

# Department of Surgery News

## February 2025



## Letter from the Chair

Dear Colleagues and Friends of the Department,

While February is a short month, it is nonetheless a busy time for the department. In addition to our regular workload of clinical, education and research activities, this month marks the beginning of numerous spring surgical meetings. It is also the time when we complete residency interviews and construct our residency match list.

In this month's newsletter we are happy to highlight a number of these activities, as well as the recent visit of Patricia Turner, M.D., M.B.A., the CEO and executive director of the American College of Surgeons (ACS) — the largest surgical association in the world. The activities of the ACS are critical to the health of patients with surgical conditions and the development and wellness of the surgical workforce. Dr. Turner's presentation on "The Changing Surgical Workforce" highlighted how surgical workforce demographics have changed over time and what appears to be a substantial shortfall of surgeons across most surgical disciplines. She also brought us up to speed on many ongoing ACS initiatives to address this and other challenges in the workforce and for our patients.

For our Q&A, we spoke with Nicole Lopez, M.D., on the value of mentorship in directing students into surgical careers. In the spirit of Valentine's Day, our February feature article delves into the meaning of "love" from the perspective of our team members.

Lastly, February 1st marked my 10th anniversary as the chair of this incredible department. It seems like I arrived yesterday, and I can't believe how time has passed. It has been an extraordinary privilege to witness the incredible transformation our team members have brought across all of our missions, bringing our communities nation-leading clinical, research and educational programs. I could not be more proud of the department's faculty, staff and trainees. I am so grateful to be a part of this family and for the support of our partners and friends outside the walls of our institution. Serving in this capacity has indeed been a dream come true.

Thank you as always for your interest in, and support of, the Department of Surgery at UC San Diego.



**Bryan Clary, M.D., M.B.A.**

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



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.

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## [Feature Article: Heart to \(Open\) Heart - What the Department of Surgery Thinks About Love](#)

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Love is in the air at the Department of Surgery! While you may know them for their innovative research and cutting-edge patient care, the faculty, staff and trainees in our department see love every day. Hear their thoughts on what love is and what makes us feel it. Their words might just open your heart to love as well.

[READ MORE](#)

### Q&A with Nicole Lopez, M.D.

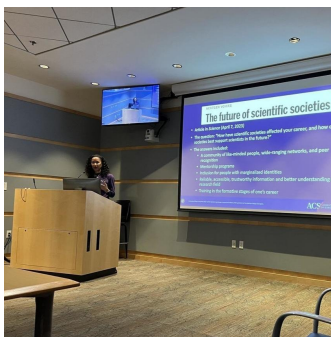
**Nicole Lopez, M.D.**, is an associate professor of surgery in the Division of Colon and Rectal Surgery, the disease team leader for colorectal cancer and the director of the National Accreditation Program for Rectal Cancer at UC San Diego. She also directs several courses for medical students at UC San Diego and serves as a mentor to many trainees in the Department of Surgery.



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## Featured News

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The department enjoyed a grand rounds presentation on "The Changing Surgical Workforce" by Patricia Turner, M.D., M.B.A., executive director and CEO of the American College of Surgeons.

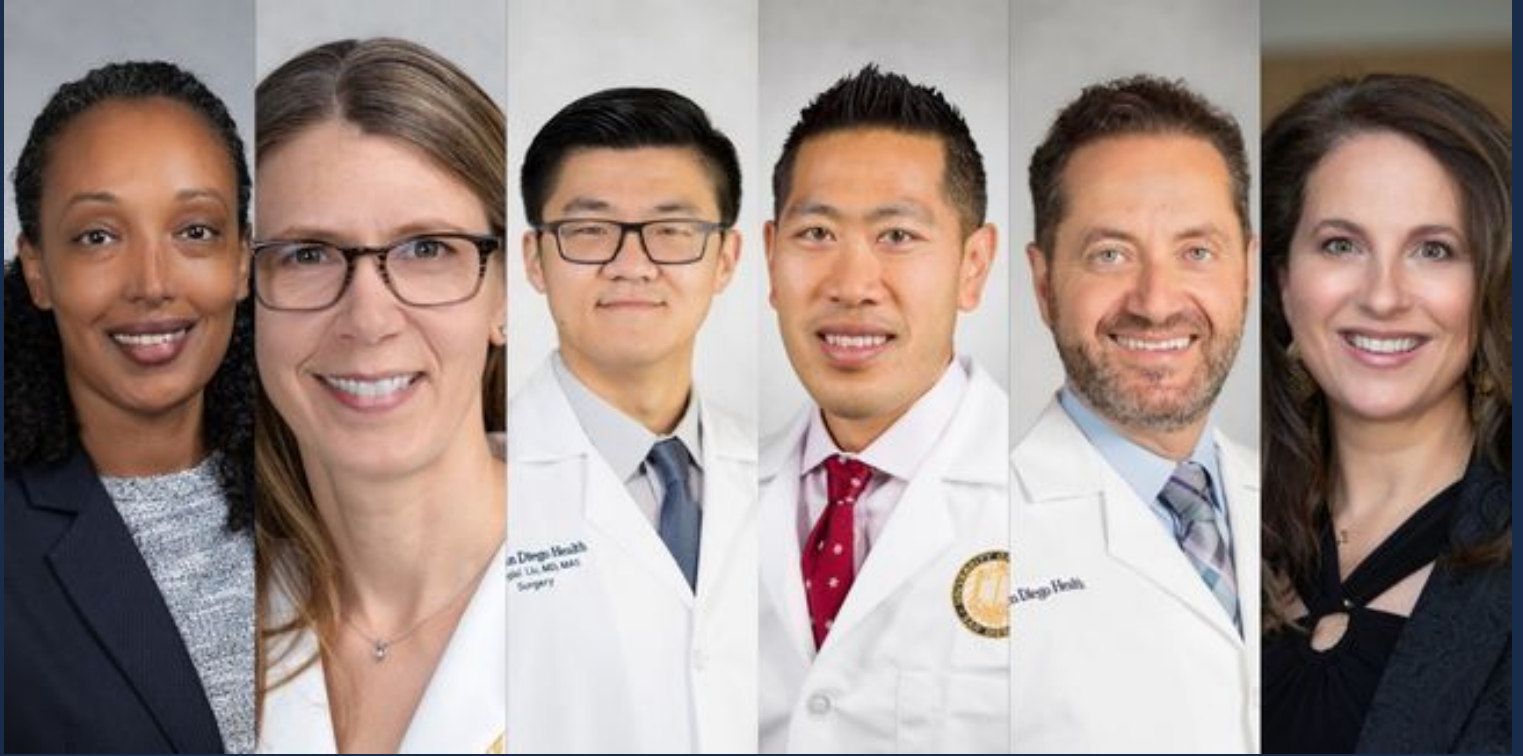
## Research News

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### UC San Diego Presents at 2025 Academic Surgical Congress Meeting

This event, hosted in Las Vegas, NV, gave department faculty and trainees the opportunity to share their research, attend workshops and trainings, learn about different surgical innovations and meet with medical professionals from across the country.



## Department of Surgery Attends UC San Diego Summer Research Symposium

Students from the UC San Diego School of Medicine, mentored by various department faculty, presented their summer research projects.



## UC San Diego Attends 2025 Pacific Coast Surgical Association Meeting

This year, the Pacific Coast Surgical Association celebrated its 100th anniversary with educational programs, research presentations and family fun in Waimea, Hawaii. Pictured is UC San Diego general surgery residency alumni Jeff Chakedis, M.D.



## Division of Plastic Surgery Attends Multiple Surgical Society Meetings

These included the 2025 American Society for Reconstructive Microsurgery annual meeting, held in Waikoloa Village, Hawaii, and the 2025 Northwest Society of Plastic Surgeons annual meeting, held in Wailea, Hawaii.

## Faculty News



## Geoffroy Noel and Laura Adams Receive Medical Educators Faculty Awards

Geoffroy Noel, Ph.D., chief of the Division of Anatomy, received the Kaiser Teaching Award and Educational Scholarship Award. Laura Adams, M.D., assistant professor in the Division of Trauma, Surgical Critical Care,

Burns & Acute Care Surgery, received the Whitehill Award.

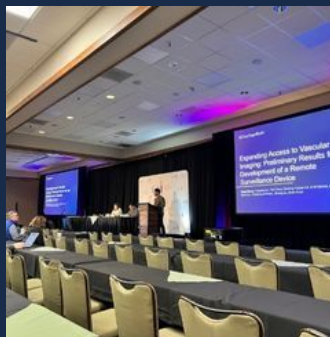


### **Mahmoud Malas Leads Cordis Training Program**

Mahmoud Malas, M.D., M.H.S., chief of the Division of Vascular and Endovascular Surgery, led an educational program on carotid artery stenting at the Center for the Future of Surgery. This program was attended by over 20 participants from across the country.

## **Training News**

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### **Sean Perez Presents at the Vascular and Endovascular Surgery Society 2025 Annual Winter Meeting**

This event was held in Breckenridge, CO. Sean Perez, M.D., general surgery resident, discussed the Division of Vascular and Endovascular Surgery's work on expanding access to vascular imaging. Mahmoud Malas, M.D., M.H.S., and Elsie Ross, M.D., M.S., also contributed to this research.

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This month, the Center for the Future of Surgery held various lab courses for general surgery residents and

minimally invasive surgery fellows. The center also hosted several tours for aspiring surgeons, introducing them to advanced surgical technologies and training methods.



## Alumni Spotlight

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*Robert Winfield, M.D., completed his trauma and surgical critical care fellowship at UC San Diego in 2012. He is now the chief of the Division of Acute Care Surgery at the University of Kansas Medical Center and is the secretary of the American College of Surgeons Board of Governors. Winfield is also pursuing an M.B.A. from Northwestern University.*

"I can still picture what it was like to show up for work with my co-fellows and faculty at the old trauma offices. The building wasn't much, but the people had so much energy and life. I loved the bond we shared during our time together. Every day felt like we were doing work that had the potential to be groundbreaking

and impactful in the field. UC San Diego and its leadership showed me what was possible in trauma care when the interest of patients was truly placed at the forefront.”

## As Seen on Social Media



## Black History Month and Humans of Surgery

Brandon Harris, M.D., Michael Turner, M.D., and Olatunde Bashorun, M.D., were highlighted across our channels for this dual feature.



## National Women Physicians Day

In honor of National Women Physicians Day, we featured some of our amazing women physicians at the department.

## Science Discoveries and Recent Publications

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



A study by the Division of Pediatric Surgery's Romeo Ignacio, M.D., and Utsav Patwardhan, M.D., found that initial nonoperative management appears to be as effective in preventing recurrent adhesive small bowel obstruction as surgery. [Read more](#)

[READ OUR LATEST PUBLICATIONS BY DIVISION](#)

## Recent Job Listings

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- [Assistant, Associate or Full Professor \(HS Clinical, Clinical X, In-Residence, Adjunct\) Surgical Sciences](#)
- [Associate or Full Professor \(Ladder Rank/In-Residence\) Surgical Sciences](#)
- [Assistant Professor \(Ladder Rank/In-Residence\) Surgical Sciences](#)
- [Assistant, Associate or Full Professor \(HS Clinical, Clinical X, In-Residence, Adjunct\) Breast Surgery](#)
- [Assistant, Associate or Full Professor \(HS Clinical, Clinical X\) Transplant Surgery](#)



### **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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