

# Annual CRC RE@CH Award and Recognition Event

May 7th, 2024

The CRC RE@CH Award and Recognition Event honors the profession of clinical research and recognizes outstanding individuals who exemplify the qualities and values needed to excel at executing clinical research at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. We want to celebrate not only those who were nominated for the award, but all clinical research staff.

## Event Agenda

### **Welcome**

*Debbie Kawchak*

### **Opening Remarks**

*Richard Aplenc, MD, PhD, MSCE*

### **Presentation of Clinical Research Manager/Nurse Nominees**

*Eileen Ford*

### **CRC/Research Participant Keynote**

*Faith Alunni*

### **Presentation of CRC Nominees**

*Eileen Ford*

### **Announcement of CRC RE@CH Award Winners**

*Michele Toms*

### **Conclusion of Program and Reception**

## Overview of Nomination Process

The CRC RE@CH Nomination Subcommittee oversees the nomination process for this award. Nominations open in REDCap, and all CHOP principal investigators are eligible to nominate their clinical research staff who meet the criteria for the award. All clinical research staff must be in their role for a minimum of two years at CHOP and demonstrate skills in each of the award criteria:

- 1. Relationships with Patients, Families, and Staff**
- 2. Human Subjects Protection**
- 3. Regulatory Compliance and Data Integrity**
- 4. Leadership Skills**
- 5. Contributions as a Clinical Research Advocate for the Hospital and Research Institute**
- 6. Interpersonal Skills**

For this award, the term “clinical research” is intended to include research staff working in clinical, behavioral, injury prevention, community, and school-based research programs. Research nurses and program managers are eligible provided they work in all skill areas outlined above. In the nomination form, PIs must identify if their nominee is either a CRC/Clinical Research Study Lead or a Clinical Research Manager/Nurse.

PIs also submit the names of two additional individuals from CHOP to complete a recommendation form as additional support for the nomination. These individuals should know the nominee well so they can speak to their experience and contributions. We received a total of 38 nominations this year.

Once submitted, the nomination committee reviews all nominations and support forms to confirm eligibility of the nominee and completion of the REDCap nomination form. The nominations are then compiled and sent to the selection committee for review and scoring.

## Overview of Selection Process

The CRC RE@CH Award Selection Subcommittee coordinates the selection process and maintains confidentiality of all scores and rankings. This subcommittee chooses the potential pool of Judges and facilitates the selection and voting processes, but does not vote.

In 2024, a total of three winners were selected across two categories:

- Clinical Research Coordinator or Study Lead category – 2 winners
- Program Manager/Research RN category – 1 winner

Candidates in each category are evaluated separately, so CRCs are not compared to managers.

### **Who comprises the Selection Committee and how they are picked:**

- The Selection Committee represents research and administrative groups across the CHOP Research Institute: PIs, Investigators, and Research Leadership.
- Judges **CANNOT** be one of the nominators or recommendation letter writers for the current year of the award.
- This year, 75 PIs/Investigators were involved in the nomination process and therefore ineligible for the selection committee.
- This year, 85 invitations were emailed to potential Judges, and 23 individuals accepted.
  - The Judges were divided into five groups:
    - Three groups judged the 26 CRC/Study Lead nominees.
    - Two groups judged the 12 Program Manager/Research RN nominees.

### **Selection Committee Judging Process:**

- Judges are sent nomination packets for their respective groups containing Confidentiality Statements, Scoring Guidelines, Scorecards, and the nominees' full application, which includes PI nomination and two recommendation support forms.
- Judges review, score, and rank each nominee in their group (between six and nine nominees) according to stated criteria.
- Scorecards are returned to the RE@CH Selection Subcommittee Chair to tally the scores.

- With the final scores and rankings for each group, the RE@CH Selection Subcommittee identifies the top scored/ranked individuals or finalists for each category.
- Finalists' applications are sent to the full group of Judges for final review prior to the Selection Committee meeting.
- The finalists' applications are presented and discussed at the virtual Selection Committee meeting. A secret vote at the end determines the three winners.

## Selection Committee Members 2024:

Agnieshka Baumritter

Alain Benitez

Karen Burke

Carrie Campbell-Coleman

Danielle Erkoboni

Samantha Ferrante

Jeff Gerber

Ariane Gittleman

Whitney Guthrie

Kelly Kachelries

John Krall

Jodi Leckrone

Melissa Lerman

Jim Massey

Meg McCabe

Shawn O'Connor

Hien Oehler

Ben Schimeneck

Amy Schwarzhoff

Prema Sundaram

Anjani Villa

Julia Warren

Dave Weber

## CRC RE@CH Steering Committee

The CRC RE@CH Steering Committee is made up of volunteers from multiple departments throughout the Research Institute. Any member of the committee who is nominated is removed from the committee to decrease any possibility of conflict of interest. The steering committee meets at least monthly throughout the year and more frequently closer to the event date. There are also several subcommittees (Nomination, Advertising, Selection, and Program Planning) that meet to focus on specific areas of the nomination and planning process for the event.

### Members of the 2024 CRC RE@CH Steering Committee:

Sunitha Batchu-Vara

Kristin Cao

Marlena Cook

Lindsey Flanagan

Eileen Ford

Christina Hayden-Rush

Paula Hu

Deborah Kawchak

Michelle Litvak

Grace Marks

Abigail Matthews

Kristen Reed

Kerri Sullivan

Donna Sylvester

Michele Toms

Chelsea Ward-Mcintosh

Lindsay Waqar-Cowles

Erin Zullo

## CRC/Research Participant Keynote Speaker: Faith Alunni

Faith Alunni, daughter of David and Maureen Alunni, grew up in northeast Pennsylvania and graduated from North Pocono High School. Following high school, she attended the University of the Sciences, where she graduated summa cum laude with her bachelor's in biochemistry. After graduating, she started working as a clinical research coordinator in the Division of Cardiology at CHOP in August of 2022.

Faith's journey at CHOP began before she was born, and her interest in research began from a young age due to her complex medical history. During her undergraduate career, she completed an internship in the Center for Fetal Diagnosis and Treatment at CHOP in 2019. After, she joined the Baird lab at the University of the Sciences in January 2020, which she remained part of until graduation. This summer, she will begin medical school at Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine where she hopes to go on to become a pediatric surgeon. Over the years, Faith and her family have participated in a few research studies at CHOP, the most recent with the Birth Defects Biorepository in 2023.

## Clinical Research Manager/Nurse Nominees:



### Constance Besnier

*Program Manager I - Neurology*

"Since she joined the team, Constance has shown great commitment to her work, to the team, and to research participants and their families. She has always been and continues to be eager to learn more and has excelled in her roles as resource coordinator, regulatory coordinator, and project manager. Constance has proved to be an essential part of our team and is now responsible for the Regulatory and Compliance Core of our program." - **Dr. Adeline Vanderver**



### Erin Donnelly

*Program Manager II - CRSO Staffing Core/Pulmonary& Sleep Medicine*

"Erin is the indispensable leader of the CHOP Cystic Fibrosis research team. In her role as manager, she leads a team of four other research coordinators and interfaces with PIs, regulatory groups, industry sponsors, and the IRB. In every aspect of her work, she goes above and beyond expectations. She works tirelessly to ensure that our research is of the highest quality." - **Dr. Clement Ren**



## Rebecca Douglas

*Clinical Research Nurse Lead - Critical Care Medicine*

“Hands down, Becca is by far the best research coordinator I have worked with in my 15 years at CHOP. She is a team player and an invaluable asset to our clinical research team. She is professional in all her interactions and really a pleasure to partner with. Whether she is working on an international interventional trial or a retrospective chart review, or using a new optical neuroimaging device, she is knowledgeable about every aspect of the study from overall aims to subtle procedural details. Her energy, dedication, and commitment are contagious, and she makes everyone around her better at what we do. Her background as a PICU nurse has given her a unique skill set to talk with families of critically ill children in a compassionate and knowledgeable way about research. Overall, she is a rock star, and I’m lucky to call her a colleague and friend.” - **Dr. Matthew Kirschen**



## Alana Fitzsimmons

*Program Manager II - Oncology*

“It is difficult to choose only a handful of outstanding qualities for Alana, as she is so incredibly well-rounded and high-performing. Her meticulous attention to detail has always stood out as one of her best attributes in clinical research. I am also always impressed by how well she can empathize and communicate with patients and families of any age or background. Alana’s dedication to accountability and to producing the highest quality work possible is admirable. I know she does not stop working on a task or project until she believes it has been completed to the best of her ability.” - **Dr. John Maris**



## Maria Gemino-Borromeo

*Program Manager II - Oncology*

“I have worked in translational and clinical research for almost 30 years, and Maria (along with her current partner Alana) is one of the two best CRCs I have ever worked with. Collegial, engaged, proactive, meticulous, organized, and an outstanding team member, she is an exceptional mentor to many junior CRCs and nurses across the Division. Her regulatory skill set is outstanding with rigorous documentation and communication with FDA, industry, and CHOP IRB and IND offices. As a PI of a complicated research program, I know Maria has our team’s back. All audits are passed with no significant issues. Finally, Maria has several patient-centric duties and is a huge asset in clinic. Patients and families simply love her, and she is passionate about the work we are doing to save children from relapsed cancer with novel therapeutic interventions.” - **Dr. John Maris**



## Melissa Godfrey

*Program Manager I - Pediatrics*

“Melissa has been an absolutely invaluable team member since joining us. Starting in the role of research coordinator, she quickly demonstrated excellence across multiple domains, reflected in her rapid ascension from her CRC role to project manager, and now clinical research program manager for the Emergency Department Minds Matter Program. She has a unique ability to hone in with extreme precision and a meticulous eye on even the smallest of details while maintaining the vision and foresight to grow the overall program. Melissa has been critical to overseeing growth from zero studies and staff to five studies and five research coordinators/assistants. She has taken every opportunity available to her at CHOP – through meetings with peers, trainings, and seminars – to grow her own knowledge and skillset. She is beyond proactive and completes each task with amazing proficiency. Finally, she completes all this work with a positive attitude, enthusiasm, and calm, truly exemplifying ICARE values.” - **Dr. Daniel Corwin**



## Waynitra Hall

*Program Manager II - Child and Adolescent Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences*

“Waynitra is the epitome of the RE@CH award. She has worked at CHOP for 20 years, moving from research assistant to research coordinator in GI, and then joining DCAPBS in 2019 as our clinical research program manager. Throughout her time at CHOP, she has been involved in every aspect of clinical research, from her early days working directly with participants to her current work managing and mentoring 17 research staff in our department, providing research support and guidance across a large number of behavioral health studies. Waynitra is also highly involved in PolicyLab. Throughout these roles, Waynitra embodies CHOP’s ICARE values, and her impact on faculty, staff, participants, and community members is immeasurable.” - **Dr. Jami Young**



## Laura MacMullen

*Program Manager I - Human Genetics*

“Laura exudes excellence across the complex qualities needed to build a dynamic clinical research program. Transitioning from NASA research to help people living with rare disease, Laura has been instrumental in growing the CHOP Mitochondrial Medicine clinical research program. Owing to her intelligence, experience, and drive, she has helped launch numerous data query programs to improve trial outcome selection and deliver precision targeted therapies to mitochondrial disease patients. She is the data coordinating center lead on the first multi-site Leigh syndrome natural history study and spear-heads international site regulatory onboarding. Laura has intricate regulatory knowledge, placing research subjects first and navigating the complex demands of a large research program. Her teamwork, dedication, advanced infrastructure organization, and data analytic capabilities have supported launch of multiple natural history studies, expanded access programs, phase II and III drug trials, and publications. Laura epitomizes the ideals and achievements of the CRC RE@CH award.” - **Dr. Marni Falk**



## Taylor Moatz

*Program Manager I - Nephrology*

“Taylor has grown into a strong leader as a program manager in the Division of Nephrology. She started at CHOP as a research coordinator 12 years ago and now leads multi-center studies, including the Glomerular Learning Network. She has established strong collaborations across Penn and CHOP through the Kidney Innovation Center. She also leads our Division’s Industry-sponsored Clinical Trials Team. Taylor effectively communicates with many stakeholders involved in her work, most importantly with patients and families. Taylor mentors our other research staff and is always willing to go above and beyond in taking on new challenges. She is excellent in managing competing priorities. In summary, Taylor exemplifies being an ambassador for clinical research, and her strong interpersonal skills create relationships across CHOP to improve the health and lives of children with kidney disease. I can think of no one more deserving of this recognition.” - **Dr. Benjamin Laskin**



## Beth Schwartzman

*Program Manager II - Endocrinology*

“Beth is a long-term research coordinator in Endocrinology who dedicated many years to running the Treatment Options for the Diabetes Type 2 (TODAY) study and its follow-up study, TODAY2. This seminal multicenter study successfully ran at CHOP for a total of 17 years, largely due to Beth’s efforts. This population of youth with T2D faced challenging social issues in their daily lives. Beth and the team created a positive and supportive environment, earning the subjects’ trust to keep them engaged in the study, and providing consistency of care that benefited subjects clinically. Beth maintained these strong connections, which led to our site having a top retention rate nationally. Since TODAY completed, Beth took on additional research duties as a program manager at CHPS and in the Division of Endocrinology. As a longtime user of the research systems at CHOP, she now guides study teams in the conduct of research.” - **Dr. Lorraine Katz**



## Allison Thomas

*Program Manager I - Center for Human Phenomic Science*

“Allison has been frequently described as the “heart and soul” of the CHPS Behavioral Neuroscience Core. Over the past 14 years, she has progressed from a Core psychometrist, supporting testing for just a handful of studies, to a program manager, training and supervising a full-time psychometrist. Under her management, our Core now supports developmental and cognitive testing for more than 50 studies across CHOP and Penn, and Allison manages these challenging logistics with grace, dedication, and an apparently endless wellspring of empathy for our very stressed patients and families. Families seen by our Core often face overwhelmingly complex medical concerns, including severe motor, speech and language, and cognitive deficits, and are participating in research visits that are often lengthy and far from home. Allison provides empathic, ethical, culturally sensitive, and family-centered evaluations that are nonetheless highly scientifically rigorous.” - **Dr. Nina Hattiangadi Thomas**

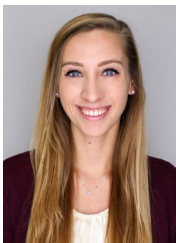


## Kristin Wade

*Program Manager II - CRSO Staffing Core/Endocrinology*

“I have nominated Kristin for this award for just about every year she has been eligible. Simply put, she gets research done, even the most challenging tasks, all while putting our participants’ and families’ experiences first. We care for participants with rare and complex disorders, and she attends to the many details that help make their trial participation successful. She also helps less experienced members of the team stretch themselves and advocates for their career development. She does all of this in a way that makes our team members feel supported, extending this care to our many collaborating teams. We are fortunate to have her at CHOP, and I am grateful to have her lead our team. We bring so much more to our participants and families because of her efforts..” - **Dr. Shana McCormack**

# CRC/Study Lead Nominees



## Kim Albanowski

*Clinical Research Coordinator II - General Pediatrics*

“Kim is a dynamic, accomplished CRC known for her extraordinary work ethic, warmth, and consistent production of exceptional work. In the last year, Kim first authored papers in major publications, led a session at a national pediatric conference, and assisted with key hospital initiatives that will improve patient care. Kim demonstrates a thorough and exacting approach to everything she touches and sets the excellence bar high. She’s accommodating, thoughtful, and easy to work with. Kim regularly performs outside of her class, managing complex situations and multiple studies. She has a unique acumen for clinical research. Kim’s interpersonal skills stand out as one of her greatest assets. She’s a clear and effective communicator and effortlessly forges connections with individuals across all levels of the research hierarchy, including patients, clinicians, managers, and peers. Kim’s an outstanding ambassador for clinical research, exemplifying excellence in every area and inspiring others along the way.” - **Dr. Christopher Bonafide**



## Ahtish Arputhan

*Clinical Research Coordinator II - Endocrinology*

“Ahtish inspires others to perform beyond their potential and to advance the clinical research culture. His insightful communications with families and participants have galvanized our team to pursue new research endeavors and to change how we approach recruitment, the consent and assent process, and study visits in a manner that creates a meaningful and positive experience for all. He serves as a mentor to new and established research staff as well as a resource to established investigators. He infuses joy into team meetings, and he is always willing to “pitch in.” He works with a questioning attitude and is willing to express dissenting opinion. He makes our team better, and he inspires me to be a better PI.” - **Dr. Andi Kelly**





## Alexandria Budney

*Clinical Research Coordinator II - Fetal Diagnosis & Treatment*

“Alex is the glue for the CFDT Psychosocial Support Team (PST). She quickly became my reliable partner upon joining our team around seven years ago. We work closely together to transform clinical services, patient care initiatives, patient and family education materials, bereavement outreach pathways, and QI and research protocols within the Center, to set the international gold standard for psychosocial care within a maternal-fetal care center. Alex has continued to excel from a clinical resource coordinator to a clinical research coordinator II, and now has her hopes set on a promotion to clinical research study manager. Along her journey, she has trained close to a dozen new CRAs and CRCs to support our psychosocial program, giving close attention to their diverse learning needs, demonstrating tremendous leadership skills and patience with each onboarding process. She holds to the mission and vision of our program, and is an integral PST member.” - **Dr. Joanna C.M. Cole**



## Amanda Bwint

*Clinical Research Coordinator II - Infectious Diseases*

“Amanda coordinates a multi-center, observational clinical research study called AMPLE, which is being performed across 17 pediatric intensive care units within the PALISI critical care network. She works with multiple PIs and research staff at CHOP and across the country to ensure successful conduct of the study. She is involved in site trainings, coordination of sample collection, data entry and cleaning, and a number of administrative tasks. Amanda is always looking to develop new skills, improve efficiency, and acquire tools that can help her better run this complex, multi-center study. She is a hard worker and effective communicator, and is dedicated to the performance of this study. I consistently receive feedback from investigators and research staff at other centers about the excellent job she is doing. Amanda has been instrumental to this study and to my research team.” - **Dr. Kevin Downes**



## Erin Cass

*Clinical Research Coordinator II - Nephrology*

“Erin Cass is an integral part of our research team, cherished by patients and colleagues for her dedication, engagement, and warmth. Her leadership qualities have been well observed during her four-year period of responsibility in our department, and her experience and insight have routinely ensured and delivered optimal outcomes for study participants. With a keen eye for detail, she drives innovation and excellence, even piloting CHOP-wide improvements in research practices. She generously mentors others and shares her knowledge freely with the community.” - **Dr. Michelle Denburg**



## Mahgenn Cosico

*Clinical Research Study Lead - Neurology*

“Mahgenn has contributed significantly to operationalize, execute, and expand our lab’s research programs effectively in accordance with IRB guidelines. She has trained a whole team of coordinators on human subjects’ research and has ensured research initiatives run smoothly and efficiently.” - **Dr. Ingo Helbig**



## Kaja Darien

*Clinical Research Coordinator II - Adolescent Medicine*

“Kaja is most deserving of the CRC RE@CH award because she demonstrates all the qualities of an outstanding research team member. She is kind, compassionate, skilled, and incredibly dedicated to the larger mission of our lab and to making small details a priority. It is a pleasure to have watched her grow from the time she was an undergraduate summer intern with us to now being a CRC leading our team, mentoring and guiding others, and exemplifying her passion for adolescent health equity research. She has formed incredibly strong relationships within our team, across the institution, and the world, working to support other PIs in adolescent health equity research. Remarkably, she has accomplished this in only a few years, and we can’t wait to see what is next in her career as she prepares to become a physician scientist.” - **Dr. Nadia Dowshen**



## Anna Dedio

*Clinical Research Study Lead - CRSO Staffing Core/Endocrinology*

“Anna is the most highly accomplished and efficacious clinical research professional, and at the same time, the least likely to take credit for her own incredible successes. She leads a multi-disciplinary NIH-supported clinical trial in a rare disorder and a complex longitudinal phenotyping study for the same condition, all while developing and supporting other team members in these and other projects, ensuring they receive recognition. She is also highly principled and very caring, prioritizing our participants’ and families’ safety, comfort, and dignity, while also adhering carefully to regulatory requirements. She embodies the spirit of this award.” - **Dr. Shana McCormack**



## Shawn Dickey

*Clinical Research Assistant II - Critical Care Medicine*

“Shawn has been the study lead for the past two years for a complicated longitudinal prospective observational study, involved in all key aspects of the study including regulatory, financial management, contracts, enrollment, and retention/follow-up. Shawn was instrumental in several important aspects of this study. First, he played a key role in communication with supply chain and a vendor to update a research license agreement after we discovered that the original institutional contract had expired. This was imperative to ensure study compliance, and Shawn worked diligently over 6 months to get the contract executed by Dr. Susan Furth. Further, to improve diverse representation of patients in the study, we expanded study enrollment to Spanish speaking families. Shawn led all efforts to ensure study documents were appropriately translated and approved by the IRB, created the study protocol amendment, and updated workflows to ensure consistency in research group for approach/enrollment.” - **Dr. Alicia Alcamo**



## Victoria Giunta

*Clinical Research Assistant I - Human Genetics*

“In her time at CHOP, Victoria has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to 22q11.2 Copy Number Variant (CNV) research in the 22q and You Center. She coordinates ongoing research projects with local and international collaborators, collects research samples from individuals across the United States and globally, and maintains one of the largest databases of 22q11.2 CNV research samples. At any given time, Victoria juggles multiple local and overseas projects, working effectively across continents and language barriers. More than just a diligent record keeper, Victoria is a friendly face to the patients and families of individuals with a 22q11.2 CNV who she recruits for research projects in the 22q and You Center and beyond.” - **Dr. Donna McDonald-McGinn**



## Morgan Hammershaimb

*Project Manager I - Infectious Diseases*

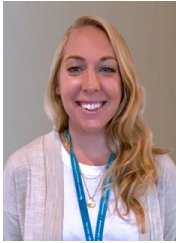
“I have been fortunate to serve as primary investigator for the Infectious Diseases Epidemiology and Antimicrobial Stewardship Research Group for over 15 years. Our successful PIs are selective in who we hire to serve as members of our research team. This selectivity has yielded what I think is one of the best clinical research teams in the country. Each member is stellar, and it is not easy to stand out amongst peers in this research group, but I can say with confidence that Morgan is one of the best clinical research coordinators we have had. Her intelligence; ability to build rapport with colleagues, patients, and caregivers; attention to detail; and general passion for doing this work is unsurpassed. I am certain she will continue a trajectory for success, but it is important to acknowledge her success in this current position.” - **Dr. Brian Fisher**



## Courtney Helm

*Clinical Research Coordinator III - Endocrinology*

“Courtney has been a “dream” research coordinator to work with. She is hard working and efficient, successfully managing a number of industry studies while also working on various clinical trial start-ups. She has been very effective in prioritizing her work and multitasking. She works under two PIs, and her work product has been consistent and great. Courtney takes initiative while maximizing results compliance and operations. She manages investigational drug trials and observational studies, IRB submissions, informed consent development and negotiation, and regulatory binder development and maintenance. She also conducts monitoring visits, site initiation visits and closure visits, and completes quality assurance. Above all, she is great with study participants and has been valuable in subject recruitment and retention.” - **Dr. Maria Vogiatzi**



## Allison Isayeff

*Clinical Research Coordinator III - Center for Autism Research*

“Allison is an exceptional team member, serving as the IBIS study coordinator and clinical psychometrist. As the IBIS coordinator, Allison is a leader among the IBIS members; Allison oversees IRB compliance, data entry, study finances, protocol changes, participant eligibility, biospecimen collection, and magnetic resonance imaging. She supervises students and research assistants and is a mentor to others. As a psychometrist, Allison facilitates developmental evaluations for children from infancy to 17 years-of-age. Allison has a warm interpersonal interaction style and makes families feel welcome, accepted, and validated. Allison goes above and beyond to support her team members to ensure each family receives quality clinical care that meets their individual needs. Allison participates in supplemental trainings to strengthen her clinical skills, advocate for inclusivity of participants of all identities, and promote best practices in research.” - **Dr. Juhi Pandey**



## Mishaska Jaramillo

*Clinical Research Coordinator III - Neonatology*

“MJ is the lead coordinator for the CHOP site of the HEALty Brain and Child Development (HBCD) Study. She was hired to lead this study and has become both the face and the brains of the entire, complex operation. She deftly organizes countless tasks, manages a swiftly growing team, has perfected prenatal recruitment into a demanding and complicated study, and coordinates multiple sophisticated study assessments across several departments. She is reliable, efficient, kind, enthusiastic, and relentlessly hard-working. She has become certified as a Spanish language medial interpreter and serves on the HBCD Spanish Language committee, along with several other study-related committees. She is fearless in the face of a mounting pile of responsibilities and unwaveringly enthusiastic about our work. She would be a most deserving recipient of this year’s CRC RE@CH Award.” - **Dr. Sara DeMauro**



## Jenna Kiely

*Clinical Research Coordinator III - General Pediatrics*

“Jenna is a highly skilled and valued member of the Safe Place research team who successfully coordinates and manages multiple projects, including two large, complex multicenter studies: 1) the largest child maltreatment prevention trial with individual randomization of 2,000 parent child-dyads and 2) an 11-center child abuse research network that collects data on 4,000 children annually. Jenna skillfully navigates complex regulatory and privacy issues, wrangles investigators from sites across the country, and supervises a small cadre of junior staff members and students. Jenna conducts all these activities with the utmost professionalism, attention to detail, and integrity. She is always thinking multiple steps ahead and anticipating potential problems. In addition, Jenna is a delight to work with and brings a positive energy to the CHOP research community. I have worked with dozens of talented research coordinators at CHOP and Penn over the past 20 years, and Jenna is simply the best.” - **Dr. Joanne Wood**



## Alicia Laguna-Torres

*Clinical Research Coordinator I - Neonatology*

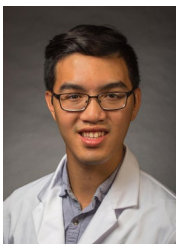
“Alicia is the consummate research coordinator. She has been not only my bilingual recruiter and data collector, but also my project manager, my scheduler, my community liaison, and my creative designer. Beyond approaching participants, consenting them, and collecting data, she creates workflows that are efficient, reproducible, and human-centered. She is wildly meticulous with excellent communication skills and attention to detail. Crucially, she has taught me how to make our research more beautifully connected to the human beings we work with. She knows all the front desk staff, nurses, medical assistants, and doctors by name, and they know her. Whenever I do site visits, I’m greeted with smiles because of the reputation Alicia has built for my studies and my team. Finally, I have seen first-hand how participants feel comfortable with and seen by her because she embodies cultural humility. I have been so lucky to have her on my team.” - **Dr. Diana Montoya-Williams**



## Julianne Larosa

*Clinical Research Study Lead - Pathology & Laboratory Medicine*

“Jules is an exceptional coordinator and now even better project manager. She immediately establishes subject and family trust with her obvious empathy, organizational skills, and integrity. Families look forward to seeing her and constantly notice if she is not present at a study visit. Her caring personality facilitates multi-year relationships, which supports the research integrity. These strong relationships she builds with subjects and families assists in maintaining study participation and data accrual.” - **Dr. Ben Samelson-Jones**



## Anh Mai

*Clinical Research Coordinator II - Cardiology*

“Anh is a dedicated and committed research coordinator who has served his role to move clinical research forward within cardiac critical care. He is attentive to detail and forward thinking, but he’s also excellent with families and clinical team members with thoughtful and considerate communication. My research work is improved through Anh’s participation, and I enjoy working with him every day.” - **Dr. Monique Gardner**



## Nadège U. Mudenge

*Clinical Research Coordinator I - General Pediatrics*

“Nadège is a professional powerhouse. She is a multilingual professional medical interpreter and community-engaged research coordinator. Her skills include REDCap MLM, multilingual recruitment of participants and community leadership boards, semi-structured interviews, parent surveys, development of multilingual educational materials in print or video, and training others on translation for research protocols. She is core faculty for the Short Course on Multilingual Approaches to Research and has been invited to speak for multiple stakeholders nationally, including PCORI, AAP, and other universities. Nadège exemplifies research excellence.” - **Dr. Katherine Yun**



## Janet Okraku-Mantey

*Clinical Research Coordinator III - GI, Hepatology, & Nutrition*

“Janet is an integral part of our team and has shown excellent work ethic around responsibility, planning, priority setting, and execution. She ensures she produces quality work and embodies the ICARE values. She demonstrates good judgement in establishing priorities and when faced with uncertainties, she seeks guidance or independently works to find solutions. She shows compassion in all that she does, from responding to patients and families in a kind and empathetic way, without judgement, to assisting and supporting colleagues. She is more than willing to assist her team and make accommodations for families. She is always positive and supportive in communication and expresses appreciation when others provide support. She has far exceeded the expectations of her core responsibilities as a clinical research coordinator.” - **Dr. Robert Baldassano**



## Jan Ramachandran

*Clinical Research Study Lead - General Pediatrics*

“Jan is an absolute star. As a clinical research study lead on our large and high-performing team, Jan stands out as extremely pro-active, hardworking, and anticipatory of any problems. Her work spans international collaborations, multi-site NIH-funded trials, complex informatics-based interventions and cohort studies, and health system/practice innovation activities. She finds just the right balance between reaching out when she needs guidance and managing many complex tasks independently. She consistently exceeds our high expectations with her outstanding skills in data management and analysis, interpersonal relations, and project management. In addition, she is unfailingly kind and professional, a joy to work with. In our collective nearly 50 years of research experience, Jan’s combination of professionalism, technical skill, and grit stands out.” - **Dr. Stephanie Mayne**



## Elizabeth Ramsay

*Clinical Research Coordinator I - General Anesthesiology*

“Ellie joined CHOP as a new graduate in 2021 and acquired a diverse set of skills within a short timeframe. She has become a vital asset to the team. Ellie demonstrates strong organizational abilities and meticulous attention to detail, ensuring that all aspects of the study are in order. She is known for her flexibility and ability to collaborate effectively within a team. Moreover, Ellie exhibits adaptability and strong problem-solving skills, which enable her to navigate the complexities of protocol adherence and regulatory compliance with ease. She conducts herself with professionalism and integrity in all interactions, prioritizing ethical conduct and adherence to research guidelines and regulations.” - **Dr. Allan Simpao**



## Haley Richardson

*Clinical Research Coordinator II - Adolescent Medicine*

“Haley is a phenomenal asset to research at CHOP. She is the most organized research staff I’ve ever worked with, and she bridges relationships across the enterprise to advance sexual and reproductive health research. She constantly innovates and improves our work, while maintaining professionalism and collegiality. She has trained and mentored junior staff. Haley consistently works to improve her knowledge base by accessing IRB and Arcus trainings, gaining critical skills in both qualitative and quantitative research. In addition to her work with my research team, she works with Andrea Bailer managing the Title X family planning program at CHOP, which creates a critical safety net for vulnerable youth in Philadelphia.” - **Dr. Sarah Wood**



## Alannah Srsich

*Clinical Research Coordinator III - Oncology*

“To put it simply, Alannah is the best clinical research coordinator I have worked with in my time as a researcher. She has all of the qualities needed to be successful in this type of role: a solid knowledge of assessment procedures, strong organizational skills, a positive attitude, and a clear desire to be of service to those she works with. Alannah balances commitments to two PIs and multiple patient-facing roles with great professionalism and warmth. She is supportive and collaborative with other research staff. She is mature and approachable in all of her interactions within our multidisciplinary team and broader division. Her engagement with patients and their families is truly lovely to watch. She is professional and warm, yet always appropriate in maintaining boundaries and setting limits during research testing visits. She is a superstar research coordinator.” - **Dr. Hannah Schofield**



## Sarah Wozniak

*Clinical Research Coordinator II - General Pediatrics*

“Sarah is often my external brain. She is instrumental in keeping complex, multi-part projects organized and on task. She works with multiple PIs, who all feel like their projects would not proceed without Sarah’s efforts. Some of her biggest contributions to the teams include:

- Serving as an unofficial mentor to RAs and new staff who are learning about how things work at CHOP
- Extreme flexibility in supporting other studies as back-up when needed and helping to get new projects launched when coordination hasn’t been fully defined
- Identifying gaps in project coordination/management and offering solutions to resolve those gaps
- Managing regulatory processes across studies with skill that minimize stipulations
- Learning new skills that she then employs across studies (e.g., qualitative coding/analysis)

I look forward to meeting with Sarah because she is so personable. We are hoping Sarah remains on our team for years to come.” - **Dr. Kate Wallis**



## Kristina Ziolkowski

*Clinical Research Coordinator III - Neonatology*

“Kristina has taken her experience as a medical assistant and neonatal follow-up clinic coordinator, along with her 20 years of experience at CHOP, and applied it all to exemplary conduct of neonatal clinical research as the Division of Neonatology’s lead outpatient research coordinator. Over the past six years, she has executed multiple complicated research projects, acting as lead research coordinator on six large studies. Kristina is a gifted mentor with a unique ability to collaborate with and understand the roles of each team member, ensuring seamless interdepartmental collaboration. She deftly explains studies to families such that they understand and are eager to participate, always doing so with a smile. She is single-handedly responsible for our phenomenal clinical trial retention rates. Kristina has become synonymous with neonatal follow-up research: if a neonatal study has a follow-up component, we assume she will be part of the study’s success.” - **Dr. Sara DeMauro**

**Thank you to Research Administration for supporting this annual recognition event!**

**Thank you for coming to this event and for all of the great work you do supporting clinical research at CHOP!**