



# UCSF Department of Medicine ZUCKERBERG SAN FRANCISCO GENERAL

## Celebrating Excellence Across the Campus: 2026 ZSFG Department of Medicine Faculty Awards



ZSFG Medicine Award Recipients, from left to right: Beth Harleman, MD (Chair of Selection Committee), Harini Sarathy, MD, Anna Chodos, MD, MPH, Jamie Yao, MD, Niharika Dixit, MD, Kristin Slown, PharmD, BCCCP, BCPS, Colin Feuille, MD, Triveni DeFries, MD, MPH, Margot Kushel, MD, Oliver Bacon, MD, MPH, Luis Garcia, MD, MS, Neil Powe, MD, MPH, MBA (Chief of Medicine)

The mission of the Department of Medicine at Zuckerberg San Francisco General is to advance health by developing and supporting innovators in patient-centered care, scientific discovery, medical education and public policy. We aspire to provide the highest quality clinical care, be a leading engine of scientific discovery, be innovators in education and shape public policy to advance health. We value creativity, teamwork, communication, lifelong learning, a supportive work environment, and compassionate care. We recognize and celebrate our talented, innovative, and dedicated faculty through the 2026 ZSFG Medicine Service Awards. Informed by peer nominations, these awards acknowledge accomplishments across clinical care, education, research, mentorship, quality improvement, and

service. The awards exemplify how faculty and trainees across the ZSFG campus are committed to our mission and values.

### 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.

**Margot Kushel, MD**  
Division of Health and Society

Dr. Kushel is a nationally recognized leader

whose work has transformed understanding of the intersection between homelessness, health, and healthcare delivery. Through her leadership in research, policy, and clinical innovation, she has advanced evidence-based approaches to improving the health and well-being of individuals experiencing homelessness both locally and nationally.



Dr. Kushel's work has helped define the epidemiology of homelessness and informed



interventions including permanent supportive housing and integrated models of care that address both medical and social drivers of health. Her scholarship and advocacy have shaped policy discussions at the city, state, and national levels, elevating the importance of housing as a critical determinant of health.

At UCSF and ZSFG, Dr. Kushel has built programs and partnerships that improve care for vulnerable populations while mentoring the next generation of clinicians, researchers, and health equity leaders. She has unwavering commitment to compassionate care, rigorous scholarship, systems-level change and the humanitarian mission of ZSFG.

**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.

**Tessa Kaplan, MD**  
Division of Hospital Medicine

Dr. Kaplan exemplifies exceptional patient-centered care through her thoughtful, compassionate, and highly collaborative approach to medicine. As an early-career faculty member in the Division of Hospital Medicine, she is widely respected for her clinical judgment, attention to detail, and deep commitment to ensuring patients and families feel heard, informed, and supported throughout their care.



Colleagues consistently praise Dr. Kaplan’s ability to build trust with patients facing complex medical and social challenges. She approaches every interaction with humility, curiosity, and respect, prioritizing shared decision-making and individualized care plans even in high-

acuity clinical environments. Her dedication to communication extends to regularly engaging family members using interpreters when needed and partnering closely with nursing staff to support coordinated, compassionate care at the bedside.

In her role as interim clinical operations lead for the Division of Hospital Medicine, Dr. Kaplan has also demonstrated a remarkable ability to improve operational processes while maintaining a steadfast focus on the patient experience.

**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.

**Anna Chodos, MD, MPH**  
Division of General Internal Medicine

Dr. Chodos has been a pioneering leader in geriatric medicine and dementia care whose innovative programs have transformed care delivery for patients with cognitive impairment across San Francisco and beyond. In 2012, she founded the SF General Geriatric Neurocognitive Clinic, a multidisciplinary program that brought together geriatrics, neurology, pharmacy, social work, and neuropsychology to provide comprehensive, patient-centered evaluations for older adults experiencing cognitive decline.



Through this clinic, Dr. Chodos championed culturally responsive neuropsychological evaluation and interdisciplinary collaboration, ensuring equitable access to evidence-based dementia care for patients from diverse educational, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds. Her leadership has helped establish sustainable systems of support for patients and families

navigating complex neurodegenerative diseases. Dr. Chodos later expanded her impact through leadership of the statewide Dementia Care Aware initiative, which developed scalable pathways for dementia screening, diagnostic evaluation, brain health counseling, and linkage to community resources within primary care settings. More recently, she launched the GUIDE dementia care navigation program for San Francisco County, further strengthening support for patients and caregivers.

Her bold vision, collaborative leadership, and unwavering dedication to improving dementia care have brought state-of-the-art services to vulnerable populations at ZSFG and throughout California.

**Outstanding Junior Investigator Award**

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

**Andrew Kerkhoff, MD, PhD, MS**  
Division of HIV, Infectious Diseases, and Global Medicine

Dr. Kerkhoff is an outstanding physician-scientist whose research has significantly advanced the fields of tuberculosis, HIV, diagnostics, and implementation science. As an Assistant Professor in the Division of HIV, Infectious Diseases, and Global Medicine, he has rapidly established himself as an international leader in strategies to improve TB diagnosis, prevention, and treatment delivery in resource-limited settings.



Dr. Kerkhoff’s work spans epidemiology, implementation science, and clinical research, with a particular focus on improving outcomes for patients with TB and HIV in Zambia and other high-burden settings. His scholarship

has generated important insights into disease transmission, patient-centered diagnostic approaches, and strategies to maximize treatment effectiveness and vaccine readiness. His collaborations with the Centre for Infectious Disease Research in Zambia and the Zambian Ministry of Health have strengthened the translation of research findings into public health policy and practice.

Despite being early in his faculty career, Dr. Kerkhoff has demonstrated extraordinary scholarly productivity, with more than 120 publications, major grant funding including a Gates Foundation award, and an NIH K23 career development award. He is also recognized as an emerging leader in implementation science education and mentorship, supporting trainees both at UCSF and internationally.

Colleagues consistently describe Dr. Kerkhoff as thoughtful, collaborative, innovative, and deeply committed to global health equity. He has an impactful research program and is dedicated to mentorship.

**Professional Altruism 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 colleagues.

**Niharika Dixit, MD**  
Division of Hematology/Oncology

Dr. Dixit exemplifies professional altruism through her quiet, sustained dedication to patients, trainees, and colleagues within the Division of Hematology and Oncology. As leader of the breast cancer program at ZSFG, she has worked tirelessly to build a program that



prioritizes not only high-quality oncologic care, but also survivorship support, patient navigation, and equitable access to services for vulnerable populations.

Her commitment to compassionate and comprehensive care has strengthened both her clinic and the broader division, helping establish a culture that centers dignity, advocacy, and patient-centered care. Colleagues consistently recognize her humility, generosity, and willingness to support others behind the scenes without seeking recognition.

In addition to her clinical leadership, Dr. Dixit is deeply committed to education and mentorship. She has played a central role in training fellows and advanced practice clinicians while advancing research focused on improving cancer navigation and survivorship outcomes.

Through her steady leadership, collaborative spirit, and unwavering dedication to the well-being of patients and colleagues alike, Dr. Dixit embodies the very definition of an unsung hero.

**Henry F. (Chip) 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.

**Colin Feuille, MD**  
Division of Gastroenterology

Dr. Feuille is an exceptional gastroenterologist and hepatology consultant whose diagnostic rigor, intellectual curiosity, and patient-centered approach have made him an invaluable resource at ZSFG. Colleagues consistently praise his thoughtful and systematic approach to complex gastrointestinal and liver disease,



noting his dedication to understanding the full clinical picture rather than focusing narrowly on procedural care.

As a consultant, Dr. Feuille brings deep expertise and collaborative problem-solving to challenging cases, helping teams navigate complicated diagnostic and therapeutic decisions with clarity and precision. He is particularly recognized for his attentiveness to the psychosocial realities affecting many patients at ZSFG and for tailoring recommendations in ways that are both evidence-based and individualized.

His genuine curiosity, humility, and commitment to high-quality consultation exemplify the tradition of excellence.

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

This award honors faculty in a specialty other than Internal Medicine for excellence in teaching and patient consultation.

**Kristin Slown, PharmD, BCCCP, BCPS**  
Pharmacy Services

Dr. Slown has made extraordinary contributions to patient care, education, and systems improvement at ZSFG through her longstanding work as an ICU pharmacist and clinical educator. For more than a decade, she has served as a trusted partner to internal medicine teams, residents, and critical care clinicians, consistently bringing expertise, professionalism, and a commitment to evidence-based care.



Dr. Slown is widely recognized for her role as a teacher and advocate for patients. She is deeply engaged in resident education during ICU rotations, helping trainees understand evolving evidence and complex medication

management decisions. Colleagues value her thoughtful approach to clinical questions and her willingness to seek out and share the latest literature to support optimal patient care.

Beyond her direct clinical work, Dr. Slown has led important institutional initiatives to improve care delivery. As co-chair of the Addiction Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee, she has helped develop protocols and educational initiatives related to alcohol withdrawal management, opioid treatment, and methadone prescribing at discharge. Her leadership has had a meaningful impact on patient safety and quality of care across the hospital.

Dr. Slown's expertise, collaborative spirit, and dedication to education and consultation are magnificent.

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**Performance (Quality) Improvement Award**

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

**Jamie Yao, MD**  
Division of Hospital Medicine



Dr. Yao has demonstrated exceptional leadership in quality improvement through innovative projects that have enhanced patient safety, operational efficiency, and the inpatient healing environment

at ZSFG. Her work reflects a rare ability to combine systems-level thinking with meaningful mentorship and frontline clinical insight.

Among her many contributions, Dr. Yao led a multidisciplinary initiative focused on improving sleep quality for hospitalized patients. Working closely with learners and colleagues, she helped implement sustainable Epic-based changes

including sleep-promoting vital sign protocols and modified medication administration practices that are now integrated into routine inpatient care. She also partnered with trainees to distribute patient-centered sleep kits for older adults on the ACE unit, demonstrating her commitment to practical and compassionate quality improvement.

Dr. Yao has also contributed to national efforts to improve diagnostic safety as one of three site leads for the Diagnostic Cross Check intervention in collaboration with academic medical centers across the country. Through diagnostic huddles following emergency response activations, her work has improved clinician satisfaction and influenced clinical decision-making in meaningful ways.

In addition to her systems improvement work, Dr. Yao is a dedicated educator and mentor who actively engages learners in quality improvement initiatives and fosters collaboration across disciplines. Her thoughtful leadership, creativity, and commitment to improving care delivery is outstanding.

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**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.

**Luis Garcia, MD, MS**  
Division of Hematology and Oncology

Dr. Garcia exemplifies compassionate, patient-centered subspecialty care through his outstanding work on the hematology and oncology consult service at ZSFG. Despite caring for a



highly complex and medically challenging patient population, he consistently approaches patients, families, and colleagues with professionalism, empathy, and thoughtfulness.

Dr. Garcia is recognized for going beyond the traditional role of a consultant by participating directly in goals-of-care discussions, communicating carefully with patients and families, and ensuring that treatment plans are clearly understood. His deep compassion for patients navigating cancer alongside significant medical and psychosocial challenges is evident in every aspect of his work.

In addition to his clinical excellence, Dr. Garcia is a dedicated educator who makes time to teach residents and medical students even during busy consult services. His tremendous commitment to patient care, education, and health equity is remarkable.

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**Jane Bailowitz, MD Volunteer Medicine 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.

**Oliver Bacon, MD, MPH**  
Division of HIV, Infectious Diseases, and Global Medicine

Dr. Bacon exemplifies the spirit of volunteer faculty service through his longstanding commitment to infectious diseases education and patient care at ZSFG. As Medical Director of City Clinic for the San Francisco Department of Public Health, he is recognized as an expert in infectious diseases, HIV, sexually transmitted infections, and public health practice.



For many years, Dr. Bacon has volunteered as an attending on the ZSFG Infectious Diseases consult service, contributing countless hours to patient care, trainee education, and interdisciplinary collaboration. Colleagues consistently describe him as rigorous, innovative, calm, and deeply committed to clinical excellence. Despite the intensity and complexity of consult service work, he approaches every case with thoughtful clinical judgment and generosity toward learners.

Dr. Bacon is also a gifted educator who receives outstanding evaluations from residents, fellows, and medical students. In addition to his teaching at ZSFG, he mentors UCSF infectious diseases fellows during rotations at City Clinic, where he provides exceptional instruction in sexually transmitted infections and public health-focused care.

His combination of humility, dedication, and enduring commitment is exceptional.

**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 colleagues and the advancement of equity and inclusion.

**Triveni DeFries, MD, MPH  
Division of General Internal Medicine**

Dr. Triveni DeFries has demonstrated extraordinary leadership and advocacy in advancing equitable care for refugees, immigrants, and individuals with substance use disorders. Through her work at UCSF and ZSFG, she has helped expand access to trauma-informed, human rights-focused



healthcare for some of the most vulnerable populations served by our community.

As co-director of the UCSF Human Rights Collaborative, Dr. DeFries leads programs that train clinicians to conduct forensic medical evaluations for individuals seeking asylum and protection following experiences of violence, persecution, and human rights abuses. She also co-founded the Asylum Medicine Training Initiative, helping build national capacity for clinicians to provide high-quality, trauma-informed documentation using the principles of the Istanbul Protocol.

Colleagues describe Dr. DeFries as a visionary and collaborative leader whose work bridges clinical care, education, advocacy, and social justice. Her efforts have strengthened partnerships between healthcare providers, legal advocates, and community organizations while expanding opportunities for clinicians to engage meaningfully in immigrant and refugee health.

Most recently, Dr. DeFries has focused on expanding the reach of this work through collaboration with community health workers, further advancing culturally responsive and community-centered models of care. Her dedication to equity, dignity, and human rights exemplifies the spirit of 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.

**Harini Sarathy, MD  
Division of Nephrology**

Dr. Sarathy is an outstanding clinician educator whose work has transformed education and multidisciplinary care for patients with advanced kidney disease at ZSFG. As Director of the Renal Plus Clinic, she has created a rich learning environment that brings together fellows, residents, medical students, pharmacists, palliative care trainees, nutritionists, nurses,

and advanced practice providers in collaborative patient-centered care.

Dr. Sarathy is deeply committed to preparing clinicians to care for culturally and linguistically diverse patients with chronic kidney disease and end-stage kidney disease. She recently developed an innovative interprofessional pre-clinic conference curriculum that integrates evidence-based learning with practical approaches to shared decision-making and longitudinal care planning for patients approaching kidney failure.

In addition to her clinical teaching, Dr. Sarathy has played a major role in advancing nephrology fellowship education at UCSF. She developed and now leads the UCSF Nephrology Fellowship ESKD elective, a longitudinal curriculum that includes landmark literature review, competency-based training, and hands-on experience in home dialysis care. Her leadership and educational innovation have been recognized nationally, including selection to the American Society of Nephrology Fostering Inclusivity in Dialysis Access leadership program.

Colleagues and trainees consistently praise Dr. Sarathy's professionalism, mentorship, and commitment to equity-focused education. Her creativity, collaborative leadership, and dedication to developing future kidney care clinicians are outstanding.



**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.

**Rebecca Brusca, MD, MPH  
Division of Hospital Medicine**

Dr. Brusca is an exceptional mentor whose approachable, thoughtful, and compassionate leadership has had a meaningful impact on trainees and junior faculty within the Division of Hospital Medicine. Colleagues consistently describe her as generous with both her time and emotional support, creating an environment where mentees feel valued, encouraged, and empowered to grow professionally.



Despite her extensive clinical and leadership experience, Dr. Brusca remains remarkably humble and accessible. She brings careful listening, thoughtful guidance, and genuine curiosity to each mentoring relationship, helping mentees navigate challenges while supporting their personal and professional development.

Her commitment to mentorship reflects the collaborative and humanistic culture of ZSFG.

**Julius R. Krevans Award**

This award was established in 1979 in honor of Dr. Julius R. Krevans and honors an intern from each department at ZSFG who exhibits clinical excellence, professionalism, and commitment to the patients of Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center while embodying the ZSFG mission to care for the underserved. ZSFG medical staff, chief residents, and UCSF medicine residents all contributed to the nominations of recipients.

**Christopher Huerta, MD, MPH  
Internal Medicine Residency Program**

Dr. Huerta has distinguished himself as an exceptional intern through his deep commitment to health equity, compassionate patient care, and unwavering dedication to the mission of ZSFG.



Colleagues consistently describe him as an outstanding physician and advocate whose commitment to serving historically marginalized and underserved communities has been evident long before the start of residency training.

Dr. Huerta is recognized for the thoughtful and patient-centered approach he brings to every clinical encounter. He works diligently to ensure that patients and families understand complex medical conditions and care plans, communicating with kindness, cultural humility, and careful attention to each patient's lived experience and perspective. His ability to build trust and create meaningful connections with patients reflects a maturity and professionalism far beyond his level of training.

In addition to his clinical excellence, Dr. Huerta demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the structural and systemic factors that shape health disparities. He is admired by peers and faculty alike as a thoughtful leader within Internal Medicine who consistently advocates for patients and elevates conversations about equity, access, and justice in healthcare.

Through his compassion, professionalism, and dedication to caring for vulnerable populations, Dr. Huerta embodies the values and legacy of ZSFG.

*Edited by-  
Neil Powe, Leonard Telesca, Ali Cunningham*

**SPOTLIGHT**

- **Brie Williams MD, MS**, has been selected as the 2026 recipient of the Claire D. Brindis Award for Community Engagement and Service in Health Policy Research
- **Jinoos Yazdany, MD, MPH**, has been selected as the 2026 recipient of the Harold S. Luft Award for Mentoring in Health Services and Health Policy Research
- **Ana Velazquez-Manana, MD**, received the 40 Under 40 in Cancer Award from the Association for Value-Based Cancer Care (AVBCC) and partner organizations
- **Neil Powe, MD, MPH, MBA**, has been announced as the 2026 recipient of the Uwe Reinhardt Distinguished Career Award from AcademyHealth
- **Niharika Dixit, MD**, and **Ana Velazquez, MD**, have both been announced as 2026 Fellows for the American Society of Clinical Oncology (FASCO).
- **Binh An Phan, MD**, has been selected as the 2026 recipients of the UCSF School of Medicine's Teaching Award for Clinical Faculty.





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