

Pediatrics Monthly Newsletter

✦
March 2026

As we reach the one-month mark of me being here, I want to take a moment to reflect on where we are—both as a department and as a community. It has been an energizing and productive start. Since day one, when we gathered to discuss priorities, vision, and shared goals, I have appreciated the openness, thoughtfulness, and engagement across the department.

Over the past month, I have been focused on listening and learning. Through our ongoing listening tour, meetings, and individual conversations, I am gaining valuable insight into what is working well and where we have opportunities to grow. As a department, we are already making progress by continuing our core work while also identifying areas for improvement and innovation. I have also had the chance to meet with many in our supporting donor community. The strong commitment to the well being of kids has been inspiring to me.

As a reminder, the listening tour will continue through April 17. I encourage anyone who has not yet participated to share their perspectives. Your input is essential to ensuring that our direction reflects the needs and strengths of the entire department.

Thank you for your continued engagement and dedication. I am excited about the path ahead and confident in what we can accomplish together.

Lisa Chamberlain, MD, MPH
Chair and Professor, Department of Pediatrics
PANDA Endowed Director, Steele Children's Research Center
Physician-in-Chief, Banner Diamond Children's Medical Center



Congratulations!



We matched!

A huge congratulations to the GME team, and a big thank you to all who made this possible!

2026 - 2027 Chief Residents

Congratulations to
Ajuni Kaur and Emilie No!



Hem/Onc Research Receives Big Grant

Doctors Katsanis and Simpson were awarded their second MPI R01 grant, funded by NCI. This is in support of their registered preclinical trial focused on using exercise-mobilized lymphocytes to improve the efficacy of allogeneic cell therapies for preventing and treating blood cancers after hematopoietic stem cell transplantation.

Congratulations on this accomplishment!



Cardiology is on a roll!

Congratulations to our Peds Cariology team, as they have recently had two publications, and have Doctors Meziab, Carr and Seckeler presenting at both national and international conferences.

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/41572642/>

<https://www.jacc.org/doi/epdf/10.1016/S0735-1097%2823%2901997-6>



6th year in a row

Congratulations
Dr. Shehab
for winning the
Specialty Advisor Award
from the COM-T on
Tuesday March 10th.





Legislative Proclamation

Dr. Joseph Torkildson was honored with a state legislative proclamation recognizing his decades of service treating children with cancer and complex neurological diseases. The proclamation, introduced by Rep. Walt Blackman, was presented during Arizona Pediatric Cancer Awareness Day.

It highlights Dr. Torkildson's leadership in pediatric oncology, neuro-oncology, and hematology, as well as his 40+ years as a U.S. Navy physician. A clinical professor at the University of Arizona, he has advanced research, expanded clinical trials, and mentored future physicians, leaving a lasting impact on patients, families, and the medical community.



New APS President

The American Pediatric Society is pleased to announce that Dr. Lisa Chamberlain will serve as the 2026-2027 President-elect starting June 1, 2026.

Congratulations, Dr. Chamberlain!



Happy Milestone Work Anniversary

10 YRS Allison Crawford, NP

5 YRS Winnie Stuempfle, NP





Welcome!

Kristen Morrow
Department Administrator



Get to know Kristen:

What's a rare talent/something you do well?
Baking pies or tarts.

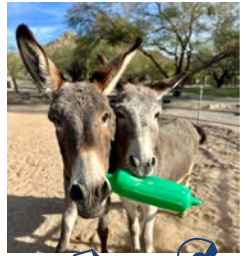
What do you enjoy doing most?
*Spending time with family and my donkeys.
I rescued 3 donkeys, Jack, Mo, and Tiny.*

What drew you to Tucson, AZ or the University of Arizona?
I love the desert, it's warm and dry.

Anything else you may want to share?
My 1st job was working at, and dressing as the Chuck E Cheese mascot for kids birthday parties!



Tiny



Mo & Jack

Thanks a Bunch

Thank a Resident Day!
Dr. Cramton made pancakes for our residents along with Dr. Theodorou, yum!



Thank you, Doctors Daniel Laubitz and Geovana Leite for presenting and giving a tour to Cornell University Alumni, making a difference during this incredible visit.



KOS was the beneficiary at the Views Golf Tournament where funds were raised for pediatric cancer research. Thank you, Kids of Steele!



Thank you, Dr. Chamberlain for speaking at the Rotary Club of Tucson to share the impactful work happening at Steele Children's Research Center.



Thank you, Kids Need to Read, for your donation of 500+ books to our pediatric clinics!



A special shout-out to Daniel Laubitz for hosting the Walk with a Doc on March 14th.



Thank you, to all of our amazing doctors! We appreciate you, and recognize you on 3/30/26 for National Doctor's Day.



Pediatrics in the News



Pediatrics Chair and Director of Steele Children's Research Center
Lisa J. Chamberlain, MD, MPH, "Kindergarten readiness: Bridging the gap"
(School's In podcast, March 5)



Diamond Children's Prom King & Queen

Two teenagers were crowned the 2026 Banner Children's Diamond Children's Prom King & Queen!

They were crowned during the February 28th game and will get to have a virtual trip around the world!



Donor / Steele CRC Spotlight & Upcoming Events!

Walk with a Doc

Join us in April as Drs Ghaderi and Hodges share information about bariatric surgery.

- Saturday April 11th @ 8:00am
- Start your morning off right!

Questions?

Contact Lori Castro at

loricastro@arizona.edu or 520-626-1614



Dr. Iman Ghaderi
and
Dr. Jeffrey Hodges
"Bariatric Surgery as a Tool-
Why Comprehensive, Lifestyle- Focused
Programs Matter"

Saturday, April 11, 2026

8:00 AM

The Rillito River Park ramada east of Swan Road
on the south bank just north of Camp Lowell.

From Swan go east on Paseo De Los Rios (you'll see the blue
Rillito River Park wall). Once on Paseo De Los Rios take the
immediate left. That road will take you into the parking lot.



This walking program is a fun and safe place to take a walk
(at your own pace), learn health tips from local healthcare
providers, and meet new friends. The event is FREE and all are
welcome!

Future walks will be held on the 2nd Saturday of every month.

Questions?
contact Lori Castro at
loricastro@arizona.edu or
520.626.1614



COLLEGE OF MEDICINE TUCSON
Pediatrics

Annual Pediatrics in the Desert

Saturday, April 18th, 2026

8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

Environmental and Natural Resources 2 (ENR) Building, Room S107
1064 E Lowell St, Tucson, Arizona 85719
~Registration details coming soon~

Don't forget / Upcoming action items:

- Faculty portfolio (UA Vitae annual reviews)
 - Division chiefs will be meeting with each faculty member to complete the annual review process. All meetings must be finished by the end of April, so that reviews can be entered into the system by 4/30/26.
- Don't forget to recognize employees (both faculty & staff) doing an excellent job!
 - You can recognize faculty, staff, residents, anyone in the Peds department!
 - Recognition can be sent to that person's direct supervisor.
 - Then the supervisor should email to Casey Nelson at caseycastle@arizona.edu.
- Creative Arts For Lowering Mental Stress (CALM) - hosted by the Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health ([click here for more info!](#))
 - 4/7/2026 from 4:00-5:00pm: Healing Dance
 - 5/7/2026 from 12:30-1:30pm: Sound Bath Meditation



Operational
reminders:

- Planning to travel? Don't forget to notify your Banner Coordinators and UA Admins.



Open positions
in Pediatrics:

Banner:
[Click here!](#)

UA:
[Click here!](#)

Thank you for reading!

For suggestions contact:
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