA Cohort 2025**

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Supriya-Chakraborty-2>

### **How long have you been at Atrium Health?**

2 years

### **Background and Research Interests**

An accomplished researcher in Molecular Hematology and Onco-Immunology, with expertise in cancer cell biology, CRISPR genome editing, and clinical translation, has contributed to leading journals and advanced cancer research through doctoral and postdoctoral work in India and Italy. Currently serving as Research Assistant Professor and Adjunct faculty, with focus centers on Natural Killer cell immunotherapy and innovative treatment platforms for hematological malignancies, while also excelling in lab management, grant writing, and mentorship.

### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

Mostly, I spend time with my daughter, whether playing with toys or exploring outside. These moments bring joy and remind me of the beauty in simple togetherness.



## **Caroline Cochrane, MD, MSCR, FACOG**

**Assistant Professor, Obstetrics and Gynecology**

[Anna.Cochrane@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Anna.Cochrane@advocatehealth.org)

**TRA Cohort 2024**

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/faculty/c/anna-caroline-cochrane>

### **How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

3 years

### **Background and Research Interests**

I am a board-certified Obstetrician-Gynecologist, originally from Charlotte, NC, and I recently obtained a Master's in Clinical Research from UNC Chapel Hill in 2020. My research interests include health disparities in benign gynecology, particularly during the menopause transition. I would like to study patients' experiences with seeking and obtaining menopause-related care, and design an intervention based on patient experiences to transform delivery of and access to menopause care.

### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

I love travelling and new experiences. I enjoy exercising and running both road and obstacle races. I am not great at cooking, but I am very good at finding great restaurants and farmers markets where I buy too many plants.



## **Dirk Davis, PhD, MPH**

**Assistant Professor, Implementation Science**

[Dirk.Davis@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Dirk.Davis@advocatehealth.org)

**TRA Cohort 2025**

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/faculty/d/dirk-alexander-davis>

**How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

< 1 year

### **Background and Research Interests**

I'm a behavioral scientist and mixed methodologist whose research focuses on improving the health of marginalized communities in the Southern US and Latin America by reducing HIV, mental health, and stigma disparities through community-engaged behavioral interventions. I'm especially interested in integrating evidence-based mental health interventions into existing HIV prevention and care services.

**What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

Plants and gardening, cooking, traveling, hiking and spending time outdoors.



## **Emilie Duchesneau, PhD**

**Assistant Professor, Epidemiology and Prevention**

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**TRA Cohort 2024**

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/faculty/d/emilie-danielle-duchesneau>

### **How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

2 years

### **Background and Research Interests**

I am a pharmacoepidemiologist and health services researcher focused at the intersections of aging, oncology, and drug interventions. The objectives of my research are: 1) to improve the quality of aging and cancer outcomes research through epidemiologic methods development and validation and 2) to use advanced epidemiologic methods to generate real-world evidence that supports interventions to improve the quality of care for older adults with cancer.

### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

I enjoy spending time with family and friends, running, biking, wheel-throwing, playing music (guitar and piano), and reading.



## **Jack Edminister, MD**

**Assistant Professor, Dermatology**

[John.Edminister@advocatehealth.org](mailto:John.Edminister@advocatehealth.org)

**TRA Cohort 2024**

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/faculty/e/john-robert-edminister>

### **How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

4 years

### **Background and Research Interests**

I am a dermatologist with clinical interests that include autoimmune connective tissue diseases, blistering disorders, and psychodermatology. My primary research interest is the study of calcimimetic drugs as putative treatments for both acquired and genetic diseases of keratinocyte dysadhesion, such as pemphigus vulgaris and Hailey-Hailey Disease.

### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

I love spending time with my significant other (Katherine) and my golden retriever (Piper). I love to be with my family, in the outdoors, or at concerts with friends.





## **Brigid Grabert, PhD, JD, MPH**

**Assistant Professor, Implementation Science**

[Brigid.Grabert@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Brigid.Grabert@advocatehealth.org)

**TRA Cohort 2025**

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/faculty/g/brigid-k-grabert>

### **How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

Almost 2 years

### **Background and Research Interests**

I am a health services researcher and implementation scientist with interests in cancer prevention and policy implementation. My primary research interest is in assessing policy approaches to increase HPV vaccine uptake using survey and EHR data and causal inference methods. I have recently begun working in the tobacco prevention and control policy space as well.

### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

I enjoy spending time with my family, reading fiction, walking, dancing, and hiking.



## **William Harrison, MD**

**Assistant Professor, Pathology**

[William.T.Harrison@advocatehealth.org](mailto:William.T.Harrison@advocatehealth.org)

**TRA Cohort 2025**

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/faculty/h/william-thomas-harrison>

### **How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

5 years

### **Background and Research Interests**

I was hired as a faculty member in Pathology in 2020 and have worked as a clinician-scientist with a 50/50 clinical/research ratio. I am the Neuropathology Core Leader for the Wake Forest ADRC. I am interested in using digital spatial profiling technology to investigate insulin-signaling pathology dysregulation in LATE-NC as well as investigating the utility of various nonhuman primate models to study human neurodegeneration.

### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

Bodybuilding, watching horror movies, visiting the mountains, hanging out and having drinks with friends.



## **Lorelei Johnson, PhD, CCC-SLP**

**Assistant Professor, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation**

[Lorelei.Johnson@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Lorelei.Johnson@advocatehealth.org)

**TRA Cohort 2025**

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/faculty/j/lorelei-phillip-johnson>

### **How long have you been at Atrium Health?**

Almost 4 years

### **Background and Research Interests**

I am a Research Scientist in the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at Carolinas Rehabilitation. I am clinically trained as a speech-language pathologist, and I am interested in the recovery of language function in stroke survivors with aphasia. Recently, I have been investigating the interaction between motor and language recovery, but I also have interests in neuroimaging, non-invasive brain stimulation, and post-stroke quality of life.

### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

I love going to concerts with my husband or snuggling with my two young kids. I also enjoy traveling and reading on the way there. I recently started gardening as well and have found that nothing beats home-grown berries.



## **Melissa Kay, PhD, MS, MPH, RD, CLC**

**Assistant Professor, Pediatrics**

[Melissa.Kay@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Melissa.Kay@advocatehealth.org)

**TRA Cohort 2024**

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/faculty/k/melissa-kay>

**How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

2 years

### **Background and Research Interests**

I am a nutrition interventionist and epidemiologist with interest in the prevention of early life obesity and the improvement of diet quality in mother-child dyads.

**What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

My two young kids take up most of my free time, but when I'm not enjoying the company of my family you can find me out running.



## **Anna Kuan-Celarier, MD, MS**

**Assistant Professor, Obstetrics and Gynecology**

[Anna.Kuancelarier@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Anna.Kuancelarier@advocatehealth.org)

**TRA Cohort 2024**

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/faculty/k/anna-mei-ching-kuan-celarier>

**How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

2 years

### **Background and Research Interests**

My research interest is in the effects of cancer treatment on cognitive and physical function and aging. I recently completed my fellowship at the University of Oklahoma during which I completed Master of Science degree in Clinical and Translational Research, and have participated in basic science, translational, and clinical research primarily focused on cancer patients.

**What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

I enjoy running, traveling, and learning new languages. I'm currently learning Hungarian!



## **Tsai-Ling Liu, PhD**

**Assistant Professor, Center for Health System Sciences**

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### **TRA Cohort 2024**

#### **Faculty Profile**

<https://atriumhealth.org/research/multi-disciplinary-centers-and-cores/chassis/meet-the-team>

#### **How long have you been at Atrium Health?**

9 years

#### **Background and Research Interests**

My educational background is in health services research with an emphasis on quantitative outcomes research. My research interests include telehealth, health disparities, and chronic disease management. Currently, I am focusing on improving outcomes for older patients, particularly those living with dementia, aiming at providing the best healthcare services to these patients.

#### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

Spending time with family and friends, traveling, reading, and enjoy watching TV / movies.



## Krishna Maddeboina, PhD

Assistant Professor, Biochemistry

[Krishnaiah.Maddeboina@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Krishnaiah.Maddeboina@advocatehealth.org)

**TRA Cohort 2025 & K12 Scholar 2025-2027**

### Faculty Profile

<https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=H7jK610AAAAJ>

### How long have you been at Atrium Health?

4 years

### Background and Research Interests

I am a computational and synthetic medicinal chemist specializing in the in silico design and synthesis of small molecule multitarget inhibitors. My expertise lies in integrating computational approaches such as molecular modeling, structure/fragment-based drug design, and cheminformatics with practical synthetic chemistry to develop novel chemotypes with polypharmacological profiles. I am interested in leveraging multitarget drug discovery to address drug resistance and improve efficacy and reduce toxicity in multifactorial diseases.

### What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

I enjoy spending time with my family and friends, playing with my daughter and son, and reading articles.



## **Sophie Maiocchi, PhD**

**Assistant Professor, Biomedical Engineering**

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**TRA Cohort 2025**

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/faculty/m/sophie-maiocchi>

### **How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

1.5 years

### **Background and Research Interests**

My research background is in nanomedicine, vascular biology and redox biology. I am interested in designing research projects that leverage clinical samples/data for more meaningful insights into disease pathophysiology and potential therapeutic targets.

### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

I enjoy playing tennis, reading literature fiction, watching terrible reality dating TV shows, cooking and playing with my kittens.





## **Eleftherios Makris, MD, PhD**

**Assistant Professor, Surgery**

[Eleftherios.Makris@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Eleftherios.Makris@advocatehealth.org)

**TRA Cohort 2025 & K12 Scholar 2025-2027**

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/faculty/m/eleftherios-makris>

### **How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

Less than 1 year

### **Background and Research Interests**

I am a surgical oncologist and biomedical engineer with a research focus on cancer tissue engineering, immunotherapy, and the tumor microenvironment. My work integrates patient-derived tumor organoids and immune profiling to model tumor-immune interactions and develop personalized immunotherapeutic strategies for treatment-resistant malignancies such as pancreatic cancer.

### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

I enjoy spending time with my family, exploring nature, travelling, biking, and reading about history and philosophy.



## Jaclyn Martindale, DO

**Associate Professor & Section Head, Pediatric Neurology**

[Jaclyn.Martindale@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Jaclyn.Martindale@advocatehealth.org)

**TRA Cohort 2024**

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/faculty/m/jaclyn-marie-martindale>

### **How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

6 years

### **Background and Research Interests**

I am a physician-scientist specializing in pediatric movement disorders, with clinical research focusing on Tourette syndrome (TS). I aim to become an independent clinical investigator and design behavioral interventions to address the full psychosocial impact of TS. Specifically, I am interested in studying and affecting these aspects of TS: 1) stigma, 2) emotional well-being, and 3) psychological distress.

### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

Gardening, reading books, and being outside.



## **Anthony Peters, MD, MS**

**Assistant Professor, Cardiology**

[Anthony.Peters@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Anthony.Peters@advocatehealth.org)

**TRA Cohort 2025**

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/faculty/p/anthony-e-peters>

### **How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

1 year

### **Background and Research Interests**

I am a clinician-investigator in the field of heart failure (HF) with an overall focus on precision health approaches for patients with HF with preserved ejection fraction (HFpEF). The purpose of my research program is to develop and test precision exercise and pharmacologic therapies for patients with HFpEF to optimize clinical response and durability.

### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

I enjoy hiking, playing with my children, tennis, and spending time in the NC mountains.



## **Kristyn Pocock, MD**

**Assistant Professor, Neurology**

[Kristyn.Pocock@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Kristyn.Pocock@advocatehealth.org)

**TRA Cohort 2024**

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/faculty/p/kristyn-m-pocock>

**How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

2.5 years

### **Background and Research Interests**

I am interested in studying the impact of enlarged breast size on migraine and neck pain.

**What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

Spending time with my young family (husband, toddler and newborn!)



## **Sarah Price, PhD**

**Instructor, Social Sciences and Health Policy**

[Sarah.Price3@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Sarah.Price3@advocatehealth.org)

**TRA Cohort 2025**

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/faculty/p/sarah-price>

### **How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

Postdoc for 2.5 years, Faculty for 5 months.

### **Background and Research Interests**

I am a clinical health psychologist with additional specialized training in psychosocial oncology. Broadly, my research focuses on identifying and intervening on psychosocial and behavioral risk factors to improve health outcomes among cancer survivors. Within this area, much of my work has focused on tobacco use, sleep disturbances, and lung cancer-specific concerns.

### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

Outside of work, I try to spend most of my time outdoors and with family and friends, especially bouldering, hiking, and camping.



## **Joanna Robles, MD**

**Assistant Professor, Pediatrics**

[Joanna.Robles@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Joanna.Robles@advocatehealth.org)

**TRA Cohort 2025 & K12 Scholar 2025-2027**

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/faculty/r/joanna-maria-robles>

### **How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

2 years

### **Background and Research Interests**

I am a pediatric oncologist and Assistant Professor in the Department of Pediatrics, Section of Hematology/Oncology with a clinical interest in hematologic malignancies. My research focuses on addressing unmet health-related social needs to enhance pediatric cancer care delivery and outcomes.

### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

I enjoy traveling, exploring the outdoors, and spending time with my family and 2 dogs.



## **Brad Rowland, MD**

**Assistant Professor, Internal Medicine**

[Bradley.Rowland@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Bradley.Rowland@advocatehealth.org)

**TRA Cohort 2025**

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/faculty/r/bradley-alan-rowland>

### **How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

5 years (3 years residency, 2 years post training)

### **Background and Research Interests**

I am interested in transitions of hospital care and how technology and informatics can be leveraged to improve patient outcomes.

Technology including continuous remote monitoring and informatics concepts including risk stratification and implementation science.

### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

Bouldering and spending time with my wife, who is a pediatric hospital medicine fellow, and 2 sons (2.5 yrs old and 7 months old).



## **Cecilia Schaaf, DVM, PhD**

**Assistant Professor, Pathology, Section on  
Comparative Medicine**

[Cecilia.Schaaf@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Cecilia.Schaaf@advocatehealth.org)

### **TRA Cohort 2025**

#### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/faculty/s/cecilia-renee-schaaf>

#### **How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

3 years (2.5 years as a post-doc fellow, 0.5 years as faculty)

#### **Background and Research Interests**

I am a veterinarian and basic science researcher with a background in intestinal pathophysiology and stem cell mediated regeneration. Using complimentary organoid cultures (human and animal derived) along with nonhuman primate in vivo modeling, I currently investigate the impact of aging on intestinal function and resiliency. I also work on a collaborative project developing a microfluidic organoid platform as a new source of adoptive cellular therapy to treat solid tumors.

#### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

Working on my mini-farm with my partner, son, horse, donkeys, chickens, dogs, and shared community garden. I also enjoy playing violin by substituting with the W-S Symphony and jamming with the old-time group at Fiddlin' Fish Brewery!





## **Kirtikar Shukla, MS, PhD**

**Assistant Professor, Molecular Medicine,  
Internal Medicine**

[Kirtikar.Shukla@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Kirtikar.Shukla@advocatehealth.org)

**TRA Cohort 2024**

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/faculty/s/kirtikar-shukla>

### **How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

7 years

### **Background and Research Interests**

My research focuses on redox homeostasis in inflammation and its role in the tumor microenvironment during chemoradiation therapy for HNSCC. I aim to discover theragnostic tools targeting redox-sensitive cysteines in alarmins released during radiation therapy, which can hinder immunotherapy efficacy. Additionally, I study redox-sensitive proteins like NQO1, aldose reductase, and NAMPT in radiation-resistant HNSCCs. By targeting these proteins and using adjuvant therapies, I seek to overcome treatment resistance and improve cancer outcomes.

### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

I enjoy spending time with my kids and watching sci-fi movies. I also love reading, especially science fiction, and spending time outdoors with my kids and friends. Cooking for my family is a favorite pastime.



## **Michael Supples, MD, MPH**

**Assistant Professor, Emergency Medicine**

[Michael.Supples@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Michael.Supples@advocatehealth.org)

**TRA Cohort 2024**

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/faculty/s/michael-william-supples>

**How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

6 years

### **Background and Research Interests**

I am a physician board certified in Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and Emergency Medicine. My research areas of interest are prehospital medicine and cardiovascular medicine, including general prehospital care optimization, reducing the burden of cardiovascular disease among EMS clinicians, and prehospital and emergency department cardiovascular disease care pathways.

**What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

I enjoy spending time with my wife and my son, traveling, and learning new skills.



## **Mariana Wingood, DPT, PhD, MPH**

**Assistant Professor, Implementation Science**

[Mariana.Wingood@wfusm.edu](mailto:Mariana.Wingood@wfusm.edu)

**TRA Cohort 2024 & K12 Scholar 2024-2026**

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/faculty/w/mariana-wingood>

**How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

2 years

### **Background and Research Interests**

I am a physical therapists with a Board Certification in Geriatrics and an implementation scientist. My research focuses on addressing the challenges healthcare providers encounter when promoting functional independence and well-being, including early fall risk screenings and encouraging patients to engage in physical activity.

**What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

Running, competing in Ironmans, hiking, skiing, traveling, and cuddling with my Greater Swiss Mountain Dogs.



## **Kip Zimmerman, PhD**

**Assistant Professor, Molecular Medicine**

[Kip.Zimmerman@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Kip.Zimmerman@advocatehealth.org)

**TRA Cohort 2024**

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/faculty/z/kip-donald-zimmerman>

### **How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

11 years

### **Background and Research Interests**

I am a biostatistician with experience processing and analyzing a wide variety of omics data to identify molecular mechanisms underlying disease. I am currently interested in how cells and tissues alter their molecular diversity through alternative splicing in response to changes in their surrounding environment. I am in the process of developing analytical methods and pipelines to analyze long-read RNA-Seq data which can be used to assess changes in alternative splicing.

### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

I enjoy spending time with my family, playing and watching sports, hiking, gardening, swimming, cooking, fishing, and camping.



# Translational Research Academy

Faculty and Staff



**Wake Forest University**  
**School of Medicine**



## **Nichole Allred, PhD**

**Professor, Biochemistry, Wake Forest  
University School of Medicine  
K12 / TRA Director**

[Nicholette.Allred@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Nicholette.Allred@advocatehealth.org)

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/faculty/a/nichole-danielle-allred>

### **How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

24 years

### **Background and Research Interests**

I am a molecular biologist with a research focus on understanding the genomic architecture of complex diseases and underlying risk factors in minority populations. I apply diverse -omics approaches to understand the genomic architecture including genome-wide association studies (GWAS), whole exome sequencing, whole genome sequencing, metabolomics and transcriptomics. With an emphasis on metabolic disease, my research focuses on type 2 diabetes (T2D), nephropathy, obesity, liver disease and cardiovascular disease (CVD).

### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

Spending time with my husband and two children, attending equestrian, gymnastics and taekwondo practice/tournaments/shows, working in my garden and playing with our pets.



## **Deepak Palakshappa, MD, MSHP**

**Associate Professor, Internal Medicine, Wake Forest University School of Medicine**

**K12 / TRA Co-Director**

[Deepak.Palakshappa@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Deepak.Palakshappa@advocatehealth.org)

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/faculty/p/deepak-palakshappa>

### **How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

8 years

### **Background and Research Interests**

I am an ambulatory general internist and pediatrician at the Wake Forest Downtown Health Plaza and also a health services researcher in the Department of Epidemiology and Prevention. My research focuses on improving the health outcomes of socially and economically disadvantaged populations by addressing food insecurity and other social determinants of health. Over the past 10 years, I have focused on understanding how to screen and address food insecurity in clinical care settings through innovative team-based care models using mobile technology, in-person navigation (with patient navigators and community health workers), and partnerships with community-based organizations.

### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

Spending time with my wife and 2 kids, coaching my daughter's soccer team, traveling to new places, reading, and golf.



## **Denise Houston, PhD, RD**

**Professor, Gerontology and Geriatric Medicine,  
Wake Forest University School of Medicine**

[Denise.Houston@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Denise.Houston@advocatehealth.org)

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/faculty/h/denise-kathryn-houston>

### **How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

21 years

### **Background and Research Interests**

I am a nutritional epidemiologist and gerontologist with a research focus on understanding the role of nutritional status, dietary patterns, and obesity and age-related changes in body composition on physical function and age-related chronic conditions in older adults. Because of the high prevalence of obesity and the concerns surrounding the potential risks of weight loss among older adults, I am interested in identifying optimal weight loss strategies for older adults with overweight or obesity that minimize the loss of lean mass and physical function.

### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

Hiking, traveling, playing with my dog, gardening, watching sports.





## **John Parks, PhD**

**Professor, Molecular Medicine, Wake Forest University School of Medicine**

[John.Parks@advocatehealth.org](mailto:John.Parks@advocatehealth.org)

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/Faculty/P/John-S-Parks>

### **How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

45 years

### **Background and Research Interests**

I am a basic scientist interested lipid metabolism in pre-clinical models of chronic diseases, such atherosclerosis, fatty liver disease, and obesity/type 2 diabetes.

### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

Any outdoor activity (biking, swimming, walking, YMCA workouts) and spending time with my three grown children and their families (five grandchildren.)



## **Jai N. Patel, PharmD**

**Associate Professor, Cancer Biology, WFUSM;  
Director, Cancer Pharmacology &  
Pharmacogenomics, Atrium Health Levine  
Cancer; Associate Director, Shared Resource  
Management, Atrium Health Wake Forest  
Baptist Comprehensive Cancer Center**

[Jai.Patel@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Jai.Patel@advocatehealth.org)

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/faculty/p/jai-narendra-patel>

### **How long have you been at Atrium Health?**

12 years

### **Background and Research Interests**

I lead translational and clinical pharmacology research at the cancer center, with an emphasis on pharmacogenomics research and implementation of precision medicine across the health enterprise. My projects range from gene discovery and translational studies to prospective interventional trials using pharmacogenomics to optimize anticancer and supportive care therapies. I have a particular interest in the implementation science behind integrating genomic medicine in health care.

### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

I am an exercise enthusiast and enjoy early morning workouts, traveling with my wife and two young children, reading (non-fiction), and listening to health, fitness, or leadership podcasts.



## Sean Simpson, PhD

**Professor, Biostatistics and Data Science ,  
Wake Forest University School of Medicine**

[Sean.Simpson@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Sean.Simpson@advocatehealth.org)

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://school.wakehealth.edu/Faculty/S/Sean-L-Simpson>

### **How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

17 years

### **Background and Research Interests**

I am a biostatistician with interests in network- and complexity-based neuroimaging, and health and social disparities. My main research focus has been on the development of novel fusions of statistical tools with network science methods for the analysis of whole-brain network data to engender more biologically meaningful approaches to understanding the root causes of a number of brain diseases and disorders.

### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

Reading, spending time with my family and friends, traveling, hiking, working out, engaging in social justice activities, watching movies.



## **Hazel Tapp, PhD**

**Professor and Vice Chair for Research  
Director, Center for Primary Care Research  
Associate Dean for Population Health  
Research, Charlotte  
Department of Family Medicine  
Greater Charlotte Region**

[Hazel.Tapp@atriumhealth.org](mailto:Hazel.Tapp@atriumhealth.org)

### **Faculty Profile**

<https://atriumhealth.org/education/graduate-medical-education/faculty#Tapp>

### **How long have you been at Atrium Health?**

20 years

### **Background and Research Interests**

My research interests are in implementing improved delivery of care for patients with chronic diseases such as asthma. As Director for the Center for Primary Care Research at Atrium Health and co-director of a practice-based research network (PBRN), I work on multiple projects designed to use community based participatory research (CBPR) and implementation research to study improved outcomes for populations with chronic disease through implementation of evidence-based interventions. For example, we study the dissemination of shared decision making for asthma in primary care practices and the Emergency Department across Atrium.

### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

I enjoy travel and hiking with my husband and sons, Craig, Nick and Harrison, distance running with a local running group, and playing with our two dogs Willow and Lucy.



## **Susan Newcomb, MA, PhD**

**Director of Education Programs, Clinical and Translational Science Institute, Wake Forest University School of Medicine**

[Susan.Newcomb@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Susan.Newcomb@advocatehealth.org)

**How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

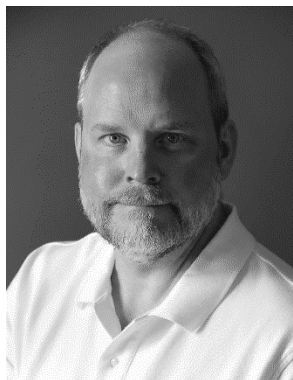
1 year

### **Background and Research Interests**

I recently joined Wake Forest, bringing experience in both secondary and higher ed learning, and in supporting faculty, staff, clinicians, and trainees developing evidence-based, inclusive teaching and course design approaches. I am passionate about applying pedagogical best practices to diverse settings such as research mentoring, management, science communication, and outreach. My research in the lab has focused on developing genetic and live-cell imaging techniques to study gene expression and the role of 3-D genome organization in animal development and disease.

### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

I love hiking with my friends and dogs, watching movies, cooking, and getting in over my head on DIY projects around the house.



## **Tom Roth**

**Education Program Manager, Clinical and Translational Science Institute , Wake Forest University School of Medicine**

[Thomas.Roth@advocatehealth.org](mailto:Thomas.Roth@advocatehealth.org)

**How long have you been at Wake Forest?**

31 years

### **Background and Research Interests**

I'm an Education Program Manager in the Clinical and Translational Science Institute responsible for coordinating the Translational Research Academy, the K12 Program, K&R Grant Writing Series, and the Medical Student Research Program and Research Day. I also create online, asynchronous training, record lectures, and try to leverage available tools and technology to facilitate learning opportunities.

### **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

Hanging out with my family and three cats, watching British crime dramas, doing home improvement projects, cooking, bicycling, photography, and audio technician for church.