

University of Chicago

PAUL HODGES ALUMNI SOCIETY

MAINTAINING AND PERPETUATING SCHOLARLY DEDICATION TO THE RADIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

Newsletter

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Chairman's Update

August 2026



FY26 was another year of strong growth for our department. We performed **499,590 imaging exams**, exceeding our budget by **2%** and increasing overall volume by **7%** compared to the previous year. While our established locations continued to grow, much of this increase was driven by the second full year of operations at Crown Point, Indiana.

Supporting this growth has required significant investment in our workforce. During the year, we expanded staffing levels, more formally integrated technologist assistants into our workflows, and strengthened partnerships with technologist training programs to build a sustainable pipeline of future employees. Over the next several months, we expect to welcome **16 students** completing their clinical rotations with us. At the same time, we continue to actively recruit for approximately **30 open positions** in partnership with our Human Resources recruitment team.

Looking ahead, we submitted **24 capital requests** for FY27 funding consideration and are pleased to report that **18 projects received approval**. Several projects are already in the vendor evaluation phase.

In addition to these capital investments, two major expansion projects are being planned for **Orland Park**. To support continued growth in orthopedic services while maintaining timely access for other referring specialties, a **third X-ray suite** will be added. Additionally, space is now available for a **second CT scanner** on the second floor. This expansion will help meet the increasing demand for CT services at this location and improve patient access.

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Chairman's Update - Continued

August 2026



Several construction and renovation projects have recently been completed or remain underway across the department. Construction of the AbbVie Cancer Center is progressing well, and we anticipate the building will be substantially complete this fall. Installation of new imaging equipment is already underway, including two CT scanners, two MRI systems, Breast Imaging, X-ray, Ultrasound, and Theranostics capabilities. This project represents an exciting milestone for our department and our patients. It provides us with the opportunity to deploy some of the latest imaging technology available, further enhancing our ability to deliver exceptional, comprehensive care to our cancer patients.

Every day, we receive positive feedback from patients who recognize the compassion, professionalism, and exceptional care provided by our staff. Maintaining that high standard across every UChicago Medicine location remains one of our highest priorities. We are also excited to share that our **Same-Day Breast Biopsy Service** was recently featured in Radiology Business. Congratulations to everyone whose hard work made this national recognition possible.

I hope this newsletter highlights some of the many successes we've achieved together while also looking ahead to the exciting opportunities before us. Thank you for everything you do to make our department successful.

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FACULTY NEWS



Joseph Steiner, PhD, has been promoted to the rank of Associate Professor. Additionally, Dr. Steiner recently presented an invited lecture titled "Tailoring Imaging Physicist Residency Training for a Changing Clinical Landscape" at the 2026 American Association of Physicists in Medicine annual meeting.



Olga Pasternak-Wise, MD, has been promoted to the rank of Associate Professor in the School of Medicine Track recognizing her outstanding contributions to our missions of patient care, education, research, and service.

Dr. Pasternak-Wise was also recently featured in the RSNA News article: [Novel Approaches Boost Students' Exposure to Radiology](#). The article details how early, inclusive outreach helps students picture a future in radiology



Dr. Milica Medved, with Dr. Kathryn Mills (OB/GYN) as the co-PI, has been awarded the 2026 Gray Foundation Team Science Grant. This grant brings together researchers from Radiology, OB/GYN, and Hematology/Oncology, with \$1.5M in funding over three years.

The generous funding from the Gray Foundation will support development and implementation of integrated breast/ovarian MR imaging, accrual of a database of quantitative MR images of suspicious ovarian masses, and development of AI tools for ovarian cancer detection. This project will eventually lead to an affordable, practical ovarian cancer MRI screening program that is likely to reduce healthcare costs – initially for BRCA carriers, and eventually for all women at high risk for ovarian cancer.

Drs. Heather Whitney, Carla Harmath, and Greg Karczmar are other members of the Radiology Department contributing to this project. In addition, Dr. Milica Medved was awarded a \$3,000 BSD Values Career Development grant from the Warner Reynolds Endowment.

FACULTY NEWS



Welcome Jerry Loo, MD, Clinical Associate

Dr. Loo is a board-certified Diagnostic Radiologist with expertise in emergency, pediatric, and neuroradiology imaging. He completed his Diagnostic Radiology residency at Los Angeles County +USC Medical Center, followed by a Pediatric Radiology fellowship at UCLA, where he received advanced training in pediatric neuroradiology, musculoskeletal imaging, and cardiovascular imaging. He brings extensive experience interpreting a broad range of imaging studies and performing image-guided procedures across adult and pediatric populations.



Welcome Mehmet Er, MD, Assistant Professor Section of Neuroradiology

During his Neuroradiology fellowship at Rush University, Dr. Er developed advanced expertise in interpreting complex neuroimaging studies, including MRI, CT, and advanced imaging techniques such as diffusion tensor imaging (DTI) and perfusion imaging. His clinical work was complemented by active participation in multidisciplinary conferences, where he collaborated closely with neurosurgeons, neurologists, and oncologists to provide comprehensive patient care.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

D&I Faculty Spotlight: Randy Miles, MD, MPH
Chief of Breast Imaging
Director of Early Cancer Prevention
Interviewed by Dr. Carina Yang



1. Do you or your family (however you choose to define it—parents, significant other, etc.) have any specific cultural or family traditions you would be willing to share?

I grew up in a family that placed a strong emphasis on education, service, and helping others. One tradition that has stayed with me is making time to come together for family meals whenever possible, especially around holidays. It's less about the specific celebration and more about reconnecting, sharing stories, and supporting one another.

2. What compelled you to choose medicine? Radiology? Breast imaging?

I was drawn to medicine because it combines science, problem-solving, and the opportunity to make a meaningful difference in people's lives. Radiology appealed to me because it sits at the intersection of technology, innovation, and clinical decision-making. I enjoy the intellectual challenge of image interpretation and the ability to impact care across many specialties.

Breast imaging became a natural fit because it offers the opportunity to make a profound impact through the early detection of breast cancer. I'm particularly passionate about reducing disparities in breast cancer mortality and ensuring that every woman—regardless of her background, race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status—has access to high-quality, evidence-based breast care. The field also continues to lead innovation in personalized risk assessment, artificial intelligence, and screening strategies, making it an exciting field in which to improve outcomes at both the individual and population levels.

3. Can you describe barriers, if any, you had to overcome to achieve your current role in the field?

One of the greatest challenges has been balancing the competing demands of clinical practice, research, leadership, and public health initiatives. I've always wanted my work to extend beyond reading studies by advancing research that improves patient care and promotes health equity, but finding the time and resources to pursue those goals has required intentional prioritization and persistence. Those experiences have reinforced the importance of collaboration, mentorship, and building strong teams to achieve meaningful, lasting impact.

4. Do you have any D&I-specific ideas you would like to implement here, or something you found to be effective at your prior institution(s) you would like to describe?

I believe diversity and inclusion are strengthened by creating opportunities that foster long-term success. One area I'm particularly passionate about is mentoring and sponsoring students, trainees, and junior faculty from groups that have historically been underrepresented in radiology. Building a strong pipeline into our specialty through outreach, mentorship, research opportunities, and career development is essential to creating a workforce that better reflects the patients we serve. I'm also committed to advancing equitable access to breast imaging services. My research has focused on identifying and reducing disparities in screening and follow-up care, with the goal of ensuring that all patients have the opportunity to benefit from early detection.

5. What do you enjoy doing in your time off?

Outside of work, I enjoy traveling, biking, and trying new restaurants. I'm a big soccer fan and enjoy following Real Madrid—Jude Bellingham is my favorite player. I also look forward to playing fantasy football each NFL season. Most importantly, I value spending quality time with friends and family and building connections with others.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION



In celebration of Juneteenth, the Department of Radiology hosted renowned Chicago contemporary artist and 2022 MacArthur fellow Amanda Williams, for her talk entitled "Inclusions and Occlusions" at the Gordon Center for Integrative Science. She is most known for her "Color(ed) Theory" series of painted houses which were slated for demolition in the South Side Englewood neighborhood, "to mark the end of their existence": <https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/stories/colored-theory>.

Drs. Vanessa Peters and Carina Yang successfully garnered a UChicago Provost's Juneteenth Celebration Grant for the event, during which Ms. Williams introduced the audience to her artwork portfolio over the years, challenging views on color, space, and race and prompting reevaluation of our environments. Her presentation examined how creative practices can reveal disparities and inspire community potential, enhancing perspectives in art, design, and social justice. The audience was highly engaged and diverse, with the session culminating in a lively question and answer session with the artist. Participants were intrigued in her use of Prussian blue paint for her artwork, which she had recreated from George Washington Carver's patented recipe by UChicago chemists, and supported by UChicago's very own President Paul Alivasatos' lab (<https://news.uchicago.edu/story/chemistry-students-partner-artist-recreate-pigment-patented-george-washington-carver>).

We look forward to exploring her next exhibit later this summer, "Other Washingtons," a new public art intervention at the George Washington Monument in Washington Park exploring the contradictions of American founding narratives and their connections to Black history (<https://otherwashingtons.com/>).

2026 Fellowship Match



Breast Imaging Fellowship

- Sophie Cemaj, MD – University of Chicago
- Cassidy Dodson, MD – University of Chicago
- Katie Nguyen, MD – University of Chicago

Neuroradiology Fellowship

- Ida Azizkhanian, MD – UTMB Galveston
- Thomas Harkey, MD – University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences
- Daniel Martin, MD – USF Morsani College of Medicine
- Eric Pham, MD – University of Missouri–Kansas City

ALUMNI UPDATE



Abdul Khan, MD, RPVI, was featured in a medical podcast regarding the multidisciplinary component of neuroendocrine tumors and the use of liver-directed therapy. In this episode of the BackTable Tumor Board Podcast, Dr. Khan joins UCM Oncologist Dr. Chih-Yi Liao to discuss the structure of a multidisciplinary tumor board and how they approach decision-making for patients with neuroendocrine tumors. The conversation explores who benefits most from liver-directed therapy, optimal timing for intervention, and the importance of individualized treatment planning. The UCM Interventional Radiology department is highlighted as a robust center for treating neuroendocrine tumors.



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We like to share good news. And please, if you move or change your email, let us know so we can update your contact information and stay in touch.

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