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FACULTY

Head and Neck Oncology

John Gleysteen, MD
 E. Ritter Sansoni, MD
 Scott Strome, MD, PhD

Laryngology and Swallowing

Sandra Stinnett, MD

Otology/Neurotology

C. Bruce MacDonald, MD
 Robert Yawn, MD

Rhinology and Skull Base Surgery

Sanjeet Rangarajan, MD

Pediatric Otolaryngology

Tom Long, MD
 Jennifer McLevy, MD
 Tony Sheyn, MD
 Rosemary Stocks, MD, PharmD
 Jerome Thompson, MD, MBA
 Josh Wood, MD

Facial Plastics and Reconstructive Surgery

Phillip Langsdon, MD

General Otolaryngology

Neal Beckford, MD
 Chris Hall, MD
 Mac Hodges, MD

Sleep, Salivary, and Airway Surgery

M. Boyd Gillespie, MD



(Figure 1) UTHSC tulips in bloom



(Figure 2) Dr. Stinnett arranging tele-health

“When i was a boy and i would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, “look for the helper. You will always find people who are helping.”
Fred Rogers

As I write this introduction to our spring edition, life is not normal. A novel virus is encircling the globe, sickening scores, and killing many. Businesses and schools are shuttered, streets are empty, the grocery store shelves are bare, and fellow citizens are sheltered in their homes. The economy is quaking, markets plummeting, and unemployment rolls swelling. The ceaseless political in-fighting and criticism in our nation’s capital is at a fever pitch. I admit this fills me with a sense of dread as I cancel elective patients and OR cases in order to free up capacity and supplies for the challenging days ahead.

Yet, in the midst of the storm, there is Hope. I remembered the words of Fred Rogers which tell me to turn away from my inward fears and focus on the outward signs of help. The signs come in many forms. The Starbucks employee and other food service professionals who make sure we are fed. My fellow healthcare workers showing up day after day to do battle with an invisible enemy. Infectious disease researchers on the UTHSC campus who continue to study ways to take the offensive versus COVID-19. Hospital administrators who are scrambling to procure the supplies and testing kits we need. My professional colleagues from around the world who are sharing their early experiences with the virus so that we will not make the same mistakes. And last but not least, the beautiful signs of spring that surround our campus with the promise that renewal is never far away.

Yesterday Dr. Sandra Stinnett, Director of the UTHSC Division of Laryngology, posted the verse “Who knows, perhaps you have come to your royal position for such a time as this. (Esther 4:14).” The residents, staff, and nurses of UTHSC Otolaryngology recognize the place of honor and privilege we occupy in society and are therefore prepared to accept our duty to lead and step into the breach to help our community. We are continuing to actively manage critical airway, infection, and cancer patients. We are arranging tele-health consultations with local Emergency Departments. And we will continue to wait in the wings as helpers to our critical care and ED colleagues on the front lines of this pandemic. In the meantime, we will learn, struggle, pray, and overcome. As always, we are there for you as we know you are there for us.

M. Boyd Gillespie
 Professor & Chair
 UTHSC Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery



(above, left and right) Adult hearing and balance center at Methodist University Hospital

UTHSC DIVISION OF OTOTOLOGY/NEUROTOLOGY

The mission of the UTHSC Division of Otolaryngology, Neurotology, and Lateral Skull Base Surgery is to provide personalized hearing and balance care for all adult and pediatric patients in the mid-south. Key team members from the UTHSC Department of Otolaryngology-HNS include **Drs. Bobby Yawn, C. Bruce MacDonald, and Josh Wood**. The department recently opened a new 4000 square foot space dedicated to adult hearing and balance in collaboration with Methodist University Hospital. The division treats every patient with respect and seeks to adhere to its core values: clinical excellence, innovation, and integrity. An academic neurotology division must successfully function in three core areas: clinical service delivery, education of resident physicians and medical students, and research. Clinical service is listed first because it is the foundation of all other missions. The division offers tertiary subspecialized care in otology and neurotology. This means it can offer the full spectrum of hearing care from simple procedures such as ear tubes to complex skull base surgeries like surgical excision of vestibular schwannomas.

In order to provide tertiary support services, the division has partnered with other professionals in Memphis that treat complex hearing and balance disorders. Division director Dr. Bobby Yawn recently established the **Memphis Cochlear Implant Collaborative**, a multidisciplinary cochlear implant team with the University of Memphis that allows his team to offer adult and pediatric cochlear implant services and foster collaborative research endeavors. Dr. Yawn and **Dr. Sarah Warren**, a PhD audiologist with the **University of Memphis School of Communicative Disorders** and adjunct professor of UTHSC Otolaryngology, plan to grow research through funded grants in order to complement growth in clinical volume. The division has also established a skull base team with our neurosurgical partners at the **Semmes Murphey Clinic** and are actively presenting joint research projects at national meetings including the North American Skull Base Society Meeting. As the division continues to grow clinically it fosters increasing exposure for our resident

physicians and medical students in advanced techniques for chronic ear surgery, cochlear implantation, and endoscopic ear surgery. By equipping the next generation of ear surgeons with the latest techniques, we ensure future generations of patients will have outstanding care.

The division goals are to expand cochlear implant surgeries to over 100 annually and vestibular schwannoma/lateral skull base tumor volume to over 50 cases annually. Likewise, there are plans to expand the educational offerings to add an additional temporal bone dissection course to complement the annual **UTHSC Shea Course**, and an endoscopic ear surgery course to the annual curriculum.

The division is currently reformatting its otologic educational curriculum for residents to include high-yield articles across the national and international literature. Research endeavors include sound-localization and healthcare disparities research with the University of Memphis; otologic device/prosthesis development; and clinical skull base research with Semmes Murphey. Division members are also identifying an otologic trauma algorithm for screening and treating post-traumatic hearing loss and facial nerve injury patients at Regional One Hospital.



Drs. Bobby Yawn and Sarah Warren

DONOR CLOSE-UP

RON KIRKLAND, MD

The UTHSC Department of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery is thrilled to have one of its own as the newly elected **President of the Tennessee Medical Association (TMA)**. Following service in the U.S. Army in Vietnam, Dr. Kirkland completed his medical training in Memphis. He then opened an otolaryngology practice at the Jackson Clinic in Jackson, TN where he was on staff for 40 years. Dr. Kirkland has been a leader in local, regional, and national medical organizations. He has served as past chair of the TMA Professional Relations Committee; past chair of TMA Legislative Committee; chairman of the board of the American Medical Group Association and Foundation. He was an AMA delegate for the Tennessee delegation for 10 years. In addition, Dr. Kirkland is past-president of the Jackson Rotary; a church deacon; and a bass clarinetist in his church orchestra. He has been married for 51 years to his dear wife Carol with whom he had 4 children, and now 8 grandchildren.

Dr. Kirkland has been a tireless support of UTHSC. He is Past President of the UT National Alumni Association, and received the Outstanding Alumni Award from the UTHSC COM. He has been a loyal alumni of time, talent, and treasure to UTHSC Otolaryngology as the department seeks to expand its regional and national reputation.

Most recently, Dr. Kirkland made a donation to **Center for Learning and Innovation in Ear, Nose, and Throat (CLIENT)** to allow enhanced surgical and research training of UTHSC otolaryngology residents. Please join Dr. Kirkland in this worthy effort to support the department.

TO MAKE A GIFT TO THE CLIENT LAB:

Please contact Mr. Kelly Davis at 901.448.4949 or visit our secure online giving at uthscalumni.com/GiveENT

A COMMITMENT TO WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

The UTHSC Department of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery sponsored **Drs. Kate Ramsey, Lauren Linker, and Deeyar Itayem** to attend the **2019 Women in Surgery Leadership Development Conference** in Ann Arbor, Michigan December 13-15, 2019. The conference empowered them to begin their residency journey with the professional and personal tools necessary for success. They networked with the leading female surgeons in the country, including President of the American Academy of Otolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery, Dr. Carol Bradford. They learned how to advocate for their diverse patients, colleagues, and communities. They were instructed in how to become leaders who are "representatives," not just "tokens."

While we all wish these issues did not exist, they simulated how to address micro-aggressions, micro-assaults, and micro-harassment with simple yet professional statements in a case study format. They learned that bias affects patient safety and unfortunately surgical outcomes even when subconscious - racism, ageism, sexism, socioeconomic-ism. They heard Dr. Bradford reflect on policies at institutional levels that affect trainee surgical performance, including women. Further, they learned about practical technologies used to influence change such as social simulations. They participated in a discussion on intersectionality's effect on research. They learned how to "be a closer" and how to avoid the "likeability trap." Topics included how to best interact with medical students and state clear expectations for them. They were made aware that even although female otolaryngologists comprise 17% of the specialty, they are a force to be reckoned with. In the end, our women interns were beyond inspired, ready to keep chipping away for incremental progress, and are grateful for the department's commitment to diversity and inclusion!



(Figure 2) Social outing with skull base nurses and support staff

UTHSC COMPREHENSIVE SKULL BASE TUMOR CENTER

After a successful 2019 and a busy start to 2020, the UTHSC **Comprehensive Skull Base Tumor Center** continues to position itself as a state-of-the-art, regional, tertiary referral center for skull base pathology. During 2019, the Center performed over 80 cases (adult and pediatric) which required various input from Neurosurgery, Ophthalmology/Oculoplastics, and Otolaryngology (**Figure 1**). Many of these patients were local Memphians, but some traveled from across the state, the southeastern United States, and in one case from as far away as Peru. The patients included women, men, young children, and older adults. The Center expanded its services through resource and instrument acquisition at Baptist Memorial Hospital – East and LeBonheur Children’s Hospital, and celebrated the opening of the Shorb Tower at Methodist University Hospital by performing more than 40 endoscopic skull base cases in the new operating suites.



(Figure 1) Skull Base Team in action

Paul Klimo, and **Rick Boop** (Semmes-Murphey). This is an area of particularly strong growth given our proximity to these high volume pediatric referral centers and offers us a unique opportunity to become an international leader in pediatric skull base oncology. Our comprehensive skull base oncologic care thrives through the work **Dr. Neil Hayes** (UTHSC Medical Oncology) and **Dr. David Schwartz** (UTHSC Radiation Oncology), who ensure that the patients have access to the latest in adjuvant therapies for these rare tumors.

Providing this type of highly specialized care depends on a complex interplay of technical resources, clinicians, and the hard work of our support staff, nurses, billers, coders, administrators, and marketing team (**Figure 2**). All of us span numerous practice plans (Semmes-Murphey, Hamilton Eye Institute, University Clinical Health, and UT Methodist Physicians). Working across several different physician groups, managing conflicting schedules, and taking on complex skull base disease requires hard work and dedication. Together, the team has taken major steps towards the realization of its goal to deliver “care through collaboration”, the central tenet of the UTHSC Comprehensive Skull Base Tumor Center.

In 2019, our surgical team continued to increase outreach within the Memphis community and beyond. **Dr. Brian Fowler** in UTHSC Oculoplastics traveled with a team to Guatemala to perform over 80 ocular procedures for local residents without access to care, and **Dr. L. Madison Michael** from Semmes-Murphey Neurosurgery served as Medical Staff President at Methodist University Hospital. **Dr. Sanjeet Rangarajan** from UTHSC Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery traveled to New Orleans, Louisiana with neurosurgeon **Dr. Jeff Sorenson** as invited faculty for the North American Skull Base Society Summer Course for Neurosurgeons and Head and Neck Fellows.

The team also benefitted from the newly launched practice of otologist **Dr. Robert Yawn** (UTHSC Otolaryngology-HNS), who will expand and develop the neurotology/lateral skull base program, and **Dr. E. Ritter Sansoni** (UTHSC Otolaryngology-HNS), who comes to UTHSC with training in Head and Neck Surgical Oncology and Rhinology. The Center continues to build its pediatric skull base tumor program via collaborative efforts with St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital and LeBonheur Children’s Hospital with pediatric faculty, **Dr. Tony Sheyn** (UTHSC Otolaryngology-HNS), **Drs.**

UTHSC OTOLARYNGOLOGY RESIDENTS

The **UTHSC Department of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery** is pleased to introduce our interns for the 2019-2020 calendar year. The national otolaryngology match continues to be a highly competitive process. UTHSC Otolaryngology received over 200 applications and interviewed 50 prospects to fill its ranks. We are thrilled to continue to attract the best of the best.

Deeyar Itayem, MD comes from BBQ brisket and garlicky hummus. Growing up in the Memphis area and treasuring her Palestinian ethnic roots, she hails from a unique hybrid identity and is a citizen of the world. She graduated from Germantown High School in 2010, the year she was awarded Tennessee Student of the Year. Deeyar continued to college at Georgetown University and majored in Biology of Global Health. She then completed medical school at Mayo Clinic where she obtained a certificate in Science of Healthcare Delivery. She is excited to be back home in Memphis, back to serve the community that raised her. Outside of residency, Deeyar loves cooking up a storm, High Intensity Interval Training, spending time with her family, and re-exploring Memphis.

Lauren Linker, MD is a proud Midwesterner who grew up in Cleveland, Ohio. She received her undergraduate degree in Speech and Hearing Science at The Ohio State University and her Master’s of Science in Biomedical Sciences and Medical Doctorate from the University of Toledo. Lauren has loved her time in Memphis thus far and is enjoying life in the south. In her free time, she likes to try new restaurants and breweries, run on Mud Island, attend cycling classes, listen to podcasts, and spend time with her fellow residents. She is also an avid Cleveland and Ohio State sports fan (O-H!). Over the course of residency, she is looking forward to learning from the wonderful otolaryngology faculty and taking advantage of all Memphis has to offer.



(from left) Drs. Linker, White, Ramsey, and Itayem

Kate Ramsey, MD grew up in Ruston, Louisiana, and later attended Louisiana Tech University where she met her husband, Jonathan. She went to LSU-Shreveport for medical school where she completed multiple research projects under the mentorship of Cherie-Ann Nathan, MD, on pinpointing various genes involved in the transformation of squamous cell carcinoma. She is currently interested in research related to sleep surgery and its outcomes in various populations of people. When she’s not at the hospital, she enjoys spending time with her pilot husband, running, cycling, and reading books.

Stephen White, MD grew up in Roswell, Ga, a northern suburb of Atlanta. He graduated from the University of Georgia with degrees in Biology and Psychology and completed medical school at the Medical College of Georgia in Augusta, Ga. During this point in his training, he is interested in most aspects of otolaryngology but does particularly enjoy endoscopic-based procedures and sleep surgery. In his free time, Stephen enjoys working out, watching college football (Go Dawgs), hiking, traveling to national parks, and discovering new music.

WALLS AND WALLETS

By Deerya Itayem, MD

Today my clinic patient lost his wallet, including his cash, government ID, and his credit cards. He drove more than 130 miles to the clinic. Still, somehow, he sat in front of me in the exam chair as patient as ever through all my history questions. When I asked about his day as I was washing my hands just prior to the exam, he told me his wallet story. I could feel my heart instantly sink - as if down the drain in front of me. Another story of a patient who has traversed so many obstacles to get to me; Many weeks to get an appointment; Driving from rural and suburb areas to see a specialist; Putting words to symptoms that are difficult to describe.

Unfortunately, these obstacles are likely the tip of the iceberg for this one patient as these are only what he opted to share with me when I probed about his day. The obstacles my patients endure are so numerous, and I often forget how privileged I am as a provider. I cannot begin to understand all the complexities and hoops that my patients must jump through to come to an appointment, to obtain medications, to plan for surgeries, to solicit help from family and friends post-op, to financially afford treatment, etc. I feel simply honored to be given the opportunity to serve. I held back tears for the rest of the appointment simply stunned in humility. I vowed right then that my patients deserved my absolute best. I cannot donate my own privilege, education, financial security, or support system, but I can use every ounce of it to pour my empathy and knowledge into their care.

Reading "My Voice" by Dr. Itzhak Brook was a similar humbling experience. Such stories of physicians becoming ill are so popular and for good reason - the power dynamic flips so instantaneously when physicians become patients. We are so absorbed in our profession that our brains don't often reflect on our patients' social barriers. In fact, we've outsourced this task to social workers and case managers. In a way, it's made our day more efficient and helped us focus on the medicine. Appointment times have gotten shorter and shorter. Reimbursement and the bottom lines have become more of a priority in the age of expensive treatments, long hospital stays, and a broken healthcare system. However, our profession is at risk of alienating patients and distancing the "power-holding" physicians from the "compliant" patient. These stories of drastic physical hardships affecting physicians tug at our hearts because they are the only ways to inject empathy into a frankly naïve group of physicians, myself included. It's a way to break the "Us vs them" wall that erupts when patients share their stories. The detailed narrative of "My Voice" emphasizes Dr. Brook's exact journey, but unfortunately the intellectualization of the process distracts from the harder task of reflecting on unanswerable questions. I would hope we would treasure non-physician stories just as deeply, although I doubt it. We relate so strongly to the tragic loss from physician to patient as if the patient is "lesser." I need to work on this. We need to work on this.

I can't thank my patient today enough for putting my life into perspective. I hope to continue developing enlightening relationships with my patients and reminding myself to acknowledge the challenges they endure. We need to acknowledge the power walls and biases our patients traverse in order to provide the best care. Sending well wishes to my patient from today, and I pray he finds his wallet.

The above essay was written by Dr. Itayem to fulfill her PGY1 requirement of reading the book "My Voice" by Itzhak Brook.

NEW FACULTY

E. RITTER SANSONI, MD

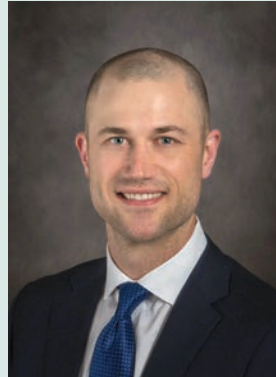
Dr. Eugene "Ritter" Sansoni is a board-certified otolaryngologist and is dual fellowship-trained in both head and neck surgery as well as advanced rhinology and endoscopic skull base surgery.

Dr. Sansoni grew up in the mountains of Colorado prior to obtaining his undergraduate degree in Spanish from Wofford College in Spartanburg, South Carolina where he played collegiate soccer. He went to medical school at the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) and was elected into Alpha Omega Alpha (AOA) Honor Medical Society as third-year medical student for his academic performance.

He completed his internship and residency in otolaryngology at Oregon Health and Science University (OSHU) in Portland, Oregon. Dr. Sansoni then did an American Rhinologic Society (ARS) fellowship in tertiary rhinology and endoscopic skull base surgery with Professors Richard Harvey and Raymond Sacks in Sydney, Australia. Following a brief period of private practice in Alaska, he completed his formal medical training in advanced head and neck surgical oncology at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, Texas.

Dr. Sansoni firmly believes in a multi-disciplinary approach to the medical and surgical management of head and neck malignancies. Additionally, he is committed to education and serves as Senior Assistant Program Director for the Otolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery Residency Program at UTHSC as well as serving on the American Head & Neck Society Education Committee.

His practice involves the management of head and neck cancer patients with an interest in sinonasal malignancies. Additionally, he manages complex benign and inflammatory sinonasal conditions. Dr. Sansoni is excited to join the growing UTHSC Department of Otolaryngology and continue to improve the access to world-class subspecialty care for Memphis and the surrounding region.



IN MEMORIAL

FRANCISCO VEIERA, MD

"For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted. (Luke 14:11)"

Dr. Francisco Vieira, a beloved member of the UTHSC Otolaryngology family, died from complications of gastric cancer on September 13, 2019. Dr. Vieira was a man of humility who was passionate for his patients, his residents, and his family. A minister once stated that truth can be found at the margins of life that are ignored by society at large. Christ found truth among the children; the widow; the Roman centurion; the tax collector; the criminal, and the prostitute. He didn't judge them, he cared for them and healed them. In a Christ-like way, Francisco served patients on the margins of society at Regional One Health (The Med). Francisco was never rushed, but sat down, and gave his time and utmost attention to each and every patient regardless of their race, ethnicity, or position in society. When patients left his clinic, they knew they had experienced an encounter with a physician who would put their best interests first.

As a chairman, you inherit certain gifts left by the chairpersons who preceded you. Francisco was truly a gift left to me by **Dr. Tom Robbins** who hired Francisco as a research assistant, and **Dr. Jerry Thompson** who gave Francisco a position on the faculty of UTHSC Otolaryngology. Francisco had completed his training in otolaryngology-head and neck surgery in Brazil but had to spend a prolonged period in Memphis as his sons received treatment for rare cancers at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Given the challenges of caring for special needs children, Francisco rarely traveled and therefore absorbed an inordinate amount of on-call and trauma duties at Regional One Health. He took special interest in his residents, and would always take the time to truly teach and mentor. As a reward for their efforts, Francisco would treat



them to a feast at Texas de Brazil at the conclusion of their Regional One rotation.

Francisco and I shared many common surgical interests from head and neck cancer to difficult airway surgery, and enjoyed discussing challenging patient problems as well tips and pearls to improve our techniques. His last gift to me was a 70-year-old copy of George Crile's text *Practical Aspects of Thyroid Disease*. His most lasting gifts to the world are the lessons he taught to former residents who still apply what they learned from him in the care of their own patients. He was a model of character and humility for medical students and residents in an age where public figures and politicians are without either. He knew that the most important things in life were not the next best things, but the things right before us- our patients; our friends; and most of all, our families.

An impartial judge might state that Francisco was dealt more than his fair share of tragedy and hardship. *But the judge would never say that if he knew the man.* Francisco's heart was full of gratitude for what life had given him, without an ounce of resentment for the things that life had taken away. His life was the embodiment of grace and dignity, always more concerned for others than himself, and he remained so to the end, never allowing the ravages of disease to assault his indomitable spirit. Today, we are the ones who hearts are full of gratitude for a physician, a husband, a father, and a friend who shared that spirit with us. Francisco is survived by his wife Jussara, daughter Kathleen, son Mitchell, and beloved grandson Austin. He is preceded in death by son Dawson Vieira. In honor of his dedication to the residents, the Department will rename the resident administrative space the *Francisco Vieira Office of Resident Administration*.

To make a gift to the Francisco Vieira Office of Resident Administration, please contact Mr. Kelly Davis at 901.448.4949 or visit our secure online giving at uthscalumni.com/GiveENT

UPCOMING EVENTS AND CME

22ND EDWIN COCKE JR., MD, RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

May 15, 2020

7TH ANNUAL UTHSC JOHN SHEA, JR., MEMORIAL TEMPORAL BONE COURSE

November 6-7, 2020

Daniel J. Lee, MD
Associate Professor
Harvard Medical School

To make a donation to the Department of Otolaryngology, please contact the senior director for development Mr. Kelly Davis at 901.448.4949 or visit our secure online giving at: uthscalumni.com/GiveENT

RECENT PEER-REVIEW PUBLICATIONS

Fabie JE, Kompelli AR, **Naylor TM**, Nguyen SA, Lentsch EJ, **Gillespie MB**. Gland-preserving surgery for salivary stones and the utility of sialendoscopes. *Head Neck* 2019; 41: 1320-27.

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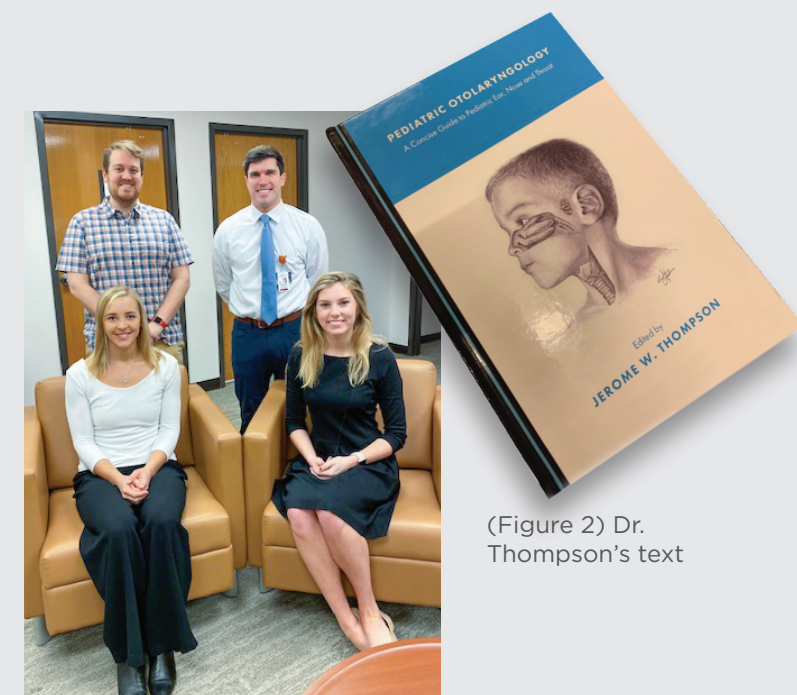
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RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Scholarly activity continues to flourish in the UTHSC Department of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery **Division of Clinical Research**. The division, lead by **Madhu Mamidala, PhD**, and a research team of residents and clinical trial coordinators (**Figure 1**) is currently managing 85 IRB-approved protocols including 7 funded trials in areas such as obstructive sleep apnea; early oral cancer detection; preservation of salivary gland function; and recurrent respiratory papillomatosis. The division has benefited from the new administrative space of the **Center for Learning and Innovation in Ear, Nose, and Throat (CLIENT)** which provides a relaxed lounge-like atmosphere for research collaboration with up-to-date conference room, computer capability, and security area for clinical trials.

One highlight for 2020 is the publication of *Pediatric Otolaryngology: A Concise Guide to Pediatric Ear, Nose, and Throat* edited by **Jerome Thompson, MD (Figure 2)**. The text is a tribute to Jerry's art of persuasion in the recruitment of contributors. A total of 18 faculty and residents from the department completed chapters for the text. The result is therefore a true example of departmental collaboration meant to be shared with others. **Be sure to order your copy today!**



(Figure 2) Dr. Thompson's text

(Figure 1) Research team of residents and coordinators

RESIDENTS



Resident drilling temporal bones



Women's Leadership Conference



Dr. Clinkscales with Ja Morant at Le Bonheur



Chief residents in holiday finest



Resident holiday gathering



Participants of 6th UTHSC Shea Temporal Bone Course

OTOLARYNGOLOGY HEADLIGHTS

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