



**UAB HEALTH SERVICES
RESEARCH TRAINING PROGRAM
(AHRQ T32)**

***ALUMNI NEWSLETTER
2024***



**Center for Outcomes &
Effectiveness Research & Education**

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A message from the Directors

As we wrap up the first year of a new AHRQ T32 grant cycle, we have much to celebrate. The UAB Health Services Research Training Program just completed its 21st year and continues a long legacy of developing the next generation of health services researchers. As we reflected on the grant renewal and successes thus far, we are excited to launch a number of innovations that we hope will bring the T32 program to new heights.

Many, if not all, of our current and past trainees have organically focused their research projects on questions that seek to promote health equity, particularly in our region of the country where the need is so great. In response, we've added sessions to each semester of our weekly Friday Fellows seminars to formally introduce concepts and research methods in this area. In our first year, these included talks from Dr. Gabriela Oates on health equity research frameworks, Dr. Tina Kempin Reuter on a human rights approach to health equity research, and Dr. Sarah MacCarthy on sexual and gender minority health in Birmingham and beyond. We look forward to continuing this focus in the years to come.

We have also added a monthly career development workshop series as an interactive opportunity for trainees to develop academic life skills. Many of the topics are from trainee recommendations such as "how to write a manuscript: tackling each section." Local program alumni have also given back by leading workshops and signing up for future ones. This year, Dr. Rachel Wells delved into her Individual Development Plan and demonstrated how she has used the document to focus and advance her career and mentoring relationships. We look forward to hearing from new alumni, Dr. Reed Bratches, this year about his strategy for preparing a job talk. Our 2023 – 2024 workshops concluded with an inaugural Works-in-Progress Symposium in May, a half-day event that brought together all T32s and many of their mentors for rapid-fire project updates. Given the enormously positive feedback, we are keen to do this again next year. Pictures from this year's event are included in the pages that follow. We invite all local and alumni abroad to join in 2025!

Finally, we are thrilled to have Dr. Emily Levitan join Dr. Mugavero as Multi PI of the AHRQ T32 award. Emily has given tremendous effort and energy to COERE training programs, including Friday Fellows and the AHRQ T32, for many years and we are pleased to acknowledge her contributions with this new leadership role in the current grant cycle. In keeping with previous years, Dr. Levitan will continue to oversee training for predoctoral appointees while Dr. Mugavero oversees that of postdoctoral fellows.

Although we are sad to see a wonderful cohort of trainees depart for brighter horizons, we are excited about the year ahead and all that is to come.

Onwards!



Michael Mugavero,
MD, MHSc



Emily Levitan,
ScD

Our Team



Michael Mugavero, MD, MHSc
Director



Emily Levitan, ScD
Director



Madeline Gibson, MPH
Deputy Director



Geri Davis
Program Coordinator

Core Faculty



Andrea Cherrington, MD
School of Medicine -
Preventive Medicine



Larry Hearld, PhD
School of Health
Professions - Health
Services Administration



Bertha Hidalgo, PhD, MPH
School of Public Health -
Epidmiology



Latesha Elope, MD
School of Medicine -
Infectious Diseases



Gabriela Oates, PhD
School of Medicine -
Pulmonary, Allergy,
Critical Care



**Patricia Patrician, PhD,
RN, FAAN**
School of Nursing



Tina Kempin Reuter, PhD
Collage of Arts and Sciences - Political
Science and Public Administration

Works-in-Progress Half-Day Symposium May 17, 2024



New Trainees



Jordi Garcia-Diaz, MD

Mentors: Lauren Walter, MD, Ellen Eaton, MD, Karen Cropsey, PsyD, and Davis Bradford, MD

Postdoc: Emergency Medicine
University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB)

Jordi Garcia-Diaz MD is a Birmingham native and attended the local school systems before attending UAB for college, medical school, and residency. Upon finishing Emergency Medicine residency in 2024, he will start a Research Fellowship under the Primary Mentorship of Dr. Lauren Walter. With the support and funding from the AHRQ T32 program, his research will focus on the efficacy of Naltrexone for patients suffering from Alcohol Use Disorder presenting to the Emergency Department.



Anais Mahone, PhD, MSW

Mentors: Latesha Elope, MD, MSPH, Tina Kempin Reuter, PhD, MA, and Donald (Donny) Gerke, PhD, MSW

Postdoc: Infectious Diseases
University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB)

Anais earned her PhD in Social Work from Rutgers – The State University of New Jersey, following completion of an MSW from Temple University and her undergraduate studies at the University of Pittsburgh. Anais is interested in investigating and evaluating the policy and political barriers to equity in HIV/STI prevention and care for Black communities in the Deep South. As a doctoral student, Anais supported studies investigating the effects of social networks and stigma on HIV prevention care for Black women. Additionally, she served as project coordinator for an innovative training program designed to increase providers' knowledge of Black women's HIV care needs. In her spare time, Anais enjoys being in nature and visiting museums.

New Trainees



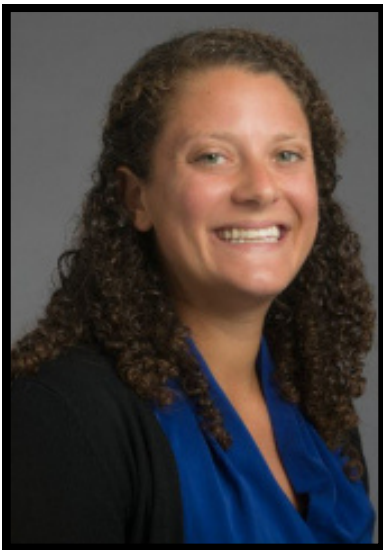
Nicole Rademacher, MD

Mentor: Kristy Broman, MD, MPH

Postdoc: Surgery

University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB)

Nicole Rademacher is a general surgery resident interested in health services research. She attended Medical College of Wisconsin for medical school before completing two years of general surgery residency at UAB. She will be pursuing a dedicated research fellowship in surgical oncology health services research under the mentorship of Dr. Kristy Broman and with the support of the AHRQ T32 program. Her research foci include understanding the factors that drive quality of cancer care within regional cancer care markets and health system-level strategies to address regional variation in cancer mortality. During her research fellowship, she will also pursue an MSPH in Outcomes Research.



Petra Sprik, MPH, MDiv

Mentors: Larry Hearld, PhD and Katherine Meese, PhD

Predoc: Health Services Administration

University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB)

Petra Sprik is a doctoral student in the Health Services Administration program at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). A recent transplant to Alabama, she previously completed her undergraduate studies at Duke University, a Master of Divinity at Princeton Theological Seminary, and a Master of Public Health from the University of South Carolina. Petra's primary research goal is to improve healthcare quality, outcomes, and affordability by studying the intersection of healthcare worker well-being and patient-centered care. She is informed by seven years of clinical experience as a healthcare chaplain, and the patient experience of living with Type-1 Diabetes. In her free time, she enjoys hiking, a competitive Peloton ride, and spending time with her family.

Returning Trainees



Elliott Botelho, BA

Mentors: Kaylee Crockett, PhD and Christina Muzny, MD

Predoc: Psychology

University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB)

Elliott is a student in the Medical/Clinical Psychology Ph.D. program working with Drs. Kaylee Crockett and Christina Muzny. Their research primarily focuses on HIV, eating disorders, and healthcare access and quality within transgender adults. They are a mixed-methods researcher, primarily studying individuals from the Southern U.S.



William Bradford, MD

Mentors: Latesha Elore MD, MSPH, and Ronnie “Matt” Gravett, MD, MSPH

Postdoc: Infectious Diseases

University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB)

William is a native of Raleigh, NC, and attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill for undergraduate studies before enrolling at Wake Forest School of Medicine for his MD. He completed residency in internal medicine at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital in Philadelphia, PA, where he developed a passion for treating patients with serious injection-related infection. He worked as hospitalist at the University of California, Davis for two years before returning to training in the Infectious Diseases fellowship program at UAB. In his spare time, he enjoys mountain biking, rock climbing, and spending time with his daughter.

Returning Trainees



Andrea Davis, MA

Mentors: Gareth Dutton, PhD

Predoc: Psychology

University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB)

Andrea earned her BA in psychology from Rhodes College in Memphis, TN, and her MA in clinical psychology from Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, TN. She is a rising third-year student in the Medical/Clinical Psychology doctoral program. Broadly, her research interests are the development and refinement of behavioral weight management interventions. Her current research proposes a brief Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) intervention that aims to address psychological characteristics that have been demonstrated to hinder weight loss efforts, including presence of emotional eating, weight self-stigma, and negative body image.



Noon Eltoum, MD, MPH

Mentors: Anna Sorace, PhD and Gabrielle Rocque, MD

Postdoc: Hematology & Oncology

University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB)

Noon attained her medical degree from the University of Medical Sciences and Technology in Khartoum, Sudan. Noon completed a Master of Public Health with a concentration in Epidemiology from the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). She is now a second-year postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Radiology at UAB under the mentorship of Dr. Anna Sorace and with the support of the UAB Health Services Research Training Program. Her research interests include breast cancer and imaging, effects of novel radiological approaches on patient outcomes, and improving healthcare access and quality globally.

Returning Trainees



Kayleigh "Elizabeth" Keith, BSN, RN

Mentors: Wendy Landier, PhD, RN, and Smita Bhatia, MD, MPH

Predoc: Nursing

University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB)

Elizabeth earned her BS in nursing from the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, AL, in 2019. Before starting her PhD program, she worked as a nurse at Children's of Alabama in hematology/oncology, bone marrow transplant, as well as cardiovascular and interventional radiology peri-operative services. She is now a second-year student in the School of Nursing PhD program. Broadly, her research interests include patient/family education in pediatric oncology and health literacy. Her current research focuses on understanding the role health literacy may play in parental ability to comprehend education related to caring for their child with cancer at home.



Joshua C.J. Lewis, BA

Mentors: Patricia Drentea, PhD, David Warner, PhD, Verna Keith, PhD, Myles Moody, and Olivio Clay, PhD

Predoc: Sociology

University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB)

Originally from Atlanta, Georgia, Joshua C.J. Lewis is a doctoral student in the Medical Sociology program at UAB. Prior to his graduate studies, he finished his BA in Philosophy from Texas A&M University and worked as a federal U.S. health lobbyist and advocate for health workforce development, minority health, and the reduction of health disparities. As a social scientist, Joshua combines his experiences in health policy, background in ethics, and sociological training to elucidate the mechanisms and social factors that perpetuate American health inequities. His current research focuses on addressing health disparities across the life course with an emphasis on chronic stressors, psychosocial resources, social determinants of health, and cardiovascular disease.

Graduating Trainees



Reed Bratches, PhD, MPH, MALS

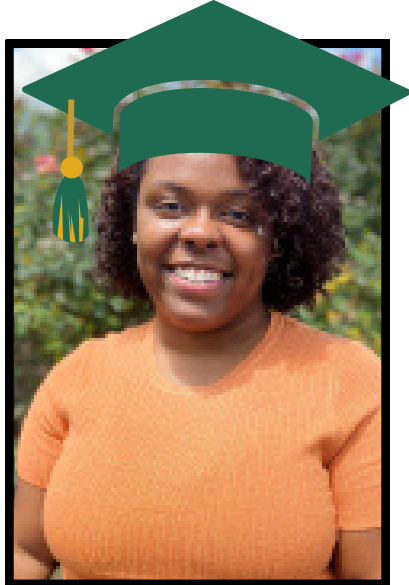
Mentors: Nick Odom, PhD, MSN, MA, RN, ACHPN, FPCN

Postdoc: Nursing

University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB)

Reed received his PhD from Dartmouth College's Institute for Health Policy and Clinical Practice in August 2022. His research primarily focuses on family caregivers, particularly how we communicate information from clinic visits to family caregivers. He has experience with the design and conduct of systematic reviews and meta-analyses, surveys, and clinical trials. Reed received his Master of Public Health in 2019 and his MALS in Cultural Studies in 2018. Outside the office, Reed can be found biking, golfing, and chasing after his young sons

Next Step: Reed will continue his career at UAB as an Assistant Professor in the School of Nursing.



Joanna Hobson, PhD

Mentors: Burel Goodin, PhD

Predoc: Psychology (Behavioral Neuroscience)

University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB)

Originally from Memphis, Tennessee, Joanna Hobson graduated from Lane College in 2019 with a BS in Biology. She currently serves as a graduate research assistant in Dr. Burel Goodin's lab, where she assists in the HIPPI project (The Impact of Insomnia on Pain in HIV). Currently, her research interests are to elucidate the roles of socioeconomic strains, physical deficits, emotional distress, and insufficient sleep on adverse health outcomes in people living with HIV (PLWH). More specifically, her aims are to address the impact of insomnia on behavior patterns (e.g., substance use) and physiological systems (e.g., immune response) in PLWH.

Next Step: Joanna will continue her training as a postdoctoral fellow with UAB's Mentored Experiences in Research Instruction and Teaching (MERIT) program.

Graduating Trainees



Bayley Jones, MD

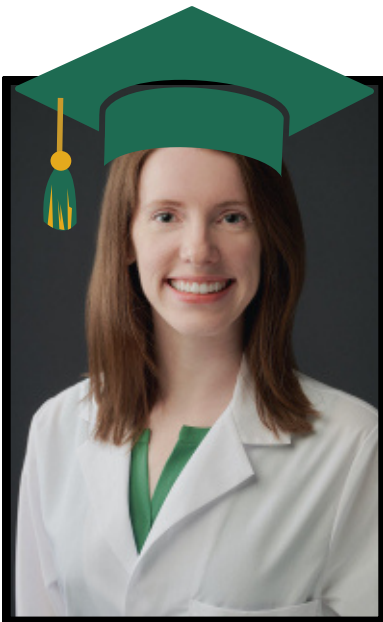
Mentor: Daniel Chu, MD

Postdoc: Surgery

University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB)

Bayley Jones is a general surgery resident interested in health services research. Originally from Alabama, she attended UAB for medical school before completing three years of general surgery residency at the University of Texas Southwestern in Dallas. She is returning to UAB to pursue a dedicated research fellowship in health services research under the mentorship of Dr. Daniel Chu. Her research focuses on enhanced recovery programs and health literacy in surgical populations.

Next Step: Bayley will return to residency at The University of Texas Southwestern in Dallas, Texas.



Kelsey Montgomery, MD

Mentors: Herbert Chen, MD, and Kristy Broman, MD, MPH

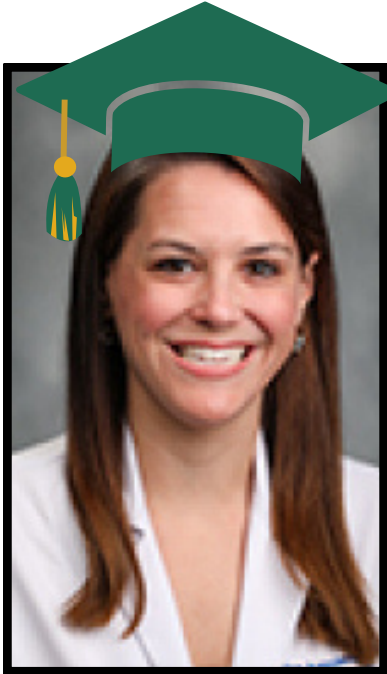
Postdoc: Surgery

University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB)

Kelsey Montgomery is a UAB general surgery resident interested in surgical oncology and health services research. Originally from Texas, she attended the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston McGovern Medical School before coming to Birmingham for surgical residency. She will be pursuing a dedicated research fellowship in surgical oncology health services research under the mentorship of Dr. Kristy Broman and with the support of the AHRQ HSOER T32 program. Her research focuses include evaluating the quality of surgical cancer care within health systems and nodal surveillance in cutaneous melanoma. During her research fellowship, she will also obtain an MSPH in Outcomes Research.

Next Step: Kelsey will return to residency at The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB).

Graduating Trainees



Jaclyn Wall, MD

Mentor: Marie Bakitas, DNSc, BSN, and J. Michael Straughn Jr., MD

Postdoc: Nursing

University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB)

Jaclyn (Jackie) Wall completed her residency training in Obstetrics and Gynecology at Duke University prior to her fellowship in Gynecologic Oncology at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. She was drawn to gynecologic oncology given its uniqueness in caring for patients throughout their entire cancer journey including diagnosis, systemic therapy, surgery, surveillance, and end-of-life care. Her primary research interest is examining the factors that most drive patients' decision-making processes for making choices about their cancer care throughout their treatment in its various stages, how these decisions are impacted by their social circumstances, and how their healthcare team can consistently provide guidance and counseling that is in line with these motivating factors.

Next Step: Jackie has accepted an Assistant Professor position at Virginia Commonwealth University.

We wish all of our graduating
T32's the best of luck in their
future endeavors!



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