

UC San Diego

# Department of Surgery News

April 2026



## Letter From the Chair

Dear Colleagues and Friends of the Department,

It is the end of April and Spring is in full swing with blooming flowers, the retreat of the colder temperatures and pollen in the air. It is a very pretty and uplifting time of year. In this context, there is a good deal of uplifting events and stories on display in the Department of Surgery.

For our Surgical Spotlight, we chatted with Tom Alsaigh, MD, a vascular medicine physician-scientist who holds a unique position in our Division of Vascular and Endovascular Surgery. At the core of every clinical program in the department are tight, comprehensive multidisciplinary relationships with non-surgeon partners. Most vascular surgical procedures are performed in response to the consequences of systemic vascular conditions (e.g. atherosclerosis, autoimmune disorders, etc.). Bringing together specialists from surgery, vascular medicine, radiology, anesthesiology and many other disciplines is critical to ensuring that

patients receive the highest level of care. Alsaigh shares about his path to medicine, research endeavors and clinical role on our team.

We also celebrated the accomplishments of our team at the East Campus Medical Center. In the two years since its opening, the center has expanded both its patient population and surgical technologies. The center also had a 37% increase in surgical procedures, which could not have happened without the hard work of our faculty and staff. I am honored to share our department's contributions to high-quality care at East Campus Medical Center and am certain its surgical scope will continue to grow.

Additionally, we highlight many training activities this month, including the appointment of Hannah Hollandsworth, MD, and Jarrett Santorelli, MD, as associate directors of our General Surgery Residency Program. With both being former UC San Diego trainees themselves, I am excited to see how they will help the program grow.

Lastly, Doximity's 2026-2027 Residency Navigator surveys are now open! If you are not familiar with Residency Navigator, it is a residency program directory used by medical students to explore over 4,000 residency programs, including our own. Using the survey data, Doximity constructs a list of the "top" programs by specialty that applicants can use to inform their training destination preferences. As such, broad participation by our proud alumni is helpful in allowing us to continue to recruit the best medical students from across the country. For our alumni readership, I would be very grateful if you would take the time to complete the Doximity survey.

With that said, I hope you enjoy this month's newsletter. As always, thank you for your support and engagement with our department.



**Bryan Clary, MD, MBA**

Marshall J. Orloff Family Endowed Chair  
Professor and Chair, Department of Surgery  
UC San Diego Health Sciences  
Surgeon-in-Chief, UC San Diego Health

**Advancements in surgical equipment and care at East Campus Medical Center**

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East Campus Medical Center received an additional \$322 million investment from UC Regents, allowing for an expansion of its surgical technologies and a 37% increase in surgical volume.

[Read the San Diego Union-Tribune article](#)

[Read the UC San Diego Today press release](#)

## Featured News

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Eugene Golts, MD, performed a double lung transplant on patient Kari Lusti, who was diagnosed with two co-existing lung conditions.





Three-year-old Ailani Troncoso met Anh Nguyen, her living liver donor, and reunited with Gabriel Schnickel, MD, MPH, the surgeon who performed the transplant, at UC San Diego Health.



Jason Sicklick, MD, spoke to JMIR Publications about his research on personalized cancer treatments.



## Surgical Spotlight: Tom Alsaigh

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Tom Alsaigh, MD, is a vascular medicine physician-scientist who studies vascular genomics and has built a longitudinal vascular care practice in the same city where he was raised: San Diego. Read about his path to medicine in our surgical spotlight.

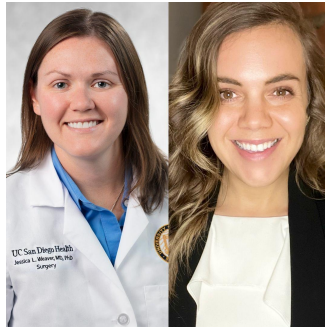


[Read Tom Alsaigh's Surgical Spotlight](#)

## Science Discoveries and Recent Publications

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Our faculty are highly productive and actively disseminate new discoveries relevant to understanding and improving the management and treatment of surgical disease.

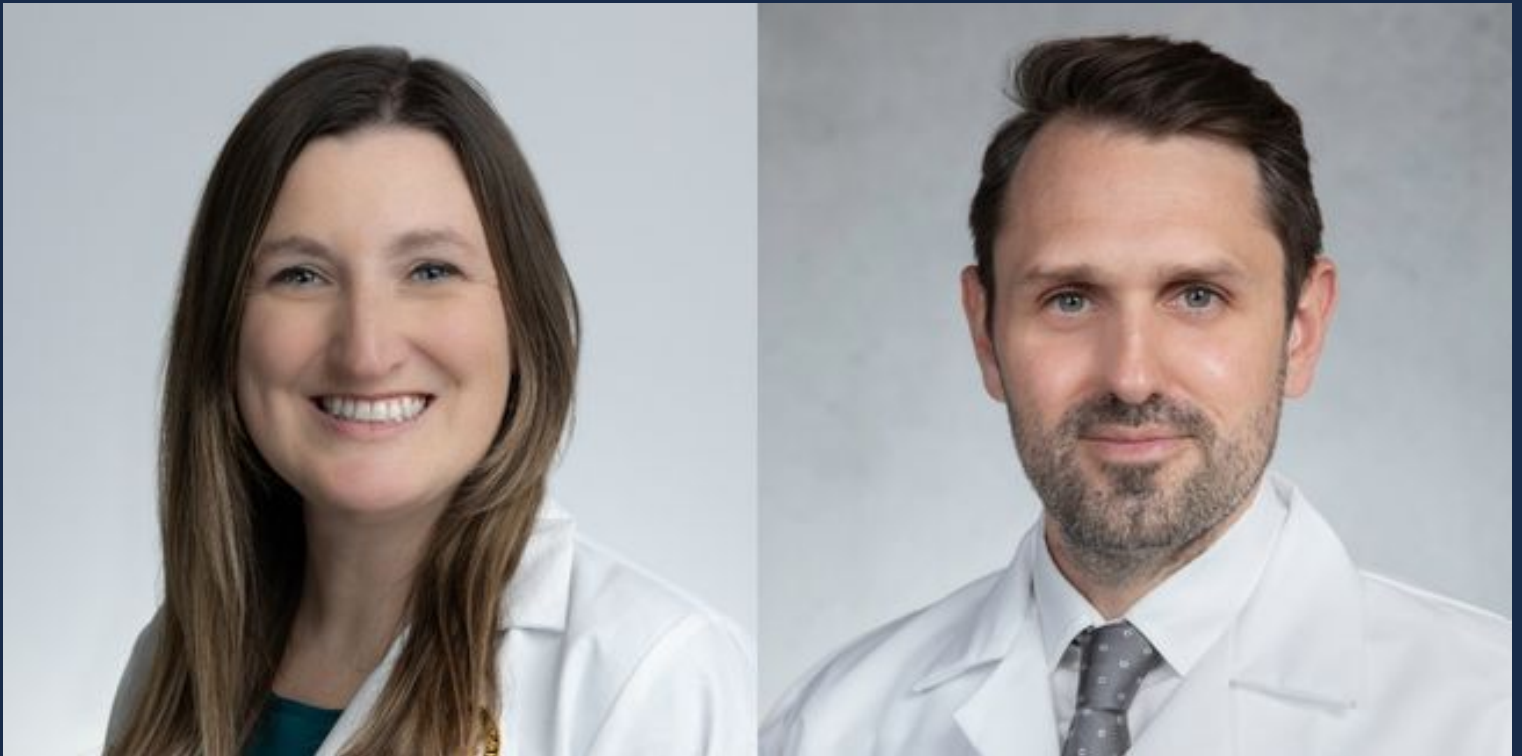


Injuries to the arteries and the head and neck can be injured in blunt trauma, putting patients at risk of stroke. They are typically diagnosed using specific screening tests and are treated with anticoagulation, which can be high-risk when other injuries are present. Now, Jessica Weaver, MD, PhD, Jessica Masch, MD, and team found that additional dedicated imaging reduced overdiagnosis and over-treatment of these injuries. [Read the publication on blunt trauma imaging](#)

[Our publications](#)

## Faculty News

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### New General Surgery Residency Program associate directors

Hannah Hollandsworth, MD, from the Division of Minimally Invasive Surgery, and Jarrett Santorelli, MD, from the Division of Acute Care Surgery, were named associate directors of the department's General Surgery



### **Sonia Ramamoorthy gives UC San Diego PREPARE Center seminar**

Pandemic Response to Emerging Pathogens, Antimicrobial Resistance and Equity (PREPARE) seminars discuss topics related to pandemic preparedness. Sonia Ramamoorthy, MD, MBA, gave a presentation on the surgical response to pandemic preparedness.



### **Amanda Gosman gives Indiana University 2026 Harold M. Trusler Lecture**

Amanda Gosman, MD, presented on sustainable capacity building in global surgery to the Indiana University Department of Pediatrics. She also led a lab for plastic surgery trainees at Indiana University.

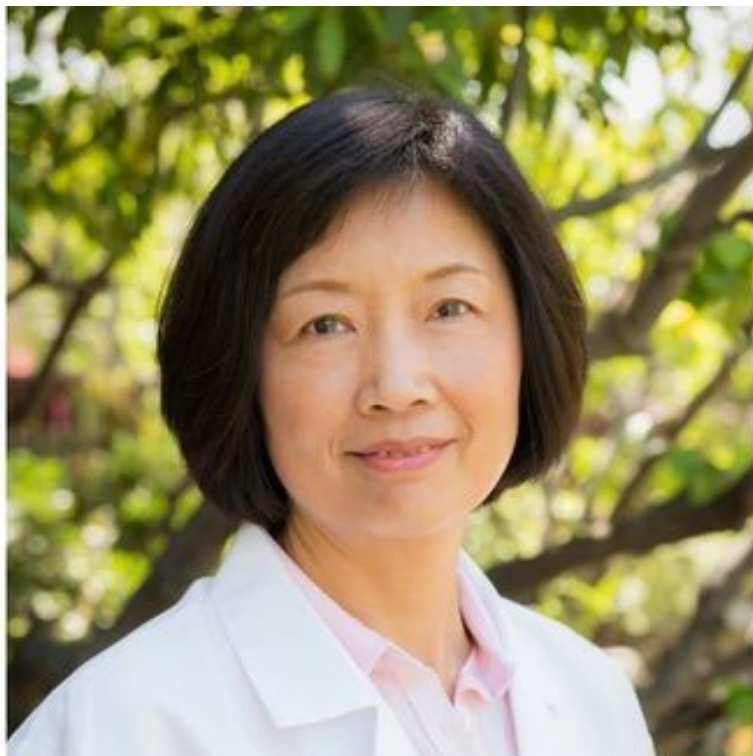


### **Department of Surgery attends Elizabeth Mittendorf lecture series**

The Division of Breast Surgery and Moores Cancer Center surgery teams attended a lecture on breast cancer immunotherapy by Elizabeth Mittendorf, MD, PhD, chief of the Division of Breast Surgery at Harvard University.

### **Training News**

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### **Department of Surgery hosts grant writing lecture**

Department faculty, residents and researchers attended a grant writing lecture led by Yuan Chen, PhD, and

Terence Doherty. Chen presented on the dos and don'ts of writing aims pages, while Doherty presented on NIH grant writing.



### California Society of Plastic Surgery Annual Meeting awards

Katharine Hinchcliff, MD, and Garrison Leach, MD, were awarded Best Save for their presentation on a difficult plastic surgery case. Alexandra Alving-Trinh, MD, won first place in the microsurgery skills competition.

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This month, the **Center for the Future of Surgery** hosted a trauma-focused resident lab taught by Laura Adams, MD, and Lara Spence, MD, as well as a plastic surgery resident lab.

The center also hosted an MIS Liver Surgery Master Class, managed by CineMed. Bryan Clary, MD, MBA, discussed contemporary perspectives on hepatic colorectal metastases at the class dinner.



## Doximity Residency Rankings

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Surveys for Doximity's 2026-2027 Residency Navigator are now open! If you are not familiar with Residency Navigator, it is a residency program directory used by medical students to explore over 4,000 residency programs, including our own, across 28 specialties.

Help us elevate our national reputation and ensure the continued impact of our residency program in six easy steps!

1. Log in to [www.doximity.com](http://www.doximity.com) or open the Doximity app.
2. On your profile, make sure you have UC San Diego Surgery Residency listed under "Education and Training."
3. Current residents or recent graduates can search for the "[Residency Navigator Satisfaction Survey](#)" to rate their residency program.
4. Board-certified surgeons can search for the "[Residency Navigator Nomination Survey](#)" to nominate up to five outstanding residency programs.
5. Click submit. A confirmation will appear when your review is recorded.
6. Encourage other colleagues and alumni to vote for UC San Diego!

[Vote on Doximity](#)

## Alumni Spotlight

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Justin Kang, MD, completed his general surgery residency at UC San Diego in 2000. Since then, he has worked as a general and breast surgeon at Southern California Permanente Medical Group (SCPMG). He is also involved with physician human resources, quality domain, and converting electronic medical records at SCPMG, and has pursued several executive education programs at the Harvard and Stanford University business schools.

“It’s hard to believe that it’s been over 25 years since graduating from the UC San Diego general surgery residency. Reflecting on those times, I remember all the friends I made within and outside the program that served as valuable cornerstones for my life journey.

One of my fondest memories of my training was the four months I spent on trauma service with Drs. David Hoyt and Raul Coimbra. My confidence as a surgeon grew immensely during those times, having successfully managed a trauma service for 120 days straight. My career in surgery has focused on breast cancer care, and for that, I wish to thank Dr. Anne Wallace for her mentorship during my training.

One piece of advice I would like to share with residents is to pursue knowledge in the things that interest you during your career. My path would not be possible without the outstanding training I received at UC San Diego.”





A conversation series that explores what it means to care, give and be transformed by our connections with others in the transplant community.

In honor of Donate Life month, listen to conversations about organ donation, transplantation and recovery.



## As Seen on Social Media

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### Day in the Life with Rachel Kwinn

Rachel Kwinn shares a day in her life in the Division of Minimally Invasive Surgery and the Center for the Future of Surgery! [Watch Rachel's video](#)

Looking for a surgical research focus? Pick a number.

1. —

2. —

3. —

4. —

5. —

6. —



Looking for a surgical research focus? Pick a number.

With our 14th Annual Research Symposium approaching, we helped future researchers explore what kind of surgical research is for them! [View the research post](#)

Support the Future of Surgery

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The Department of Surgery relies on the financial support of our alumni and friends to conduct groundbreaking research and train the next generation of surgeons. We invite you to partner with us by contributing to the Department of Surgery Excellence Fund. Every gift, no matter the size, is crucial in advancing our vital missions.

[Donate](#)

## Recent Job Listings

- [Assistant, Associate, or Full Professor \(HS Clinical, Clinical X, In-Residence, Adjunct\) Pediatric Cardiothoracic Surgery](#)
- [Assistant, Associate, or Full Professor \(HS Clin, Clin X, In-Res, Adjunct\) Trauma, Surgical Critical Care, Burns, and Acute Care Surgery](#)
- [Assistant, Associate or Full Professor \(HS Clinical, Clinical X, In-Residence, Adjunct\) Colorectal Surgery](#)
- [Assistant, Associate or Full Project Scientist - Surgery](#)
- [Assistant, Associate or Full Professor \(HS Clin, Clin X, In-Res, Adjunct\) Thoracic Organ Procurement and First Assistant Surgeon](#)
- [Associate or Full Professor \(HS Clinical, Clinical X, In-Residence, Adjunct\) Vascular and Endovascular Surgery](#)
- [Assistant, Associate or Full Professor \(HS Clin, Clin X, In-Res, Adjunct\) Transplant Surgery/Surgical Oncology](#)



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### About the Department of Surgery

The Department of Surgery at UC San Diego prides itself on delivering state-of-the-art, nation-leading clinical care to the diverse communities of Southern California and beyond. We are dedicated to transforming the lives of future patients through groundbreaking research and shaping the next generation of surgeons and leaders through our exceptional training programs. These training programs are a key reason UC San Diego Health hospitals rank among the top twenty nationwide and why our School of Medicine is recognized as a leader in research and medical education.

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