



NEWS



Call for Abstracts: 2026 William C. Wood Research Symposium

The Annual William C. Wood Research Symposium showcases the basic and clinical science research of all trainees in the Emory Department of Surgery.

Participation is open to medical students, residents, and fellows; trainees in a dedicated laboratory rotation are encouraged to submit their research and attend the symposium.

The 2026 Symposium will be held on Thursday, April 30, 2026. The deadline for submissions is Friday, February 6, 2026.

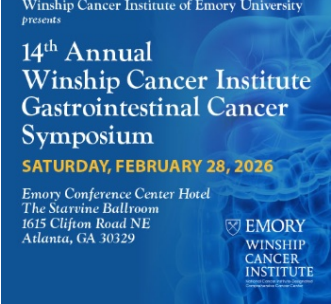
If you have any questions, please contact John Lyons (jdlyons@emory.edu) or Onkar Khullar (onkar.vohra.khullar@emory.edu).



Emory Bariatric Center Presents 2026 Inaugural Emory Obesity Summit

The Emory Bariatric Center is hosting an Obesity Summit on Friday, January 23, 2026 at the Emory Conference Center. The educational event will focus on MultiD multimodal obesity care management with didactics and panels. The keynote speaker will be Henry Ting from Delta.

[Register Here](#)



14th Annual Winship Cancer Institute Gastrointestinal Cancer Symposium

The 14th Annual Winship GI Cancer Symposium will be held on Saturday, February 28th at the Emory Conference Center Hotel. We have developed an excellent program with leaders in oncology from across the country. Registration is free for students and trainees.

This activity is intended for physicians, nurse practitioners, oncology nurses, physician assistants, and pharmacists. Trainees at all levels are highly encouraged to attend.

For more information, please contact Janice Thomas at janice.thomas@emory.edu.

[Register Here](#)



Emory Burn Surgery Subtrack Approved by AAST

The Emory burns surgery subtrack has been officially approved by the American Association for the Surgery of Trauma (AAST). The burn surgery subtrack is sponsored in conjunction with the American Burn Association and any participating Emory ACS fellow will receive a certificate upon completion of the fellowship.

With the approval from the AAST, Emory has officially become the first burns subtrack in the country.



Emory Healthcare Surgeons Complete First Patient Case in ARISE III Clinical Trial

Drs. Leshnower, Duwayri, and Zurcher completed the first patient case in the ARISE III clinical trial to treat a life-threatening heart condition, called acute type A aortic dissection, using an investigational ascending stent graft. The minimally invasive procedure is considered more suitable for higher risk populations versus an open-heart surgery to repair the dissection or tear.

The ARISE III trial is a prospective, multicenter, non-randomized pivotal study approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to assess the safety and effectiveness of the investigational Gore Ascending Stent Graft in patients with acute Type A aortic dissections who are considered high risk for conventional surgery.

APPOINTMENTS



Dr. Elizabeth Benjamin Appointed Chief for Division of Acute Care Surgery

Elizabeth Benjamin, MD, was appointed as inaugural division chief for the newly created Division of Acute Care Surgery in November. Within in her new role, Dr. Benjamin will lead and integrate clinical, educational, and research operations across trauma, burn, emergency general surgery, and critical care, guiding the continued growth of Acute Care Surgery services.

Dr. Benjamin joined Emory in 2020 and currently serves as a professor of surgery and the trauma medical director at Grady Memorial Hospital.



Dr. Patrick Sullivan Named Interim Chief for Division of Colorectal Surgery

Patrick Sullivan, MD, FACS, FASCRS, has been appointed Interim Division Chief of Colorectal Surgery in the Department of Surgery.

Dr. Sullivan is a professor of surgery in the Division of Colorectal Surgery and a long-standing member of the Emory Winship Cancer Institute since 2011. He is also the medical director of Emory's ERAS and Standardization of Colorectal Perioperative Care Program, chief quality officer for the Division of Colorectal Surgery, and chair of the Cancer Committee for the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer at Winship. He is an experienced colorectal surgeon with a nationally recognized clinical and academic focus on rectal cancer, enhanced recovery after surgery (ERAS), and quality-driven surgical care.

Division of Breast Surgery Announces New Advanced Practice Providers

The Division of Breast Surgery has announced the appointment of four new advanced practice providers. The new providers will assist the faculty and team of the Division of Breast Surgery. Please join us in welcoming the new team.



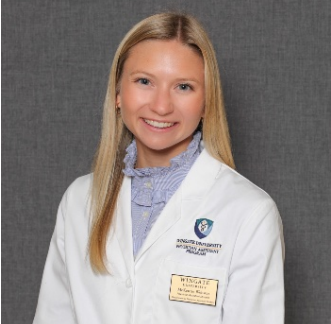
Lacey King, PA

We are pleased to announce that Lacey King has been named Lead for the Advanced Practice Provider (APP) team in the Division of Breast Surgery. In this role, Lacey will provide clinical leadership and support for our APP team while continuing her strong commitment to patient-centered care. Please join us in congratulating Lacey on this well-deserved role.



Megan Luedtke, PA-C

Megan brings four years of experience in breast surgery from Advocate Christ Medical Center in Oak Lawn, Illinois, where she developed strong expertise in patient care, surgical assistance, and post-operative management. She is deeply committed to providing compassionate, patient-centered care and is excited to support patients throughout their surgical experience. Megan will support Dr. Tari King and Monica Rizzo in their clinical practices.



McKenzie Webster, DMSc, PA-C

McKenzie joins us after beginning her career in primary care, where she developed a strong foundation in comprehensive patient care and a deep commitment to women's health. With a particular interest in breast health, she is excited to support patients throughout every step of their surgical journey with compassion and expertise. She will support Dr. Clara Farley in her clinical practice.



Christina Palau Vaccari, MS, AGNP-C, CWON, RN

Christina is a nurse practitioner with extensive experience in wound and ostomy care, bringing a strong foundation in patient-centered care and clinical assessment. She is currently transitioning into a role within the Benign and High-Risk Breast Clinic, with a focus on breast cancer prevention, early detection, patient education, and collaborative care to support patients across the breast health continuum.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION



Dr. Victoria Teodorescu Chosen as ASDIN's 2026 Beathard Award Recipient

Victoria Teodorescu, MD, was chosen as the 2026 recipient of the American Society of Diagnostic and Interventional Nephrology's (ASDIN) Beathard Award. The Beathard Award was created in 2007 and is presented in recognition of teaching excellence, scholarly activity, and clinical excellence. Dr. Teodorescu is the first female surgeon to receive the award.

Dr. Teodorescu will be presented the award at ASDIN's 22nd Annual Scientific Meeting at the WDW Swan Resort in Lake Buena Vista, Florida on Saturday, February 21, 2026.

The mission of ASDIN is to promote excellence in dialysis access care to improve outcomes for patients with kidney disease.

NEW FACULTY



Mateo Villa, MD

Assistant Professor, Division of General & GI Surgery, Department of Surgery

Dr. Mateo Villa is a double board-certified general and critical care surgeon who completed his medical training at the Medical College of Georgia in 2015. He went on to pursue general surgery residency at HCA Kendall Hospital in Miami, graduating in 2024, where he distinguished himself through strong clinical performance and leadership in high-acuity surgical care. He continued his advanced training at HCA Kendall, completing a Surgical Critical Care Fellowship in 2025 with a focus on complex, critically ill surgical and trauma patients.

Dr. Villa's clinical interests include robotic surgery and the operative management of common and complex general surgical diseases, including gallbladder disease, diverticulitis, and appendicitis.



Kerry-Ann Mitchell, MD, PhD, FACS

Assistant Professor, Division of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, Department of Surgery

Dr. Kerry-Ann Mitchell is a distinguished surgeon-scientist specializing in Neuroplastic Surgery, with expertise in complex scalp and skull deformities resulting from neurosurgical procedures, trauma, cancer, and neurological disorders such as epilepsy. She joined Emory University as an assistant professor for the Division of Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery, with a secondary appointment in the Department of Neurosurgery.

Dr. Mitchell received a PhD at the University of Utah and her MD at Stanford University School of Medicine. She is excited to bring her expertise to Emory University, where she aims to advance the field of neuroplastic surgery and expand its impact on patient care and research.

THE DEPARTMENT OF SURGERY CENTENNIAL



The William C. Wood Endowed Fund

The William C. Wood Endowed Fund has been established as part of the 100th anniversary of the Department of Surgery, and to honor Dr. Wood.

In honoring Dr. Wood's passion for surgical education, with this fund, we support the next generation of surgeons on their way to excellence. We invite you to join the leadership of the Emory Department of Surgery in commemorating the remarkable impact he had on the world of surgery, both locally, nationally, and internationally.

[Donate to the Wood Fund](#)

