



UNIVERSITY OF UTAH  
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Department of Internal Medicine

# Internal News

DEPARTMENT OF INTERNAL MEDICINE NEWS

NEW FACULTY | Summer 2016 | JULY - SEPTEMBER



## **Florentino "Butch" Abueg, MD**

Division of Geriatrics

Start date: July 1, 2016

Dr. Abueg was born in the Philippines. After finishing his Medical Degree at the University of the Philippines, he went to the State University of New York in Brooklyn where he completed his residency training in Internal Medicine at Downstate Hospital in Brooklyn. He completed a Geriatric Fellowship at the University of Utah. After completing his fellowship, he worked as a hospitalist for three years at St. Marks Hospital under the Senior Health Center and performed house calls for homebound Senior Patients over the last 13 years he has worked as a full-time Geriatrician at the St. Marks Senior Health Center. Dr. Abueg has maintained certifications with the American Board of Internal Medicine in the fields of Internal Medicine, Geriatrics and Hospice and Palliative Medicine. He currently serves as a hospice physician and Medical Director for a home health agency as well as the Medical Director for the William E. Christoffersen Salt Lake City Veterans Home. Currently, he is the President of the Utah Geriatrics Society.



## **Owen Chan, PhD**

Division of Endocrinology & Metabolism

Start date: September 1, 2016

Dr. Chan is an Associate Professor of Medicine in the Division of Endocrinology and Metabolism. Dr. Chan received his PhD from the University of Toronto, Canada and subsequently completed his post-doctoral training in the Section of Endocrinology at Yale University. He later served on the faculty at Yale and also served as the Director for the Yale Diabetes Research Center's Physiology Core. He is internationally recognized for his research in the field of hypothalamic glucose sensing and brain fuel metabolism. In particular, his research focuses on the role of brain fuel metabolism on hypothalamic neurotransmission and the impact that prior antecedent hypoglycemia and diabetes have on these systems and their ability to regulate peripheral glucose metabolism.

# New Faculty Announcement



## **Laura A. Pace, MD**

Division of Gastroenterology

Start date: August 1, 2016

Laura A. Pace is an Assistant Professor in the Division of Gastroenterology, Hepatology, and Nutrition. She received a BS degree in Chemistry from the State University of New York at Stony Brook, graduating with honors. She then entered the Medical Scholars Program at the University of Illinois, where she obtained a PhD in Neuroscience in 2007 and a MD in 2010. Dr. Pace completed her clinical training as part of the American Board of Internal Medicine Physician Scientist Training Program, including residency in Internal Medicine at the University of Utah and Gastroenterology fellowship at the University of Utah and the University of California San Diego (UCSD) in 2015. While at UCSD she was awarded the National Institutes of Health, Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award. She has also received specialized clinical training from leaders in the field of gastrointestinal motility and small intestinal mucosal diseases.

Dr. Pace's clinical interests are focused on autoimmune diseases with gastrointestinal manifestations, such as celiac disease, eosinophilic diseases, systemic sclerosis, and autonomic disorders. Her research integrates genomics and metabolomics with microbial physiologic measurements to delineate the human and microbial components underlying complex disease states affecting the gastrointestinal tract.



## **Marcus Pezzolessi, PhD**

Division of Nephrology & Hypertension

Start date: September 1, 2016

Dr. Pezzolessi is an Assistant Professor in the University's Division of Nephrology and Hypertension. After attending the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, MA, he completed his Ph.D. training in Biological Sciences and Human Genetics at The Ohio State University followed by a Master's of Public Health in Quantitative Methods at the Harvard School of Public Health. He completed his post-doctoral training as a member of the Joslin Diabetes Center's Section on Genetics and Epidemiology and as an Instructor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School.

The primary focus of Dr. Pezzolessi's research is to understand the genetic etiology of diabetes and its complications using an integrated 'omics'-based approaches. To accomplish this, he is applying high-throughput next-generation sequencing technology to develop a multi-dimensional understanding of diabetes and its complications. Recently, a major focus of his research has been the study of circulating microRNAs as novel biomarkers of progressive renal function decline in patients with Type 1 diabetes.

# New Faculty Announcement



## **Tuan Pham, MD**

Division of Gastroenterology

Start Date: August 1, 2016

Tuan Pham is currently a Clinical Instructor in the Division of Gastroenterology, Hepatology & Nutrition. He pursued his undergraduate studies at the University of Texas at Austin, where he obtained both a Bachelor's of Science degree in Biochemistry and Bachelor's of Arts degree in Microbiology in 2001. He went on to obtain his MD from the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center in 2008. Afterwards, he spent several years at the Baylor College of Medicine completing a residency in Internal Medicine and fellowship in Transplant Hepatology, as well as serving on faculty as a Hospitalist within the Section of General Internal Medicine. He subsequently moved to the University of Utah to pursue additional training in a Gastroenterology fellowship, which he completed in 2016.

Dr. Pham's clinical practice is largely focused on liver diseases and liver transplant medicine. His clinical and academic interests are especially dedicated to improving the management of NAFLD and nutritional derangements within chronic liver disease, which in turn have naturally extended into the field of obesity medicine. In addition to his hepatology practice, Dr. Pham will be overseeing an endoscopic bariatric clinic providing a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary approach towards weight loss and management of obesity-associated comorbidities.



## **Susan J. Sample, PhD**

Division of Medical Ethics

Start date: May 14, 2016

Susan J. Sample is an assistant professor in the Division of Medical Ethics and Humanities, Department of Internal Medicine; Writer-in-Residence at the Huntsman Cancer Institute; and associate instructor in the Department of Writing and Rhetoric Studies in the College of Humanities at the University of Utah. She received her BA in philosophy from Whitman College and an MFA in creative writing from the University of Arizona. She completed her PhD in communication, focusing on rhetoric and medicine, from the U of U. Her research explores the rhetorical ways physicians and patients use narrative, particularly how physician-trainees use narrative when writing about experiences with patients at the end of life. She teaches medical humanities and reflective writing in the School of Medicine. She also is facilitator for the Physicians Literature and Medicine Discussion Group, facilitator for the Resident Physician Writing Group, and a faculty advisor for the medical students' literary journal, Rubor. At HCI, Dr. Sample is developing a program in narrative and medicine for patients, caregivers, physicians, and staff, offering workshops as well as individual writing consultation. In the College of Humanities, she teaches a medical discourses class for undergraduates interested in becoming health-care professionals.

# New Faculty Announcement



## **Michelle Sorweid, DO, MPH**

Division of Geriatrics

Start date: July 1, 2016

Dr. Sorweid obtained her Bachelor's of Science degree in Biological Sciences from the University of South Carolina in 2004, and subsequently completed a Master's degree in Public Health from Columbia University in New York, New York with a focus in Aging and Public Health. She attended medical school at the University of North Texas - Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine in Forth Worth, Texas and completed an Internal Medicine residency in 2014 at St. Joseph's Hospital in Denver, Colorado. She completed a Fellowship in Geriatrics at the University of Utah and was then selected for a VAMC Advanced Research Fellowship from 2015-2016 where she developed and completed a VA-sponsored research study with caregivers of veterans enrolled in a proactive tele-health cognitive evaluation program. During this time, she also completed a mini-fellowship at the University of Utah Cognitive Disorders clinic where she trained with the state's renowned cognitive neurologists.



## **Michael Sossenheimer, MD**

Division of Gastroenterology

Start date: August 1, 2016

Michael Sossenheimer is a Clinical Track Associate Professor of Medicine in the Division of Gastroenterology. He studied medicine at the University of Düsseldorf and University of Heidelberg, Germany, where he earned his MD-PhD in 1989. Dr. Sossenheimer completed his internships and residency at the University of Düsseldorf and University of Maryland Medical System and then pursued his Gastroenterology fellowship training at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, followed by an advanced therapeutic ERCP fellowship at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston.

Board certified in Internal Medicine and Gastroenterology, Dr. Sossenheimer has practiced Gastroenterology for more than 18 years and treats a wide range of digestive diseases. Expert procedures include ERCP, endoscopy, colonoscopy, enteroscopy, ileoscopy, sigmoidoscopy, and pouchoscopy. Dr. Sossenheimer is a Fellow of the American College of Physicians, Fellow of the American College of Gastroenterology, Fellow of the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy, and a Fellow of the American Gastroenterology Association.