

A background image of a neural network with blue neurons and glowing orange nodes.

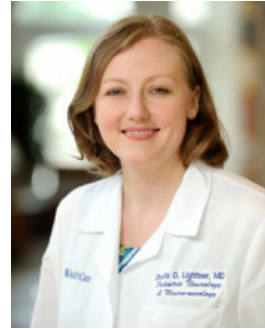
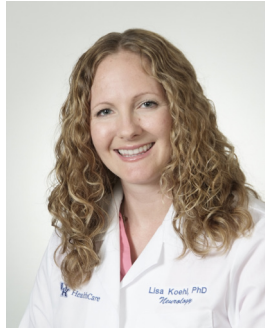
# *The Newspaper*

**University of Kentucky  
Department of Neurology  
July 2021**

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## Publications



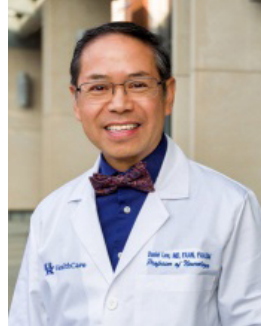
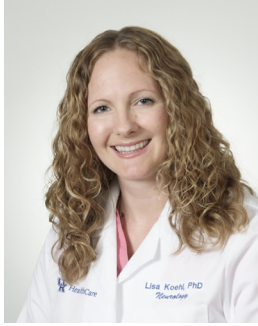
Carmona-Iragui M, Alcolea D, Barroeta I, Videla L, Munoz L, Van Pelt KL, Schmitt FA, Lightner D, Koehl L, Jicha GA. Prognostic performance and longitudinal changes in plasma neurofilament light levels in adults with Down syndrome: A multicenter longitudinal study. *Lancet Neurol.* 2021; 20: 605-14.

## Invited Speaker



Meriem Bensalem-Owen, MD, moderated the session *Abnormal Adult & Pediatric EEG* during the inaugural Bootcamp on CNP Fundamentals organized by the American Clinical Neurophysiology Society (ACNS). Dr. Bensalem-Owen also gave a talk about video-EEG monitoring in the EMU.

## Grants



Lisa Koehl, PhD; Daniel Lee, MD; Fred Schmitt, PhD; Tritia Yamasaki, MD, PhD; along with Lauren Whitehurst, PhD, were awarded the Neuroscience Research Priority Area pilot grant for their study entitled, "Sleep dysfunction as a predictor of plasma biomarkers and cognitive dysfunction in Parkinson's disease."



Larry Goldstein, MD. UK received a three year CDC Coverdell award to optimize stroke prevention and care and outcomes in Kentucky. Lead partners are the Kentucky Department of Public Health and University of Louisville. The project is administered through UK Kentucky Rural Extension Center.

The Louisville Courier Journal and the Lexington Herald Leader printed an article about the grant.

[Click here](#) to read the Herald Leader article and [click here](#) to read the Louisville Courier-Journal article.

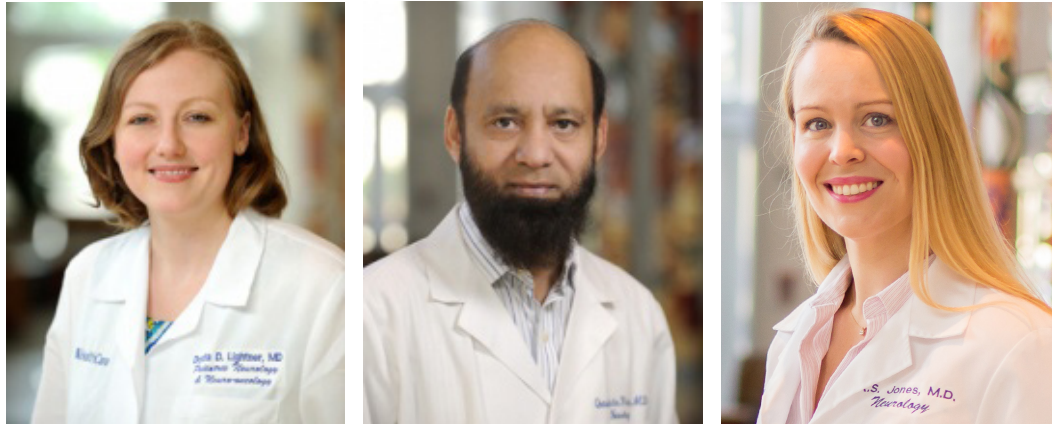
## Faculty Achievements



Jessica D. Lee, MD, was selected as the Department Quality and Safety Program Officer (DQSPO) for Neurology.

## Faculty Achievements Cont.

### Child Neurology Medical Directors



For a variety of reasons, it became necessary to shift Child Neurology Medical Director responsibilities. Because of the high volume of children with epilepsy or spells admitted to KCH and requiring electrophysiological monitoring, Dr. Khan will serve as the new KNI Child Neurology Inpatient Medical Director. Dr. Lightner, who spends the bulk of her clinical time in the ambulatory setting, will move to serve as the KNI Child Neurology Ambulatory Director.

Thanks to Dr. Jones and Dr. Lightner for their hard work and many accomplishments in their positions as KNI Child Neurology Inpatient Medical Director and KNI Child Neurology Ambulatory Director, respectively.

### Neurology MS4 Advanced Development Director



Julie Youssefi, MD

Having completed both medical school and Neurology residency at UK (and being our first ACGME Epilepsy fellow), Dr. Youssefi has first hand knowledge of our educational programs and opportunities to enhance our offerings. As a fourth year medical student, she served as the president of our AAN SIGN group. As a medical student, she also helped develop curriculum and served as an instructor in neuroscience for TRY-IT!, a STEM focused program targeting underserved

middle school students from minority and low socioeconomic status to increase diversity. While a Neurology trainee, she assisted in conducting Neurology OSCEs and participated in our medical student lecture series.

Dr. Youssefi is succeeding Dr. Al-Salaimeh in this important education focused position.

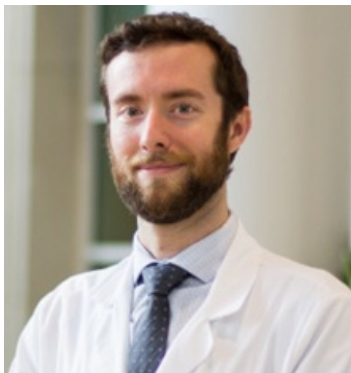
## Welcome New Faculty



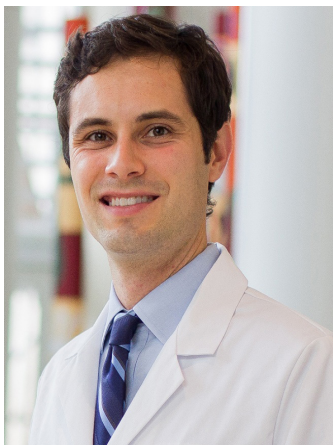
**Jordan Clay, MD, Assistant Professor, Epileptologist**  
"I enjoy hiking and photography while hiking. I also enjoy golf, but I am terrible at it. I love to read and collect books. I am a fan of Formula One racing, and rarely miss a race (on television that is; perhaps one of these days I'll make it to Monaco). Overall, my favorite hobby is cooking with my family and friends, whether it be on the grill, on the range, or baking (thanks to the Great British Baking Show)."



**Julie Youssefi, MD, Assistant Professor, Epileptologist**  
"I am thrilled to join the Department of Neurology as faculty this year. I have had the great pleasure of working or interacting with the wonderful group of faculty, nurses, residents, support and research staff in different capacities since 2009. I am originally from northeastern Pennsylvania. My husband, Tony, works for the Commonwealth of Kentucky and we have three boys Zak, Elias, and Joseph. I love to try new activities, cook, hike, and go on family walks."



**Kevin O'Connor, MD, Assistant Professor, Vascular**  
"In my spare time, I like to be with my amazing wife and two wonderful cats. Our dog is usually also around. We spend our time together reading, watching something mindless on TV, or visiting a nearby park. To broaden our intellectual and cultural horizons, we tune in to ABC on Mondays to see if this week of The Bachelor, The Bachelorette, or Bachelor in Paradise will be the most dramatic ever."



**Neil Toupin, MD, Assistant Professor, Child Neurology**  
"Out of work, most of my activities involve my wife and two daughters, aged 7 and 4. As a family, we enjoy traveling, camping, and spending time with our friends. We greatly enjoy living in Lexington and spending time outside in parks or in the Red River Gorge. Personal hobbies include basketball and chess."

## Welcome Cont.

## New Faculty Cont.



**Saurav Das, MD, Assistant Professor, Vascular**

"A wise person once told me, "Saurav, you won't know how boring you are until someone asks you what you do for fun?" Having said that, I like going on road trips, stopping in small towns, national parks, pretending to be a photographer. My favorite is one long road trip of the west coast from Phoenix to Seattle when I stopped at Grand Canyon, Zion, Death Valley, Redwoods, Multnomah, Mount Rainier. To see the changing landscapes all

at once was awe-inspiring. I like reading popular science, collaborating on creative and innovative ideas, and making friends along the way."



**Tarek Ali, MBBS, M.ED, Assistant Professor, Movement Disorders**

"Outside of the hospital, I spend most of my time with my fiancé, Brittany, and our corgi, Annabelle. While she tries to fit as many house plants as possible into our home, I keep looking for new places to put a speaker. I maintain the vibrations are good for the plants. We're both foodies and travel buffs, with a growing list of Michelin star restaurants we someday hope to be able to afford to go to."



**Sedeek ElMoursi, MD, Instructor, NIR Fellow**

### *COVID-19 doesn't care about politics; it only wants to infect*

BY EDWARD KASARSKIS



The political legacy of the past four years has clouded our thinking about intrinsically non-political issues. The single biggest problem facing the world today is the non-partisan virus known to us as SARS-CoV-2. As best we can tell, the virus seeks out any available human being to infect—Republican, Democrat, female, male, Jew, agnostic, Catholic, Hindu, Afghan, Italian—absolutely anyone. It really doesn't care all it wants to do is be a virus and reproduce.

We all know by now that

**LET THOSE WHO ARE VACCINATED PROUDLY PROCLAIM THEIR STATUS AND BE THANKED BY THE CDC AND BY THEIR FELLOW CITIZENS. THE UNVACCINATED WILL KNOW AT A GLANCE WHOM TO THANK FOR THEIR OWN SAFETY.**

our only available defensive weapons against Covid are vaccination and masks. Getting the Covid infection results in sickness and death. All of this seems to be pretty cut and dried. And yet even as the delta variant is pummeling Florida, Rep. Matt Gaetz of that state proudly proclaimed it to be the "Florida Variant" or the "Freedom Variant", a clear attempt to continue to change this public health crisis into a pseudo-partisan issue, all the while his con-

stituents get sick and die.

What is missing? In addition to masks and vaccinations, it seems that many Americans lack a sense of community and forget that they also are citizens of the world. Missing is the recognition that their own personal actions affect those around them. This has sustained us in the past. But clearly their inaction spreads the virus from one person to another, causing the others sickness and perhaps death, all the while

they are being a knowing accomplice. This is pure selfishness.

As the virus spreads, frustration grows. People don't want to listen to science or to their elected officials. In a way all this is understandable. The science is complicated and most of us have not had exposure to the science of epidemiology in school. Prevalence, incidence, percent positivity, rolling averages—this has been all on the job training for most Americans. Others have commented that it is hard even to get an intuitive grasp of these numbers—600,000 persons dead in the US from Covid after all. What does this really look like? Can you even name one person on your block in Lexington who died from Covid? I can't. And then in the next 30 seconds, someone will be on the internet telling you that Covid is a hoax or the vaccine will alter your DNA or make you sterile. The noise is just deafening

... In the meantime the virus stalks the unvaccinated without remorse, because after all, it's just a virus. You would think us humans would be smarter.

All the burden has been placed on those citizens who understand the gravity of the situation and their place in the world. As different variants appear, the science and our understanding of the virus evolves. Viewed from outside the scientific community, it appears that the CDC is "walking back" on their guidance. Then as the governors are counting ICU beds, down on their knees begging people to get vaccinated, the logjam persists.

So what can we do since the old strategies are not working? The government clearly has taken the posture of appealing to a person's sense of altruism, or cash incentives, or mandates. May I suggest a complimentary strategy. We need to get vaccination out of the closet. The Vaccinated are not public-

ly acknowledged and celebrated. The federal government should manufacture and distribute face masks with only one simple message on them proclaiming: "ANOTHER DECENT VACCINATED PERSON WITH A MASK". These should be free and available at every facility that administers a vaccination. For those of us who already have been vaccinated, we should be able to show our CDC vaccination card and get a new mask. Let those who are vaccinated proudly proclaim their status and be thanked by the CDC and by their fellow citizens. The Unvaccinated will know at a glance whom to thank for their own safety. And this is also an action item that is clear and printed on the mask for others to follow.

Edward Kasarskis is a professor of neurology at UK who specializes in ALS (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis).

## Departmental Trainee of the Month - July



**Gabriela Keeton, MD, PGY 4**

### **Collective Responsibility/Teamwork**

"I worked with Dr. Keeton for 2 weeks on general neurology and she has demonstrated excellent clinical skills and led the team in a very efficient way. We had some tough patient issues, where extensive family counseling was needed. One patient required different family members be updated each and every day and Dr. Keeton was on top of this. She provided explanations in an easy to understand fashion, set clear expectations in terms of prognosis and at the same time was very empathetic. Another patient who had complex phenomenology was eventually diagnosed with a condition in which counseling was key and Dr. Keeton again did an excellent job explaining the diagnosis and management to the patient."

### **Caring**

"Dr. Keeton led the general neurology team. She was on top of each and every case (both inpatient and consults) and led the team in an efficient manner. Every family member was updated every day (none of the families were bedside because of COVID restrictions)."

### **Professionalism**

"As Academic Chief Resident, she is doing wonderful job, coordinating with course leaders, suggesting topics which are best for residents and board exams. She was also selected for the UK GME Emerging Leaders Program."

### **Excellence**

"Very involved and helpful with the ABC workgroup. We received several emails regarding Dr Keeton's work/ involvement with the ABC workgroup and paying attention to the fine details. "

"Dr Keeton's presence and explanations in Spanish helped to make some critical decisions in epilepsy care for a Spanish speaking patient in the EMU. Dr Keeton also reviewed and made changes to a responsive neurostimulation document."



## Philanthropy

### Robert J. Baumann, MD Resident Endowment Fund

The endowment was established in honor of Dr. Baumann's skills as a clinician and educator. It provides much needed funding for resident learning opportunities and research-related needs that are not otherwise supported.

Education is one of the core missions of our department - we are always looking for ways to improve the curriculum and educational opportunities we provide. Our goal is to continue to attract the highest caliber trainees to our programs, provide comprehensive neurological education, and increase the number of neurologists available in the commonwealth capable of providing cutting edge patient care and who are dedicated to life-long learning. In 2015, the Robert J. Baumann, MD Fund for Neurology Residents was established to help us support our goals for the neurology resident program. Dr. Baumann has been a familiar face among neurology residents at the University of Kentucky for four decades. Dr. Baumann truly embodies the teaching mission of our department. His devotion to the field of medicine and training the next generation of providers is truly second to none.



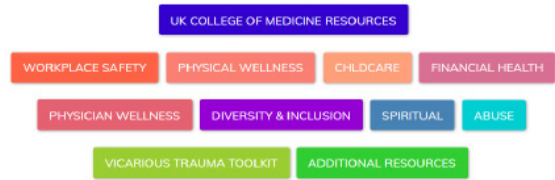
In keeping with Dr. Baumann's passion for providing a strong medical education, the endowment will bolster the continued expansion of the Residency Program and ensure that our trainees have a well-rounded experience, positioning us to be among the best, and most sought out programs in the United States. Please consider contributing to the continued growth of our program and making an impact on future neurology residents by making a gift to the Robert J. Baumann MD Fund for Neurology Residents. All donations will be acknowledged and are tax deductible.

Donations can be made by contacting our Director of Philanthropy, Lisa Deaton Greer. (859-323-5374 or [lisa.greer@uky.edu](mailto:lisa.greer@uky.edu)) or by clicking here <https://neurology.med.uky.edu/neurology-alumni>.

# Wellness and Support Resources



## Wellness



## Support

The Department of Neurology provides access to various services designed specifically for faculty and trainees to receive support in dealing with the unique needs of individuals. Counseling services can help identify and resolve problems related to work, personal, career or relationships.

- [Physician Support Line](#)
- [Lexington Medical Society Physician Wellness Program](#)
- [UK Work-Life Counseling](#)
- [UK REFER Program](#)
- [Emergent Psychiatry Services](#)
- [The Ridge Behavioral System](#)

## Diversity & Inclusion



## Statement for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

As healthcare providers, we have an obligation to do no harm. But our obligations go further to prevent harm from befalling others because of our inaction or silence. We can no longer be idle while vestigial institutions and implements of racism that perpetuate inequity remain intact. Silence for the sake of avoiding an uncomfortable truth is not acceptable and it was never acceptable. Indifference to racism makes us complicit in systems that have oppressed, marginalized, and scapegoated people for generations. In a country long heralded as the land of the free, being Black or a member of an underrepresented minority group cannot be a disqualification for enjoying the rights and privileges afforded to others.

Racism and social injustice in the United States claimed the lives of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and countless other persons of color. Breonna Taylor, a fellow Kentuckian, UK alumna, and healthcare provider, died at the hands of people who are supposed to be keepers of the peace. Violence is but one facet of the chronic and pervasive racism that has plagued our communities. Medicine is not immune to the consequences of our nation's inequities; they affect us, our colleagues, and our patients and impair our ability to provide comfort and care. As healthcare providers, we begin addressing symptoms such as implicit bias and healthcare disparities by recognizing that they stem from hundreds of years of oppression.

We proudly stand with other members of the medical community and proclaim Black Lives Matter. We stand with the people of color and others in our community and across the United States in denouncing the abhorrent treatment that Black people, other persons of color, and other underrepresented groups have endured. We stand with others who pledge to be anti-racist and who work to tear down the pillars of institutional racism. As a Department, UK Neurology is committed to equity, diversity, and inclusivity. With only 3% of Neurologists being Black or African American and only 7% Hispanic-Latino, in an effort to counter decades of neglect, we commit to recruiting colleagues from underrepresented groups and ensuring that they thrive in an environment that is free from racism and bigotry. We commit to supporting young, underrepresented persons in our community so that we can have greater diversity among physicians in our field in the future. We must do better. We will do better.

# Events (All pre-COVID 2.0)

## Ladies Night Out at Newton's Attic



## Events Cont. Ladies Brunch



## Saving a Life on Vacation



Julie Youssefi, MD, was on vacation in Florida enjoying breakfast, when suddenly someone she didn't know went into cardiac arrest and she had to start CPR. Thank you, Dr. Youssefi!

Events Cont.  
Trainee Outings



**Events Cont.**  
**Trainee Outings**



## Save the Dates

**2021**  **HealthCare**  
KENTUCKY NEUROSCIENCE  
INSTITUTE

University of Kentucky College of Medicine  
Neuroscience Research Priority Area

**Neuroscience  
Clinical Translational  
Research Symposium**

**Save the date:  
October 8th**

**Scan for Registration Information:**

**Keynote:  
Seth Himelhoch - MD, MPH**



### THE SCN IS EXCITED TO ANNOUNCE THE 2021 SUMMIT KEYNOTE SPEAKER:



#### **Dr. Justin Fraser, FAANS, FAHA**

Vice Chair, Department of Neurological Surgery Associate Professor of  
Cerebrovascular, Endovascular, and Skull Base Surgery  
Director, Cerebrovascular Surgery and NeuroInterventional Radiology  
Departments of Neurological Surgery, Neurology, Radiology, and  
Neuroscience Center for Advanced Translational Stroke Science  
University of Kentucky

**Stroke Care Network Virtual Summit**  
October 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021

*\*Registration Forthcoming\**

Rachel Ward-Mitchell, RN, BSN, would like to invite you to the virtual epilepsy support group meeting every other week via Zoom. This meeting will replace the in-person monthly meeting for now. If you would like to join the meetings please contact Rachel at 859.218.5053 or through Central Kentucky Epilepsy Network <https://www.facebook.com/CentralKentuckyEpilepsySupportNetwork>.

Please submit contributions for the August  
Newspaper to Lee Anne Rudd, ([lee.rudd@uky.edu](mailto:lee.rudd@uky.edu)).