

## FACULTY MEMBER HIGHLIGHT: DR. PETER KURNIALI



Dr. Peter Kurniali is a Hematology/Oncology physician at the Sanford Cancer Center in Bismarck, N.D.; lead principal investigator for clinical research at Sanford Health Bismarck; and an assistant professor at the UND SMHS Department of Internal Medicine. Dr. Kurniali completed his hematology/oncology fellowship at Michigan State University in East Lansing, Mich.; his internal medicine residency at Boston University School of Medicine's Roger Williams Medical Center in Providence, R.I., and his medical degree at Universitas Trisakti Faculty of Medicine in Jakarta, Indonesia. Dr. Kurniali has been an advisor for the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduate (ECFMG) Acculturation program since 2009, and sits on six Sanford Health

Bismarck committees, including the Oncology Genomic Steering, Advisory Board for Hospice, and Palliative Care, Transfusion, and Cancer committees.

Dr. Kurniali is currently the principal investigator of 3 clinical research studies:

- A pilot study to investigate the level of inter-alpha inhibitors in bone marrow aspirate
- Multiple-industry and cancer cooperative group research studies conducted at Sanford Health Bismarck
- An Autoantibody Response Guided by immune-Oncology Surveillance (ARGOS) repository study with Sanford Enterprise to explore inter-alpha inhibitors as biomarkers to predict response and complications in cancer patients treated with immunotherapy.

## ND ACP/SHM POSTER COMPETITION WINNERS

The 2019 North Dakota Chapters of the American College of Physicians (ACP) and the Society of Hospital Medicine (SHM) held their annual poster competition on Oct. 3, 2019, at the DoubleTree by Hilton in West Fargo. There were 38 posters presented: six in the ACP Research category, eight in the ACP Clinical Vignette-Residents category, 12 in the ACP Clinical Vignette-Medical Student category, and 12 in the SHM Clinical Vignette category.

The winners of the ACP Research category were Donald Hamm (MSII) and Dr. Jonathan Geiger with "An A-Mu-zing change: The effects of selective Mu opioid receptor agonists on endolysosome pH." Vinita Vadiya (R1) and Dr. Avish Nagpal won the ACP Clinical Vignette-Residents category with "Peripheral T-cell lymphoma masquerading as acute retroviral syndrome." Brett Johnson (MSIV) and Dr. Haven Malish won the ACP Clinical Vignette-Medical Student category with the poster "Up in Smoke: Acute respiratory distress syndrome in an 18-year-old secondary to e-cigarette use." The winning poster of the SHM Clinical Vignette competition was "Acute eosinophilic pneumonia: A rare complication of daptomycin therapy" by Michael Storandt (MSIII) and Dr. Abhishek Matta.



Donald Hamm, Vinita Vadiya, and Brett Johnson are eligible to compete at the national ACP Internal Medicine 2020 meeting April 23-25 in Los Angeles, Calif. Michael Storandt is eligible to compete at the national SHM Annual Conference in San Diego, Calif., April 15-18.

## NEWS FROM THE CHAIR



In February, UND announced that Dr. Marc Basson was awarded a five-year, \$20.3-million Clinical and Translational Research grant from the National Institute of Health (NIH). With this grant UND, in collaboration with the University of South Dakota and Sanford Health, will lead the Dakota Cancer Collaborative on Translational Activity (DaCCoTA) to study the link between cancer and the environment. This research will help lead to new and innovative ways to treat cancer in the Dakotas.

Sanford physicians can now sign-up for the Sioux Falls Sanford Improvement Symposium 2020. The symposium will be held on April 8, 2020, at the Sioux Falls Convention Center. For more information, go to: <https://www.sanfordhealth.org/classes-and-events/sanford-improvement-symposium-2020-sf>.



## RESIDENT IS FIRST FEMALE NATIVE AMERICAN PHYSICIAN IN NORTH DAKOTA NATIONAL GUARD



In June 2019, upon graduation from the UND SMHS with her medical degree, Dr. Ciciley Littlewolf became the first female Native American physician in the North Dakota National Guard. Her journey to this point has been long, and not always easy, but her hard work and determination saw her through.

Dr. Littlewolf spent most of her childhood on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation in eastern Montana, moving to Vermillion, S.D. with her mother and five siblings when she was 12. When Dr. Littlewolf was 17 she joined the Army National Guard, becoming a combat medic and eventually a first lieutenant. She earned her Bachelor's degree in criminal justice from the University of South Dakota, but following her one-year deployment to Kosovo in 2009-10 couldn't get rid of the

desire to become a doctor. She went to North Dakota State University to gain the necessary prerequisite for medical school, graduating with her second Bachelor's degree in 2014. After driving 7 hours to retake her MCATs, to ensure her scores were competitive, she received the news she had been waiting for. She was informed she was accepted into the University of North Dakota School of Medicine & Health Sciences for the 2015 school year.

On July 1, 2019, Dr. Littlewolf started her Internal Medicine residency here at the UND SMHS. She is currently working towards becoming a primary care physician. While Dr. Littlewolf's residency is only beginning, she has begun planning her resident research project. Dr. Littlewolf hopes to research the effect of CBD oil for osteo-arthritic veterans. There are sure to be big things to come from her.

## QUARTERLY NEWS

- A tentative date of June 15, 2020, has been set for the 2020 DaCCoTA Annual Symposium. For more information go to: <https://med.und.edu/daccota/symposium.html>.
- We are glad to announce that two fourth-year medical students will be presenting posters at the American College of Rheumatology (ACR) 2019 Annual Meeting. Jack Stacy and Jacob Greenmyer, with mentorship from Dr. Erdal Diri, are both co-authors on 2 posters titled "The efficacy of low dose prednisone for remission induction in newly diagnosed rheumatoid arthritis patients," and "DAS28-CRP cut-off for high disease activity assessment is lower than DAS28-ESR in rheumatoid arthritis." The meeting will be held Nov. 8-13 in Atlanta, Ga.
- Dr. Kayla Estep, third-year Internal medicine resident, presented her poster titled "Not so incidental: A case of incidentally found metastatic melanoma of the pancreas" at the American College of Gastroenterology 2019 meeting in San Antonio on Oct 25-30.

## IMPORTANT DATE

- November 8-13 – 2019 ACR Annual Meeting in Atlanta



## CLINICIAN Q&A: DR. ABHISHEK MATTA

**Please describe your current clinical practice.**

I am currently a hospitalist at Sanford Health Fargo and an Assistant Professor at UND SMHS. I take care of patients who are admitted to the inpatient service.

**How long have you been with the UND SMHS?**

Four years.

**Do you serve on any UND committees?**

Yes, I serve on the Clerkship Committee.

**How do you balance clinical practice and an academic career?**

To me, teaching and clinical practice are two sides of the same coin. There is something to learn from every patient that we see, and every lesson we learn will help us in our clinical practice. Teaching and learning are necessary for us to be excellent clinicians.

**What do you like most about teaching?**

I teach mainly to share my passion for medicine. I experience a great sense of accomplishment in seeing our students gain the necessary skills and knowledge. It helps me learn new things every day. It is very rewarding to be a teacher who can shape the minds of the physicians who will be taking care of our community in the future.

**What resources from the University do you find valuable in clinical or teaching responsibilities?**

The Chair of the department of Internal Medicine, Dr. Dinesh Bande, is very approachable and open to suggestions. We have wonderful library access to online literature. The Alliance of Academic Internal Medicine membership and attending the annual conference was helpful in bringing new ideas to our medical students and Internal Medicine resident curriculum. The bedside ultrasound devices provided to the Internal Medicine residents is helpful in Point of Care Ultrasound (POCUS) training. The simulation lab is also an important educational tool for our students.

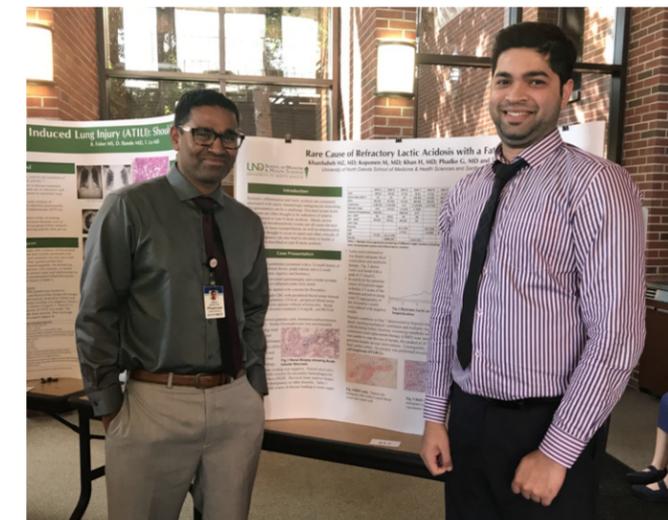
**What can you advise to other physicians who are considering becoming more involved in teaching?**

For us physicians, teaching is a sacred duty. Teaching gives us a platform to grow our eloquence, knowledge, and understanding of medicine. Teaching should not just be a passive transfer of knowledge but should ignite the fire of curiosity and inquisitiveness in the learner to ensure a life-long habit of learning and inspire compassion so that they can be great physicians in the future.



## RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES

If you are interested in becoming involved in research, or have research ideas but do not know where to start, feel free to contact Mikki Eken at [mikki.eken@UND.edu](mailto:mikki.eken@UND.edu). If you have published research or presented a poster or oral presentation, please inform Mikki Eken.



## INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD REMINDER

If you are the primary investigator of the research team, UND IRB approval is mandatory, *in addition to the hospital IRB approval*. For questions, please contact: Michelle Bowles at [michelle.bowles@UND.edu](mailto:michelle.bowles@UND.edu) or by calling 701.777.4079.