



# UCSF Department of Medicine

## ZUCKERBERG SAN FRANCISCO GENERAL

### Celebrating Excellence: 2025 ZSFG Department of Medicine Faculty Awards



ZSFG Medicine Award Recipients, first row, left to right: Marlene Martin, MD, Leslie Suen, MD, Elaine Dekker, RN, Anne Rosenthal, MD, Sandra Moody, MD. Back row: Beth Harleman (Chair of Selection Committee), Cody Cichowitz, MD, Elizabeth Abbs, MD, Alicia Fernandez, MD, Mary Gray, MD, Vanessa Thompson, MD, Lurit Bepo, MD, Lisa Ochoa-Frongia, MD, Seth Goldman, MD, Neil Powe (Chief of Medicine).

The Department of Medicine at Zuckerberg San Francisco General recognizes and celebrates our talented, innovative, and dedicated members through the 2025 ZSFG Medicine Service Awards. With nominations informed by peers, these awards acknowledge accomplishments in many dimensions and importantly express gratitude for faculty commitment to the department and hospital's goals.

#### John Murray, MD Award for Excellence in Internal Medicine

This award is presented to a Medicine faculty member in recognition of academic excellence and dedication to the humanitarian mission of ZSFG.

#### Mary Gray, MD Cardiology

Dr. Mary Gray exemplifies the highest standards of academic excellence and humanitarian service at ZSFG. As a distinguished cardiologist, she provides outstanding care across multiple settings - from the Cardiac Care Unit to the ECHO lab and outpatient clinics. Her clinical expertise is matched by her extraordinary commitment to teaching and mentoring the next generation of physicians.

Colleagues consistently praise Dr. Gray's remarkable availability and thoughtful guidance. She is known for not only providing timely advice but also following up to ensure positive outcomes. As a physician leader in risk management, she has made significant

contributions to patient safety and quality improvement across the campus.

Dr. Gray's impact extends beyond individual patient care through her dedication to teaching medical students, residents, and cardiology fellows. Her approach combines clinical excellence with ZSFG's humanitarian values, making her an outstanding role model for faculty and trainees alike. Her ability over many years to lift up others while delivering exceptional patient care embodies the spirit of the John Murray Award.



### Care Experience Award

This award is given to a faculty member at the Assistant Professor level and recognizes dedication to the care experience, respect for patients, and shared decision-making to meet patients' needs.

#### Lurit Bepo, MD Hospital Medicine

Dr. Lurit Bepo exemplifies the highest standards of patient-centered care through her unique combination of internal medicine and addiction medicine expertise. Her warm, compassionate approach, coupled with clinical excellence, has made her an outstanding addition to ZSFG's mission of providing exceptional care to all patients.



Despite being early in her career, Dr. Bepo has demonstrated remarkable initiative and versatility. She has provided extensive clinical service across multiple settings, including

the Resident Inpatient Service (RIS), Faculty Inpatient Service (FIS), and Richard Fine People's Clinic (RFPC). Most notably, she identified a crucial gap in patient care and responded by founding an ambulatory procedures clinic, improving access to essential medical procedures for our vulnerable patient population.

Dr. Bepo's commitment to excellence extends beyond direct patient care through her leadership of SFPC resident journal clubs, contributing to both medical education and evidence-based practice. Her "can-do" energy and dedication to respectful, comprehensive patient care make her a worthy recipient of the Care Experience Award.

### Clinical Innovator Award

This award is presented to a person who has developed and implemented an innovative tool, process, or pathway for care that has had an impact on operations, efficiency or documentation.

#### Seth Goldman, MD Hospital Medicine

Dr. Seth Goldman has distinguished himself through his transformative work in healthcare information technology (IT) at ZSFG. His innovative approach to improving hospital systems has enhanced operations across multiple domains of patient care. Through his leadership in IT initiatives, Dr. Goldman has successfully created and implemented processes that have strengthened communication between staff members and streamlined healthcare delivery.

Beyond his direct contributions to system improvement, Dr. Goldman has demonstrated a commitment to sustainability through mentorship, helping guide others in their quality improvement and project leadership endeavors. His ability to drive partnerships and create lasting positive change exemplifies the spirit of clinical innovation at ZSFG.



### Distinction in Medical Education Award

This award recognizes a faculty member who has advanced medical education at ZSFG through exceptional leadership, curricular innovation, and mentorship of trainees.

#### Lisa Ochoa-Frongia, MD General Internal Medicine

Dr. Lisa Ochoa-Frongia has distinguished herself as an exceptional medical educator through her innovative approach to teaching and curriculum development. As an expert preceptor, she



excels in one-on-one resident education, skillfully guiding trainees in developing both clinical expertise and communication skills essential for serving culturally and economically diverse populations.

Her groundbreaking curriculum, which has gained national recognition at the Society for General Internal Medicine, has revolutionized how residents approach mental health care. The comprehensive program addresses depression, anxiety, personality disorders, and psychotic disorders through both didactic and experiential learning. Dr. Ochoa-Frongia has assembled an impressive array of expert speakers covering crucial areas including psychiatry, street medicine, immigration health, trauma-informed care, and gender diversity.

Known for her kind and gracious demeanor, Dr. Ochoa-Frongia creates a supportive learning environment that puts trainees at ease while challenging them to grow professionally. Her dedication to medical education has significantly enhanced residents' ability to provide comprehensive care to our diverse patient population.

#### Henry F. Chambers, MD Medicine Subspecialty Consultant Award

This award recognizes an outstanding subspecialty faculty member who exemplifies the contributions of longtime Infectious Disease specialist Henry (Chip) Chambers.

#### Sandra Moody, MD Hospital Medicine

Dr. Sandra Moody has transformed palliative care services at ZSFG through her exceptional leadership and innovative approach to patient care. As Director of the Palliative Care Service, she has successfully relaunched and rebuilt the program, creating a robust team dedicated to providing essential end-of-life and supportive care to our most vulnerable patients.



Her vision for comprehensive palliative care led to the co-founding of the pioneering Palliative Care Nurse Liaison Program, an initiative that has significantly enhanced palliative care delivery



throughout the hospital. This innovative program demonstrates Dr. Moody's commitment to both patient care and staff support, ensuring that palliative services are readily accessible across all hospital units.

Dr. Moody exemplifies the consultative excellence honored by this award, continuing the tradition of outstanding service established by Dr. Chip Chambers.

#### ZSFG Performance/Quality Improvement Award

This award recognizes the exemplary commitment to improve areas of performance at ZSFG, including quality, efficiency, and access.

#### Anne Rosenthal, MD General Internal Medicine

Dr. Anne Rosenthal has demonstrated exceptional leadership in quality improvement at ZSFG, particularly through her role as the immediate past Medical Director of Richard Fine People's Clinic (RFPC). Her commitment to excellence in patient care is reflected in her comprehensive approach to quality improvement, which seamlessly integrates health equity into clinical metrics for cancer screening, diabetes control, and hypertension management.



During the challenging aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, Dr. Rosenthal's leadership was instrumental in rapidly improving clinic performance metrics that had declined. Her

dedication to advancing quality improvement extends beyond direct patient care through her significant contributions to the resident QI curriculum and her mentorship of junior faculty interested in QI work and teaching.

As a humble and effective leader, Dr. Rosenthal has navigated challenging times with grace and equanimity. Her work in enhancing the Health Systems and Clinical Microsystems (HSCM) curriculum demonstrates her commitment

to developing the next generation of quality improvement leaders. Her ability to champion meaningful change while fostering collaboration exemplifies the highest standards of performance improvement at ZSFG.

#### Outstanding Early Career Investigator Award

This award recognizes a research faculty member at assistant professor level for demonstrating exceptional research productivity.

#### Leslie Suen, MD General Internal Medicine

Dr. Leslie Suen has emerged as a national leader in addiction medicine research, demonstrating exceptional scholarly productivity and impact early in her career. Her groundbreaking work during the COVID-19 pandemic proved instrumental in maintaining expanded access to methadone treatment, showcasing her ability to translate research into meaningful policy change.

As one of the most prolific addiction medicine researchers at UCSF, Dr. Suen employs both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to address critical questions in the field. Her versatile approach to research, combined with her talent for coalition building, has established her as a go-to expert in addiction medicine nationally.



What sets Dr. Suen apart is not just her research excellence, but her ability to drive societal change through thoughtful advocacy. Her commitment to teaching and mentoring ensures that her impact extends beyond her own investigations to inspire and guide the next generation of researchers. As a project leader and collaborator, she exemplifies the innovative spirit that drives research excellence at ZSFG.

#### Clinical Fellow Award

This award recognizes a Department of Medicine clinical fellow who strongly

embodies the mission to provide high quality and compassionate care to vulnerable and underserved patients and a dedication to the eradication of disparities in health and healthcare.

#### Cody Cichowitz, MD Cardiology

Dr. Cody Cichowitz exemplifies ZSFG's mission through his exceptional commitment to providing equitable, high-quality cardiovascular care to underserved populations. His dedication to health equity, shaped by his early experiences working with low-income communities in Baltimore and research efforts in Sub-Saharan Africa, has made him a standout fellow in the Cardiology division.



Dr. Cichowitz's impact is particularly evident in his ability to translate complex cardiology concepts into accessible information, ensuring that all patients receive comprehensive care regardless of their socioeconomic status or health literacy level. Residents consistently praise his exceptional teaching abilities and commitment to patient care, with one noting his "invaluable teaching and commitment to health equity."

What truly sets Dr. Cichowitz apart is his holistic approach to medical education and patient care. Colleagues value his presence on service not only for his clinical expertise but also for his dedication to nurturing the growth of students, residents, and fellow physicians while maintaining focus on compassionate patient care. His commitment to both excellence and humanity in medicine makes him an outstanding embodiment of ZSFG's mission.

#### Mentoring Award

This award is given in recognition of exemplary contributions in mentoring students, postgraduate trainees or faculty members. Mentoring achievements may pertain to clinical, educational or research activities.

**Alicia Fernandez, MD**  
General Internal Medicine

Dr. Alicia Fernandez has distinguished herself as an exceptional mentor whose influence spans the entire academic medicine pipeline, from college students to senior faculty. Her expertise in Latino health, workforce development, language barriers, and chronic disease management has made her an invaluable mentor across multiple domains of medicine.

Dr. Fernandez's commitment to mentorship is evident in the numerous programs she has created and led. These include SF-BUILD for college students, UCSF PROF-PATH for medical students, and the RISE and FUEGO programs for faculty development. Through these initiatives, she has built sustainable pathways for developing diverse healthcare leaders at all career stages.

Her mentorship extends from the classroom to the clinical setting, where she guides students and residents on the wards and in clinic. Dr. Fernandez's comprehensive approach to mentoring has helped shape the next generation of healthcare professionals while advancing health equity in medical education and patient care.



she devotes countless unpaid hours to advancing addiction medicine education and training at ZSFG.

Her commitment is particularly evident in her work with the addiction medicine fellowship program, where she precepts fellows during her own clinic hours and coordinates the comprehensive addiction medicine chronic pain curriculum. Dr. Abbs further demonstrates her dedication by serving multiple weeks annually on the addiction consult service, all on a volunteer basis.



What sets Dr. Abbs apart is not just her generous contribution of time, but the exceptional quality of her mentorship. Colleagues praise her wisdom, kindness, and willingness to handle administrative tasks so learners can focus on their education. Her constant availability and supportive approach make her an invaluable resource for trainees and a worthy recipient of an award that honors the memory of Dr. Jane Bailowitz's service to ZSFG.

**Professional Altruism Award**

This award is given annually to recognize a faculty member who embodies the humility, empathy, and courage as an unsung hero, who consistently demonstrates selfless collaboration and a commitment to the well-being of their colleagues.

**Vanessa Thompson, MD**  
General Internal Medicine

Dr. Vanessa Thompson exemplifies the spirit of the "unsung hero" through her selfless dedication to faculty development and well-being across ZSFG and UCSF. Known affectionately as "Nessy," she has made lasting contributions to both the Division of General Internal Medicine and Division of Hospital Medicine through her commitment to clinician educator wellness and mentorship.

Dr. Thompson's impact is particularly evident

in her leadership of faculty recruitment efforts, where she has successfully attracted diverse, highly sought-after talent to the department. Her skillful organization of GIM faculty retreats has strengthened departmental cohesion and community. Colleagues praise her ability to speak truth with clarity while remaining attentive to others' needs, a quality she has demonstrated throughout her career at ZSFG.

Her approach to service is characterized by humility and genuine concern for her colleagues' well-being. Dr. Thompson's consistent dedication to supporting others while working behind the scenes makes her the embodiment of professional altruism.



**Robert Lull, MD Non-Internal Medicine Consultant Award**

This award was named in memory of Robert Lull, longtime Chief of Nuclear Medicine and honors faculty in a specialty other than Internal Medicine for excellence in teaching and patient consultation.

**Elaine Dekker, RN**  
Infection Control and Prevention

For nearly two decades, Elaine Dekker has served as an invaluable resource to the ZSFG community as Program Manager for Infection Control and Prevention. Her exceptional expertise and unfailing availability have made her an indispensable consultant to physicians, nurses, environmental services staff, and countless others across the hospital.



Ms. Dekker's impact extends far beyond her official role, as she has fielded thousands of queries about patient isolation, staff illness, outbreak prevention, and

**Jane Bailowitz, MD Volunteer Faculty Award**

This award recognizes the contributions to the Medicine Service of a volunteer faculty member, not directly or fully appointed in the Department of Medicine and honors the memory of Jane Bailowitz in recognition of her service to the Division of General Internal Medicine.

**Elizabeth Abbs, MD**  
Tom Waddell Urban Health Center

Dr. Elizabeth Abbs exemplifies the spirit of volunteer faculty service through her extraordinary dedication to medical education and patient care. While maintaining her role as a full-time primary care physician at Tom Waddell,



complex protocols. Her accessibility during nights, weekends, and holidays, combined with her gracious approach to sharing knowledge, has made her a trusted advisor in challenging clinical situations. Her expertise in both implementing and de-implementing isolation precautions has helped streamline patient care while maintaining safety.

As a recognized expert who contributes to both local and national advancement of infection control practices, Ms. Dekker exemplifies the spirit of the Robert Lull Award through her dedication to teaching and consultation. Her eighteen-year commitment to supporting the ZSFG community with knowledge, guidance, and unfailing patience makes her an outstanding recipient of this honor.

### Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Award

This award is given annually to recognize a faculty member who embodies humility, empathy, and courage as an unsung hero, who consistently demonstrates selfless collaboration and a commitment to the well-being of their colleagues.

### Marlene Martin, MD Hospital Medicine

Dr. Marlene Martin exemplifies unwavering commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion through her innovative work in addiction medicine and community engagement. Her leadership has helped establish one of the nation's most comprehensive inpatient addiction consult services while ensuring culturally responsive care for the Latino community.

As a core faculty mentor in the "Puente" clinic, Dr. Martin facilitates crucial connections between Spanish-speaking providers, fellows, and patients. Her groundbreaking work with promotoras demonstrates her dedication to community-based healthcare education, empowering community members to share both medical and culturally concordant information about alcohol use disorder and withdrawal management.



What distinguishes Dr. Martin is her steadfast commitment to DEI principles regardless of the political climate, reflecting her authentic dedication to health equity. Her ability to bridge clinical excellence with community engagement while advancing opportunities for Spanish-speaking healthcare providers makes her an outstanding champion for diversity, equity, and inclusion at ZSFG.

Editors: Neil Powe, Leonard Telesca, Ali Cunningham

## SPOTLIGHT

### Congratulations!

Maura Temple has joined the ZSFG DOM central administration team as Clinical Operations Manager, effective May 19, 2025.

Maria Ruiz, MD, MPH is the 2025 recipient of the [Julius R. Krevans Award](#) from the ZSFG Vice Deans office.

