



**TO:** University Senate  
**FROM:** William Wertheim, MD, MBA  
Executive Vice President for Stony Brook Medicine  
**DATE:** May 5, 2025  
**SUBJECT:** SBM EVP Report

---

## ACADEMIC UPDATES

### **Renaissance School of Medicine Earns ACCME Accreditation**

The Renaissance School of Medicine's Office of Continuing Medical Education (CME) has received Accreditation with Commendation from the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME). To be eligible for Accreditation with Commendation, CME providers must demonstrate compliance with the Core Accreditation Criteria, Standards for Integrity and Independence, and required policies, in addition to eight criteria within the AACME's Menu of Commendation Criteria. Fully accredited since 1979, the Office of CME's "Commendation" status—the AACME's highest performance ranking—means that its accreditation term will last six years, as opposed to four for full accreditation.

### **Celebrating the Profession of Social Work**

The School of Social Welfare held its third annual luncheon in celebration of Social Work Month, honoring the vital contributions of social workers across campus. The event welcomed over 125 social workers from Stony Brook University, Stony Brook University Hospital, the Long Island State Veterans Home, and various satellite campuses throughout Long Island—many of whom are proud SSW alumni. Held in the Health Sciences Center Galleria, the luncheon provided a valuable opportunity for networking and connection among peers, as well as with SSW faculty and staff.

### **School of Nursing has Strong Showing at 2025 ENRS conference**

Stony Brook University School of Nursing made a significant impact at the 2025 Eastern Nursing Research Society (ENRS) conference, boasting the largest representation with a combination of 18 podium and poster presentations. Faculty and students showcased research, highlighting the university's commitment to advancing nursing science and best practices. Dr. Ann-Margaret Navarra, Associate Dean for Research and Innovation, was installed as the new ENRS president. Undergraduate and graduate students presented impactful Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) and research posters, covering a wide variety of impactful areas of inquiry. Faculty-student collaborations yielded data-driven projects, including those focused on critical healthcare access and utilization needs, pain assessment in patients with dementia, and the application of a



socioecological framework in Adherence Connection for Counseling, Education, and Support with HIV+ Adolescents and Young Adults. Stony Brook University School of Nursing's strong presence at ENRS underscored its leadership in nursing research and education.

#### **Peng Mao Awarded \$2.8 Million by NIH to Study Temozolomide Resistance**

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is awarding Peng Mao, Associate Professor in the Department of Pathology, a grant to lead his study, "Repair of temozolomide-induced DNA damage in transcribed genes." A funding amount of over \$2.8 million is pending final approval by the National Cancer Institute (NCI), and Dr. Mao's application scored in the top 8th percentile among those submitted. The study, set to begin this July and run through June 2030, aims to uncover a novel resistance mechanism to temozolomide (TMZ), a frontline chemotherapy for glioblastoma (GBM). The research will investigate how transcriptional stalling influences the repair of TMZ-induced DNA adducts—specifically examining the role of transcription-coupled nucleotide excision repair (TC-NER) in overcoming alkylation damage. By addressing this critical knowledge gap, the research could advance understanding of TMZ resistance and guide more effective treatment strategies for GBM.

#### **Physical Therapy Faculty Members and Student Honored at APTA Combined Sections Meeting**

The team of Adriana Saab '25, Dr. James Pierre-Glaude, and Dr. Eric Lamberg were honored at the APTA CSM in Houston, Texas. Their inspiring poster, "Physical Therapists Championing Inclusion through Adaptive Sport" earned the APTA Academy of Leadership and Innovation social responsibility award.

#### **Natalia Marchenko Awarded Funding for Breast Cancer Research**

Natalia Marchenko, Assistant Professor in the RSOM's Department of Pathology, has been awarded funding for her study, "Validation of BVLRB as a novel therapeutic target in breast cancer." The project investigates biliverdin reductase B (BLVRB) as a potential new therapeutic target in HER2-positive breast cancer, an aggressive form of the disease often resistant to current treatments. Preliminary research indicates that BLVRB plays a key role in maintaining redox balance and may influence HER2 receptor trafficking, particularly in tumors with high BLVRB expression. Building on these findings, Dr. Marchenko will conduct preclinical in vivo experiments to validate BLVRB's function and therapeutic potential, with the goal of developing more effective treatment options for patients who do not respond to existing HER2-targeted therapies. Sponsored by the Carol M. Baldwin Foundation for Breast Cancer Research Award, the project began in March and runs through February 2026.

#### **Farah Haq Elected Fellow in the American College of Occupational & Environmental Medicine**

Farah Haq, head of the Division of Occupational, Environmental & Clinical Preventive Medicine within the RSOM's Department of Family, Population & Preventive Medicine, has been elected



as a Fellow in the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (FACOEM). This prestigious recognition reflects Dr. Haq's outstanding contributions to the field of occupational and environmental medicine, as well as her dedication and service to the College. Her application was approved by both the Committee of Fellowship Examiners and the ACOEM Board of Directors. Dr. Haq was officially recognized as part of the Fellow Class of 2025 at the American Occupational Health Conference (AOHC) in Orlando, FL, April 27–30.

#### **SBM Faculty Recognized During Women's History Month**

SHP Clinical Assistant Professor in Physician Assistant Studies **Rasheed Davis** was honored at the 36th Annual Town of Babylon Women's History Month Program. This year's theme, "Moving Forward Together! Women Inspiring and Educating Generations," celebrated the incredible impact of women throughout history and their vital role in shaping our future.

Celebrating 40 years of healthcare excellence, **Christina Burke**, Clinical Associate Professor In the Department of Physical Therapy, was honored at the 39th Annual Town of Brookhaven Women's Recognition Awards. Among 18 trailblazing women recognized for their contributions in community service, education, law, science, healthcare, and medicine, Christina's dedication shines brightly.

**Leah Topek-Walker**, Clinical Associate Professor of Social Work, was recently honored by the Town of Brookhaven Office of Women's Services for her exceptional contributions to the community in education.

#### **Susan Lane Named Hedwig van Ameringen Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine Fellow**

Susan Lane, RSOM Associate Dean of Clinical Faculty Development, has been selected as a Fellow in the 2025–2026 Hedwig van Ameringen Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine (ELAM) Program at Drexel University College of Medicine. Highly competitive and prestigious, ELAM is the only longitudinal program in North America dedicated to preparing women for senior leadership roles in schools of medicine, dentistry, public health and pharmacy. The intensive one-year program is designed to develop the professional and personal skills required to lead and manage in today's complex health care environment, with special attention to the unique challenges facing women in leadership positions. To be accepted into ELAM, Fellows must be nominated and supported by the dean or another senior official of their institution. Dr. Lane's Fellowship work will begin in June and conclude with the Leaders Forum—a capstone event—in April 2026.



### **Renaissance School of Medicine Faculty Recognized by the Miriam and David Donoho Academy of Clinical & Educational Scholars**

RSOM faculty members in the departments of Medicine, Urology and Anesthesiology have been selected as Junior Fellows and Mentors in the Miriam and David Donoho Academy of Clinical & Educational Scholars (ACES). Established in 2014, ACES supports the Renaissance School of Medicine's educational mission by fostering a community of resolute educators committed to innovation and excellence in medical teaching, scholarship and leadership. Members are selected through a competitive process recognizing their contributions and potential in advancing medical education. From the Department of Medicine, Dr. Imran Chaudhri, Assistant Professor of Medicine in the Division of Nephrology and Hypertension, and Dr. Julia Powelson, Assistant Professor of Clinical Medicine and Associate Program Director of the Critical Care Fellowship in the Division of Pulmonary, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine, were named Junior Fellows and will be mentored by Dr. Sandeep Mallipattu and Dr. Sahar Ahmad (a former Junior Fellow), respectively. Dr. Michael Ernst, Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Urology, was also selected as a Junior Fellow and will be mentored by Dr. Andrew Feit, Assistant Professor, Department of Anesthesiology.

### **Joe Verghese Elected to Association of American Physicians**

Joe Verghese, Professor and Chair of the Department of Neurology, has been accepted to the prestigious Association of American Physicians (AAP). Election to the AAP—by nomination and seconding from current AAP members—is extended to physicians for accomplishments in basic or translational biomedical research. Membership is limited to only 70 persons annually and reflects preeminence in physician-led science and leadership. Dr. Verghese was formally introduced at a formal AAP dinner on April 26, during the 2025 Joint Meeting in Chicago.

### **Anissa Abi-Dargham to Receive 2025 Award for Research in Psychiatry by American Psychiatric Association ([SB News](#))**

The American Psychiatric Association (APA) has selected Anissa Abi-Dargham, SUNY Distinguished Professor and Chair of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Health, to receive the 2025 Award for Research in Psychiatry, recognizing her influential contributions to schizophrenia research. Established in 1949 as the Hofheimer Prize, the Award for Research in Psychiatry honors an outstanding body of work or a lifetime contribution that has significantly impacted the field or clinical practice. Dr. Abi-Dargham was nominated for the award by Dr. Nina Kraguljac of Ohio State University and will be formally recognized at the American Psychiatric Association Annual Meeting in Los Angeles on May 19, where she will also deliver a lecture titled "Misfiring Signals: Dopamine Dysfunction in Schizophrenia – From Neural Pathways to Behavioral Manifestations."



### **Michelle Ballan Featured in Morning Grounds, Morning Rounds SBM Video Series**

Dr. Michelle Ballan, SSW Professor and Associate Dean for Research; Professor in the Department of Family, Population & Preventive Medicine; and Director of the Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and related Disabilities (LEND) Program, was a featured guest on Morning Grounds, Morning Rounds with Dr. William Wertheim, Executive Vice President of Stony Brook Medicine, discussing her research and practice focus on the health and well-being of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.

### **RSOM Faculty Receive Seed Grant Funding for Women in Medicine and Science**

Agnieszka Bialkowska, Associate Professor in the Department of Medicine, and Heidi Preis, Assistant Professor of Research in the Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Medicine, are among 10 faculty members awarded university seed grants of up to \$5,000 each to support research conferences at Stony Brook over the next year. Dr. Bialkowska, in collaboration with Aleksandra Krajewski, Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of General Surgery, will use the funding to support the 20th annual Women in Medicine and Science (WIMS) Research Day in March 2026. Dr. Preis, together with Cassandra Heiselman, Assistant Vice Chair of Research for the Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Medicine; Marci Lobel, Distinguished Professor, Department of Psychology, CAS; and Petar Djuric, Distinguished Professor, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, CEAS, will host the Stony Brook Women's Health Research Conference, also planned for March 2026.

### **Bachelor of Social Work Student Receives Grant to Supply Self-Care Kits**

Grace Kennedy, a BSW junior, received a \$400 grant through the Contribution Project to create self-care kits for the SSW Wellness Room. The kits, designed to promote mental and physical well-being, include items like stress balls, face masks, kinetic sand, and coloring pages. The initiative aims to support students' wellness by encouraging relaxation, mindfulness, and stress relief during their academic journey. "Please feel free to check it out and take items as you need, I hope you all enjoy this new addition", said Grace. The Contribution Project accepts applications from people ages 14-25 who are seeking to make an impact on their community, school, or neighborhood through contribution. To learn more visit:

<https://contributionproject.org/>

### **School of Health Professions Hosts 2025 Outstanding Alumni Awards Event**

On March 26th, the SHP celebrated its outstanding alumni with a joyous event that united faculty, staff, students, alumni, and friends. The evening highlighted successful alumni making positive impacts in their fields. It was a night of pride, inspiration, and community spirit.

Honorees included:

Nesheta Akhter '14, Applied Health Informatics

Christopher Caravella '09, Health Science



Nina DePaola '87, Physical Therapy  
Leah Holbrook '07, Health Care Policy Management  
Tazia Shaw-Harrison '08, Clinical Laboratory Sciences  
Brian Mitra '01, Health Science  
Sasha Russ '12, Respiratory Care  
Christopher Stoebe '05, Physician Assistant  
Luke Schiele '20, Occupational Therapy  
Claudine Weiner '93, Athletic Training

### **Renaissance School of Medicine Showcases Student and Faculty Research**

The RSOM's Office of Undergraduate Medical Education (UGME) hosted its annual Scholarly Concentrations Program (SCP) Research Day on April 24 at the MART, highlighting the work of Class of 2025 students alongside their faculty mentors. The event featured several oral presentations and nearly 50 poster presentations highlighting student-led research. The SCP is a four-year track opportunity for medical students to pursue scholarly interests in related areas of medicine while gaining career experience, networking opportunities and research project-based proficiencies to augment their medical education.

The Department of Surgery will host its Research Day on Wednesday, May 7, from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM, in the MART Auditorium. Established in 2010, the department's annual Research Day offers residents a platform to present research aimed at advancing the science of surgery. The program will showcase ongoing and completed research projects by way of oral platform presentations, as well as a poster competition by residents, medical students and faculty. This year's keynote speaker is Timothy M. Pawlik, Chair of the Department of Surgery at the Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center, Urban Meyer III and Selley Meyer Chair for Cancer Research, and Surgeon-in-Chief at the Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center.

Stony Brook Cancer Center hosted the Gloria and Mark Snyder Symposium on Research and Clinical Insights for Cancer Prevention and Treatment on April 22 at The Waterview in Port Jefferson. This year's symposium focused on the integration of diverse areas of cancer research and their collective role in advancing prevention strategies, diagnostics and therapies aimed at reducing cancer burden locally and beyond. Keynote speakers included Dr. Wei Zheng, Anne Potter Wilson Chair in Medicine at Vanderbilt University, who spoke on leveraging big data and emerging technologies in epidemiology, and Dr. Xuehong Zhang, Professor and Assistant Dean for Research at Yale University School of Nursing, who highlighted multidisciplinary collaborations to improve liver health. Named in honor of Stony Brook alumni and philanthropists Gloria and Mark Snyder, the symposium underscored the Cancer Center's commitment to innovative research and personalized approaches to cancer care.





## CLINICAL UPDATES

### *Special Visitors and Outreach*

- Incoming President Andrea Goldsmith visited East Campus in April and was welcomed by Dr. Bill Wertheim and the Stony Brook Medicine leadership team. Dr. Wertheim provided an overview of the Stony Brook Medicine System. He and Carol Gomes, CEO/COO, Stony Brook University Hospital provided a tour of the hospital including the Emergency Department, Children's Hospital, and Stony Brook Cancer Center.
- Dr. Wertheim along with Susan Hedayati, Vice Dean for Research and Glen Itzkowitz, Associate Dean for Scientific Operations & Facilities welcomed staff members of Senator Chuck Schumer. The tour included the Research Freezer Room to the Cyclotron/PET Imaging Suite and Cancer Center Lab.
- Dr. Wertheim joined Paul Connor, Chief Administrative Officer, Stony Brook Eastern Long Island Hospital to thank supporters at the Eastern Long Island Hospital Foundation's "Grateful Gathering"
- Dr. Wertheim visited with CPMP administrative offices to meet with staff and learn about any challenges they face in efforts to serve our patients. The walk through was hosted by CPMP's CFO, Lisa Layton and Director of Revenue Cycle, Elisa Betancourt.

### **AWARDS, ACCOLADES & NEWS:**

- Stony Brook Medicine, Southampton Hospital Association, and the Southampton Hospital Foundation held a special ribbon-cutting ceremony on April 5, to celebrate the late spring opening of the Stony Brook East Hampton Emergency Department.

Once open, the Stony Brook East Hampton Emergency Department, an off-campus extension of Stony Brook Southampton Hospital's Emergency Department will be one of only a few free-standing emergency departments in New York State.

The much-needed Stony Brook East Hampton Emergency Department will open in late spring and receive patients at 400 Pantigo Place in East Hampton. The state-of-the-art, 22,000-square-foot, off-campus emergency facility will provide vital healthcare services to residents and visitors in the Town of East Hampton, including Amagansett, Montauk, Sag Harbor, and Springs.

As part of the Stony Brook Medicine healthcare system, this off-campus facility was designed to provide essential care for those located on the farthest end of the South Fork. It will operate 24/7, 365 days a year, including holidays.



The Stony Brook East Hampton Emergency Department is equipped with advanced diagnostic technologies and life-saving treatments, including a dedicated resuscitation room; cardiac monitoring capabilities in every exam room; specialized fast-track treatment rooms for general, pediatric, obstetrics/gynecology, and ophthalmology patients; two isolation rooms; a comprehensive imaging center, featuring advanced diagnostic technologies, including MRI, CT scan, Ultrasound and X-ray; an on-site ambulance for hospital transport; and eco-friendly innovations, including rooftop solar panels, a rain-catch garden and native plantings to reduce environmental impact.

- Stony Brook University Hospital (SBUH) has been designated as a Society for Obstetric Anesthesia and Perinatology (SOAP) Center of Excellence for the second time. This prestigious status is awarded to institutions and programs that demonstrate the highest standards of obstetric anesthesia care. Stony Brook's recertification shows the hospital's commitment to quality clinical practice and ongoing education in obstetric anesthesiology. SBUH is the only hospital in Suffolk County to be named a Center of Excellence.

SBUH is one of 13 institutions and obstetric anesthesia programs globally to have renewed the SOAP Center of Excellence designation initially granted in 2020. The honor is valid for four years.

The Center of Excellence designation was created in 2018 to set a benchmark of expected obstetric anesthesia care to improve standards nationally and internationally and provides a broad surrogate quality metric of institutions providing obstetric anesthesia care.

The criteria for the Center of Excellence designation cover various domains including personnel and staffing; equipment, protocols, and policies; simulation and team training; obstetric emergency management; cesarean delivery and labor analgesia care; recommendations and guidelines implementation; and quality assurance and patient follow-up systems. The criteria were generated by expert consensus and incorporate evidence-based recommendations.

- Stony Brook's Bariatric and Metabolic Weight Loss Center, part of the Department of Surgery's Division of Bariatric, Foregut, and Advanced Gastrointestinal Surgery, has been chosen as the Best Bariatric Practice on Long Island for the third consecutive year. The Best of Long Island (BoLI) awards are chosen by the Long Island public from 14





categories, including Health, Wellness & Beauty, in which Best Bariatric Practice is a subcategory.

The Bariatric and Metabolic Weight Loss Center, led by Director and Division Chief Konstantinos Spaniolas, MD, offers surgical and non-surgical weight loss solutions, including medical management, diet and exercise plans, counseling, behavior modification, and group support. The center's board-certified doctors have extensive surgical experience and have performed more than 4,000 surgeries, including over 1,970 bariatric procedures (95 percent done laparoscopically).

In addition to its three consecutive BoLI awards, the Stony Brook Bariatric and Metabolic Weight Loss Center is consistently recognized nationally for setting outstanding performance and outcome standards. While many bariatric surgery centers are not accredited, the Stony Brook Bariatric Center has achieved top-level national accreditation (Comprehensive Center with Adolescent Qualifications) from the Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Accreditation and Quality Improvement Program (MBSAQIP).

- Stony Brook Medicine Media Relations received 11 Hermes Creative Awards for its work including three Platinum Awards, four Gold Awards and four Honorable Mentions. The Hermes Creative Awards is an international competition honoring creative professionals in traditional and emerging media, and excellence in public relations. Hermes Creative Awards is administered and judged by the Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals, one of the largest, oldest, and most respected evaluators of creative work in the marketing and communication industry. Winners range in size from individuals to media conglomerates, and Fortune 500 companies. Over the years, the competition has drawn more than 100,000 entries from over 100 countries.
- Allyson Silver, MPH, FACHE, assistant vice president of operations for surgical services at Stony Brook Medicine, was recognized on Becker's Hospital Review's list of perioperative service leaders to know in 2025.

Becker's list includes 28 perioperative service leaders at leading hospitals and health systems across the country. These leaders are responsible for optimizing operating room productivity, boosting surgical team cooperation and tackling workforce issues. Silver is the only leader from Long Island named on this year's list.

- In December, our Stony Brook Medicine Center of Excellence for Alzheimer's Disease, led by Nikhil Palekar, MD, reached another significant milestone in Alzheimer's disease



care by administering our first treatment of donanemab (Kisunla®) - a newly approved therapy to help slow the progression of early-stage Alzheimer's - at our MART infusion center. As you may recall, in June 2024, Stony Brook Medicine administered Long Island's first treatment of lecanemab (Leqembi®), another recently approved therapy used for the same purpose.

Many individuals diagnosed with mild cognitive impairment or mild dementia due to Alzheimer's disease have high levels of amyloid in areas of the brain. Amyloid is a naturally occurring protein in the body, but in some cases, it can form abnormal deposits in tissues and organs. Both donanemab and lecanemab are designed to target and reduce amyloid, addressing one of the underlying causes of the disease.

Approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), donanemab is given as an IV infusion every four weeks; while lecanemab is given as an IV infusion every two weeks.

**PERSONNEL CHANGES:**

- Donna Heinemann, MD, was recently appointed as the Medical Director for the Stony Brook Medicine Clinically Integrated Network (CIN).

Dr. Heinemann brings years of invaluable experience having served in a series of leadership positions, including Vice Chair for Clinical Affairs for the Stony Brook Department of Medicine, and most recently, Medical Director for Stony Brook's Accountable Care Organization (ACO). Her academic journey began at Johns Hopkins University, where she earned her undergraduate degree, followed by her MD from Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. Her expertise was honed during her residency at New York Hospital/Cornell Medical Center, where she also held the role of chief resident.

Throughout her career, Dr. Heinemann has been a beacon of excellence in medical education, mentoring medical students, residents, fellows and faculty in the nuances of general internal medicine and primary care. Her dedication to education extends beyond traditional boundaries, and her leadership acumen is evident through her multifaceted contributions in various leadership positions at Stony Brook, including the CPMP Managed Care Contracting and Patient Experience Committees.

In her new position as Medical Director, Dr. Heinemann will provide physician oversight of Stony Brook Medicine's Clinically Integrated Network as well as the Stony Brook Medicine Accountable Care Organization. Dr. Heinemann will work closely with leaders from Stony Brook Medicine and other key partners to support and participate in the



governance of initiatives aimed at expanding clinical integration across Stony Brook Medicine.

Dr. Heinemann's extensive clinical background, along with her commitment to delivering high-quality healthcare offer the CIN the expertise and leadership necessary to achieve success as we continue to deliver on our core values of integrity, compassion, accountability, respect and excellence while at the same time transforming value-based care at Stony Brook Medicine.

- John M. Hutter, MBA, MS, FACHE, FACMPE, was recently appointed as the Executive Administrative Officer for Stony Brook Clinical Practice Management Plan (CPMP).

Having served over the years in multiple leadership positions throughout Stony Brook Medicine, John brings considerable financial and administrative expertise to this new role. Most recently, John has been serving as Executive Director for the Stony Brook Medicine Clinically Integrated Network (CIN) and was instrumental in the development and success of the CIN, which includes the Stony Brook Accountable Care Organization (ACO), as well as recently formed programs such as Ambulatory Care Management and the Post-Acute Care Collaborative. Through his leadership, his team has been able to bring in more than \$25 million to SBM through the ACO and managed care incentives while saving Medicare over \$35 million. This has been accomplished through improved efficiencies, improved quality and decreased costs of care.

John earned his MBA and MS in healthcare management from Saint Joseph's College and currently holds fellowships with the American College of Healthcare Executives and the American College of Medical Practice Executives. Throughout his career, John's healthcare journey included positions in hospital and medical practice operations, strategic planning, revenue cycle and value-based care. His multidisciplinary background and experience provided him with the diverse set of skills necessary to serve in this new role.

In this new position, John will be responsible for the administrative, financial and strategic matters related to CPMP. He will be working closely with Anne Walsh-Feeks, the Assistant Dean and Chief Operating Officer for Ambulatory Operations, as well as other leaders across Stony Brook Medicine. He will lead the coordinated, enterprise-wide delivery of system-level strategies to improve the financial well-being of the physician practices while ensuring the success of the tripartite mission of SBM. This will include the integration of services across the physician practices and academic



departments, allowing for optimized efficiencies and improved continuity across the clinical and academic missions.

- Sophie McHeffrey, MPH was appointed as the Assistant Director of Patient Experience. Sophie joined Stony Brook Medicine in 2015 as a member of the administrative support team for Stony Brook Children's Hospital Nursing and Operations.

In 2020, she went on to serve as a Patient Experience Data Analyst and helped design and build our inaugural Patient Experience tableau dashboards, Press Ganey patient survey tool alignment and implemented our patient compliment and key driver reports. As Patient Experience Project Manager since 2023, Sophie has been responsible for managing and executing key patient experience projects, including our inpatient and ED Patient Experience Quality Teams, our Joint Commission Health Equity certification as well as our iRound platform and Patient Experience Improvement Award.

Sophie has a Bachelor of Science in Health Science from Boston University and a Master's degree in public health from Boston University School of Public Health. She has continuously demonstrated commitment to improving the care of our patients, staff and community while working collaboratively with all levels of our organization to meet Stony Brook Medicine's strategic goals.

- Noemi Valerio-Mansibang, RN, CIC, CPHQ, has been appointed as the Assistant Director of Infection Prevention and Control.

Noemi brings a wealth of experience in nursing education, medical-surgical nursing, and infection control. Before immigrating to the U.S. in 2004, she was an instructor in the BS Nursing program at the University of the City of Manila. She then worked in the medical-surgical/telemetry unit at SUNY Downstate Medical Center before transitioning into infection control in 2013 at Long Island Developmental Disabilities Service Office, where she oversaw infection prevention efforts for 87 group homes in Nassau and Suffolk counties.

Since joining the SBUH Healthcare Epidemiology Department in 2016 as a Nurse Epidemiologist, Noemi has been instrumental in infection prevention efforts across various units, including the surgical and neurosurgical ICU, medicine, neurology, psychiatry, burn, and mother-baby units. Her dedication to professional growth is evident in her recent achievement of a Master of Arts in Adult Education from SUNY Empire State University and her certification as a Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality (CPHQ).



**OPERATIONAL UPDATES:**

**Emergency Medicine:**

- Emergency Medicine physician Dr. Samita Heslin was invited to speak at an international conference sponsored by the American College of Emergency Physician and the European Society for Emergency Medicine. The effort served as part of our journey to becoming accredited as a Geriatric Gold Level 1 Emergency Department. Dr. Heslin spoke as the representative from the United States and a colleague from Basel Hospital in Switzerland represented Europe.
- In preparation for the opening of the Stony Brook East Hampton Emergency Department our EMS leadership team has been meeting with the local EMS agencies on the South Fork. Targeted education has been provided which focuses on appropriate transport of patients in need of clinical services provided by the East Hampton Emergency Department versus those that should bypass East Hampton and be transported to Stony Brook Southampton Hospital (i.e. Heart attack, stroke and trauma patients).

**Heart Institute:**

- On April 1, SBUH cardiology attending faculty began providing cardiology inpatient and emergency room services coverage and cardiac testing at Stony Brook Eastern Long Island Hospital (SBELIH). The team operationalized echocardiography and electrocardiogram (EKG) testing with SBM Information Technology integration for inpatients at SBELIH. The cardiology attendings will provide weekday daytime consultative coverage and on- call/virtual coverage on the off-shifts and weekends.
- Stony Brook Medicine's electrophysiology (EP) service began using Pulsed Field Ablation (PFA) technology for complex atrial fibrillation (AF). This new technology allows for a reduction in procedure times and decreased scheduling backlog improving throughput in the procedure labs.
- The Heart Institute clinical team facilitated a booth at the Spring Wellness Checkup event held at the Central Islip Court complex. The team provided clinical education, blood pressure and cholesterol screening and hands-on CPR demos to the local community.

**Neurosciences:**



- Stony Brook University Hospital received a 3-year recertification of our Level 4 Epilepsy Center for Adults, and a conditional 1-year certification as a Level 4 Center for Pediatrics. The National Association of Epilepsy Centers (NAEC) changed its process and split center certification by age, as it was formerly inclusive of all ages. This resulted in Stony Brook University Hospital filing two separate applications. Despite our limited pediatric surgical patients, we were granted a 1-year conditional certification, with additional time to meet volume requirements. The NAEC designation has a direct impact on our U.S. News & World Report ranking. The Pediatrics team (Neurology and Pediatrics) will collaborate to identify appropriate patients and reduce outmigration.
- Stony Brook University Hospital was awarded a \$10,000 grant from the American Parkinson Disease Association (APDA) which will help support our patients' engagement in exercise programs through a community partner called HopeFitness. The opportunity for our patients through HopeFitness was designed to model the programs available through our Southampton Parkinson's Disease Center east end affiliate, at a location closer to Stony Brook University Hospital, in Bohemia.
- Stony Brook Medicine continues to develop formal working relationships with school districts throughout Suffolk County. We have received commitment letters from four school districts, including East Hampton, Montauk, Southampton and Port Jefferson, with several more in the pipeline. The initiative initially focuses on both cognitive and behavioral health services, parent education, and professional development, and will progress to include a variety of other pediatric and family health services. Objectives include increasing top-of-mind perception of the Children's Hospital, improving access for patients/families, and supporting our communities.
- Stony Brook University Hospital received approval from the Office of Mental Health to pilot an age-range change on our children's psychiatric unit. The age range will be modified from 8 through 14 to 9 through 15. The change will help to better meet the demand we experience in our psychiatric emergency department and pediatric units. The pilot will begin immediately and, barring no unforeseen circumstances, an application to make the change permanent will be submitted to the Office of Mental Health.
- Stony Brook Eastern Long Island Hospital has received approval from the Office of Mental Health to open an integrated clinic within the Quannacut outpatient setting, currently serving those with addiction. This will enable Quannacut to serve individuals ages 14+ with a primary mental health diagnosis that do not also have a substance use disorder. This is a positive step forward in meeting community demand and is anticipated to open in the summer of this year.





**Ancillary/Support Services:**

- The Blood Bank is currently working on the configuration and implementation of the WellSky Blood Centers software. This program will replace the current HCLL Donor program for blood donor processing and management. The current program in use is no longer supported by the vendor. The WellSky Blood Centers program is a comprehensive solution designed to enhance safety and streamline operations for blood donor management. From donor recruitment and blood collection to manufacturing, testing, and distribution, this software oversees the complete product lifecycle within a single FDA 510(k)-cleared system.
- In a further effort to reduce expenses, monthly usage reports are distributed to all department heads which list items ordered from WB Mason. Utilizing this report, hospital leadership tracks stationary expenses and reviews the various types of items ordered by staff, which provides further internal controls.
- The Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND®) is an autonomous accrediting agency for education programs preparing students to begin careers as registered dietitians or dietetic technicians, registered. Programs meeting the ACEND Accreditation Standards are accredited by ACEND®. On April 7th, ACEND surveyors reviewed the Dietetic Internship Program at Stony Brook University and the Hospital for the purposes of renewing our certification to continue the Dietetic Internship program. Through interviews and data review the surveyors have expressed their appreciation for our program. A formal report will be distributed in approximately eight weeks.

**Patient Experience:**

- Roseanna Ryan presented at Stony Brook Medicine Programs of Distinction service line meetings, showing a reduction in complaints and grievances in the Medicine Service since December 2024 by leveraging proactive patient advocate rounds.
- Nicole Rossol, Chief Patient Experience Officer, participated in the HANYS Chief Experience Officer Collaborative which will be meeting on a quarterly basis to review data and best practices across New York State.
- In collaboration with Dr. Erin Hulfish and the Immediate Care launch, the Patient Experience team implemented a new Immediate Care Patient Experience Press Ganey survey that patients will receive by email or text. This survey will allow Stony Brook Medicine to obtain feedback on this new service and address any opportunities for improvement that are shared by those using these services.



- Chaplaincy held Ash Wednesday services this month and distributed ashes to over 1800 staff, patients, and families.
- A new employee of Language Services, Maria Aguilera, medical interpreter, has started as a replacement medical interpreter and will be working from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday.
- Nicole Rossol, Chief Patient Experience Officer and Sophie McHeffey, Assistant Director of Patient Experience, presented at the 7th Annual Quality Celebration with a multi-disciplinary team highlighting the improved rounding metrics for Nursing and The Environmental of Care Team using the iRound rounding platform.
- Nicole Rossol and Dr. Lindsey Schacter presented to over one thousand participants “Stony Brook Medicine Leading Physician and Nursing Teams to Success: Using Compassionate Connected Care to improve Communication” as part of a National Press Ganey Webinar Series.
- In celebration of Patient Experience Week, Dr. Wertheim sat down with Nicole Rossol in an episode of his Morning Grounds, Morning Rounds which airs throughout the Stony Brook Medicine system. The two discussed how meaningful, person-centered experience is just as essential as high-quality clinical care and how it is reflected in every part of our patient experience strategy.