

### MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



Warren Sandberg, MD, PhD  
Chair, Department of Anesthesiology

In these challenging times, it is amazing to see what VUMC and the Department of Anesthesiology are doing to keep our community safe and healthy. I am proud to see all the acts of dedication and courage.

As we recover from the recent tornados and navigate the COVID-19 pandemic, VUMC continues to be the healthcare institution Middle Tennessee looks to for leadership in difficult times. Today, VUMC is one of the few places in

Middle Tennessee providing testing for COVID-19. We continue to prepare for a growing population of COVID-19 patients, and our experts in infectious disease and vaccine development are working with colleagues across the country to learn more about the virus and how to prevent and treat it.

The Department of Anesthesiology is contributing to these efforts in many ways. Here are just a few examples:

*Clinical staff have been incredibly flexible as staffing needs and volumes change on a daily basis.*

*The Anesthesiology Critical Care Medicine Division is taking steps to prepare for patients diagnosed with COVID-19, including the creation of new units and integration of additional staff from across the institution.*

*Telemedicine is being rapidly deployed to the Pain Clinic and VPEC.*

COVID-19 has prompted many other changes across the medical center. For the safety of patients and staff, VUMC has implemented strict limits on visitors to campus. Social distancing, while a new concept for most of us, is being embraced by VUMC. Waiting rooms are less crowded, rider limits have been introduced for campus shuttles, and non-clinical staff are being encouraged to work from home as much as possible. At each step of the way, our department has been in the vanguard, demonstrating how to run everything electronically, from payroll to town hall meetings.

The employee assistance funds provided after the tornados have been expanded

to help employees who are experiencing hardships due to COVID-19. Employees can learn more about these funds, and other types of support available, by contacting the Work/Life Connections Employee Assistance Program (615-936-1327).

This spring we also lost former department chair Brad Smith. Brad was an inspiration for generations of anesthesiologists, and he oversaw the department during the development of anesthesiology as a truly academic medical specialty. I was fortunate to spend some time with Brad during his last days, and we talked about anesthesiology as a profession – a calling to attend to the needs of patients unflinchingly. As I came on line to the department's first whole-house

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## Crawford presented with Candle Award

Anesthesiology Department faculty member Lane Crawford, MD, who also serves as a Vanderbilt University School of Medicine (VSM) Robinson College Faculty Affiliate Advisor, was presented with the Candle Award during Anesthesiology Grand Rounds on Friday, Jan. 24, 2020. The Candle Award is presented to Faculty Affiliate Advisors who strongly demonstrate leadership, mentorship, and accessibility in their interactions with students.

Students have described Crawford as being a pillar in the Robinson community and a dedicated participant in a variety of Robinson College events. Crawford said Vanderbilt's

medical students are an amazing group of physicians in training. "It's a privilege to get to spend time with them as an FAA, and I feel very honored to receive an award from a group that I admire so much," she said.

The VSM advisory college system provides the opportunity for students and faculty to interact in an informal setting. Crawford explained that this means faculty and students really get to know each other as people. "I think the important thing as an FAA is to show up and not take yourself too seriously."

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# Dr. Bradley E. Smith (1933-2020)



Dr. Smith was appointed as Professor of Anesthesiology and Chair of the Vanderbilt University Department of Anesthesiology. To date, he has had the longest duration of any chair in that role, serving for 24 years (1969 – 1993). While chair, Dr. Smith directed a six-fold increase in both faculty and resident numbers, and also in clinical workload. During this time, he established the region's first Anesthesiology Biomedical Engineering Division, Tennessee's first full-time Critical Care Team, and Nashville's first Pain Management Clinic.

During his tenure as chair, the department graduated 271 anesthesiology residents, and four doctorates of philosophy and 14 master's degrees were awarded to anesthesiology trainees. The department also published more than 500 peer-reviewed papers and the faculty grew to nine fully tenured professors (including four former Vanderbilt University Anesthesiology residents), which were outstanding accomplishments in this period.

At the state and national level, Dr. Smith was president of the Society for Obstetric Anesthesia and Perinatology (SOAP), the Society for Computers in Anesthesia (SCIA), and the Tennessee Society of Anesthesiologists (TSA). He was one of the longest serving directors of the American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA) and was general chairman of the 1996 ASA Annual Conference. During his career, he served in various roles for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the National Formulary, the National

Research Council, the American Board of Anesthesiologists, the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, the American Heart Association, and other bodies.

Dr. Smith retired clinically in 2008, but his love for medicine and the specialty of anesthesiology continued. Dr. Smith received a Paul Wood Fellowship and served as a Trustee of the Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology. Even after ending his clinical practice, Dr. Smith served as a contributing editor for *Tennessee Medicine* and for the *Obstetric Anesthesia Digest*. Until the past few years he also served on the Council of Mentors of the Anesthesia History Association.

Dr. Smith's leadership set the foundation and trajectory for the department to be the national and international leader that it is today in anesthesiology and pain, critical care, and perioperative

medicine. However, Dr. Smith leaves much more than a legacy of academic achievement and national recognition. During his more than four decades of practice and leadership in the specialty, Dr. Smith defined what it means to be a true professional. Always a consummate clinician, Dr. Smith's greatest pride was in delivering the best personal care to every patient, serving as a role model for generations of anesthesiologists. In light of this, in 2009 a lectureship was established in his name by then Department Chairman Dr. Michael Higgins.

Dr. Smith made a lasting impact at Vanderbilt University, on generations of residents and faculty, and on the specialty of anesthesiology.

Dr. Smith was married to Gretchen Basore Smith for 65 years. He had two children, Ione Lake and Bradley Gordon Smith. He is survived by his daughter, Ione.

Dr. Bradley Edgerton Smith, professor emeritus, past chairman of the Vanderbilt University Department of Anesthesiology, passed away on March 20th in Nashville after a long battle with cancer.

Dr. Smith was born on January 4, 1933, in Cedar Vale, Kansas. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Tulsa in 1953 and his medical degree from the University of Oklahoma in 1957. Dr. Smith completed his anesthesiology residency at the United States Naval Hospital in New York City in 1960. After residency, he was a member of the U.S. Navy's Project Mercury, the country's first human spaceflight program. From there, Dr. Smith completed a research fellowship and obstetric anesthesia fellowship at Columbia University, Presbyterian Hospital in New York City. This was the first obstetric anesthesia fellowship completed in the United States. Dr. Smith's passion for obstetric anesthesia was present throughout his entire career and was a focal point of his research, publications, and teaching.

After serving in the Navy, Dr. Smith was on faculty at Yale University and then the University of Miami. In 1969,



*Bradley Smith teaching the finer points of how to read the size of a laryngoscope blade.*

## Crawford

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Crawford explained that she was a medical student at Vanderbilt when the advisory college system was getting started, so she got to experience firsthand the positive effects on student wellness, camaraderie, and mentoring. She said when she returned to VUMC as faculty in 2017, she knew she wanted to be involved with the advisory colleges to help create those same experiences for students. She said that being an FAA helps her as a clinical anesthesiologist because spending time with students is energizing.

“Medical school is a transformative experience, and also incredibly stressful at times,” she said. “I hope to do anything I can to contribute to the positive, supportive environment that the advisory colleges create for students as they navigate that journey.”

## Chair's Message

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Zoom meeting, I was touched to hear CRNA Charlie Sharbel mention that Brad had been inspirational to him. Charlie encapsulated so poignantly the feelings that many of us had about Brad.

Despite all that is happening, VUMC is dedicated to maintaining the same groundbreaking and outstanding care that our patients depend upon. And we are more committed than ever to all the extra missions that distinguish academic medical centers from other hospitals – education, discovery, and leadership. That is a lot to ask, but I know we will not fail our patients. I have never been prouder to be the chair of our great department.

Finally, let's reflect that we are experiencing an historical event. There is much to provoke anxiety, based on what we've seen around us, the unknowns we face about the months and years ahead. Paradoxically, for me at least, this has been a time of heightened self-awareness and reflection. This spring, unlike any other, I have been aware of the gradual swelling of flower buds and opening of leaves as the season comes into its fullness. I hope you will find a few moments every day to admire the beauty of this world and, at the same time, be comforted that human ingenuity and determination will prevail.

For the most up-to-date information on COVID-19, please visit [www.vumc.org/coronavirus](http://www.vumc.org/coronavirus).

# 2020 Dr. Bradley E. Smith Endowed Lectureship on Medical Professionalism



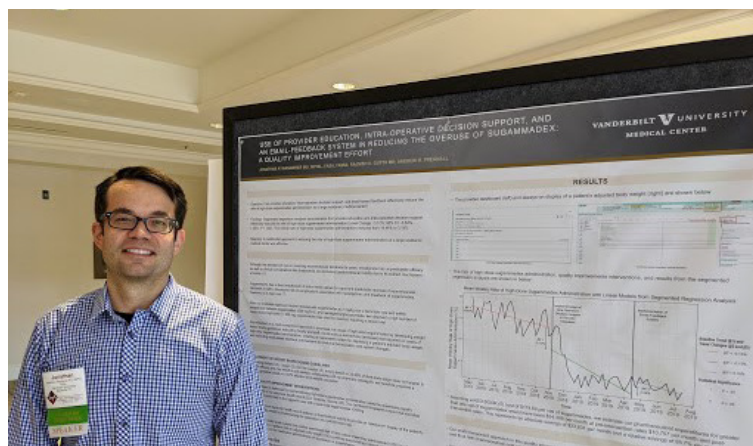
*On Friday, Feb. 21, 2020, Deborah J. Culley, MD, was the featured guest speaker for the 11th annual Dr. Bradley E. Smith Endowed Lectureship on Medical Professionalism. The topic of her lecture was "Professionalism in Anesthesiology: Paving a Path Forward." After the lecture she was presented with a plaque.*

# 2020 Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist Week



On Wednesday, Jan. 22, 2020, the department celebrated Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist Week. CRNA Week is the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists' annual celebration of anesthesia patient safety and the nation's nearly 54,000 CRNAs.

# 2020 Society for Technology in Anesthesia Annual Meeting



The 2020 Society for Technology in Anesthesia annual meeting took place in Austin, Texas, from Wednesday, Jan. 15 through Saturday, Jan. 18. Jonathan Wanderer, MD, MPhil, (top left) presented on transitioning to EPIC. Mark Rice, MD, (top right) gave a lecture on the realities of perioperative equipment. Warren Sandberg, MD, PhD, (bottom left) gave a lecture on the financial realities of anesthesia and technology. Robert Freundlich, MD, MS, MSCI, (bottom right) co-chaired the meeting.

# eStar Physician Builders develop creative workflows



Originally published in the VUMC Reporter on March 19, 2020

By Paul Govern

Through its eStar Physician Builders Program, Vanderbilt University Medical Center supports physicians and other health care team members in devising new content and tools for VUMC's health information technology system.

To date, some 47 employees have undergone training and certification as physician builders or clinical content builders, and each has been paired with an eStar analyst from Health IT.

As an eStar Physician Builder, "You yourself have the technical ability to go into our system and configure it the way that you want it to work. You can then partner with our analysts and teams to get that configuration tested and into the production environment here at VUMC," said the director of the program, Jonathan Wanderer, MD, MPhil, associate professor of Anesthesiology and Biomedical Informatics.

"With this program, the big advantage is that you can get folks who already know the medicine really well and get them involved in designing and building new systems features, or changes to workflows that help with patient care."

Here are some examples of the work of eStar Physician Builders:

- Chetan Aher, MD, assistant professor of Surgery, and Teri Huff, RN, senior associate, Nursing Administration, created the eStar bariatric procedure pass, which allows teams to easily track surgical weight loss patients as they progress through psychiatric and medical evaluations, endoscopy, insurance approval, medical weight loss trials and so on.
- When a specialist provides a consult in the Emergency Department, patient disposition entails completion of a consult note. Wanderer designed the brief consult note process, which helps the ED avoid delays by ending the wait for full consult notes to be completed. The brief consult note is devoted solely to the consultant's disposition recommendation; it can be completed in a minute or two using an eStar smartphone app, at which point the information is flagged on the ED track board and the ED team gets a smartphone alert. When the consultant later begins the full consult note, the disposition recommendation gets inserted automatically. The brief consult note has been piloted by neurology, neurosurgery, orthopaedic surgery and urology.
- In the electronic health records (EHRs) of complex pediatric patients,

it's less than ideal if documentation about matters like airway management or complex feeding regimens are dispersed among multiple notes. With input from his department's Complex Care Team, Barron Patterson, MD, associate professor of Pediatrics, devised a tool that supports consolidation of this EHR documentation. It's among several eStar features devised by Patterson.

- Wael Alrifai, MD, MS, assistant professor of Pediatrics and Biomedical Informatics, devised a comprehensive neonatal care dashboard in the EHR. Also, for babies who are expected to be born sick, he created a tool for preloading a care plan summary that appears automatically in the EHR upon documenting of the patient's birth.

Alrifai has worked on these and other new content features with input from the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit eStar Workgroup and the Pediatrics eStar Forum.

Physician builder training and, for non-physicians, clinical content builder training, each take six days to complete, with training provided in two courses by Epic Systems Corp., the Verona, Wisconsin-based health IT company that develops the platform on which eStar runs. Last spring, Epic trainers were on campus at VUMC and provided the first half of this training and will do so again in the future. The course is otherwise given in Wisconsin.

For more information visit the VUMC SharePoint website devoted to the eStar Physician Builder Program (employee login required).

## • Building Resilience •

COVID-19 poses new challenges for all of us both at work and at home. Formed in mid-March in response to the pandemic, the department's Faculty and Staff Support Team is charged with providing personnel with access to a variety of resources aimed at providing practical and emotional support and mitigating stress. The Team communicates through *Weekly Update* and the department website, as well as email updates, and offers virtual support groups and activities.

## Department Spotlight: Celebrating Departmental Accomplishments

Through the efforts of CRNA week, sending Vanderbilt CRNAs to the first Pan African Nurse Anesthesia Conference became a reality. In addition, the over \$30,000 raised will support the travel of 30 African anesthetists to attend the meeting and represent their countries.

**Lane Crawford, MD**, received the Candle Award from VSM's Robinson College. Students have described Crawford as being a pillar in the Robinson community and a dedicated participant in a variety of Robinson College events.

**Andrew Franklin, MD, MBA**, was elected to a two-year term as President of the ERAS society, a component society of ERAS. President-Elect duties begin upon election, and the role officially begins August 2020.

During the Wednesday, March 4, staff meeting, **Brooke Hoover** received the Departmental Credo Award.



**Christopher Hughes, MD**, received his first R01 grant. The COPE-iOS prehab/rehab R01 is focused on perioperative cognitive and physical optimization to prevent long-term disability. **Kimberly Rengel, MD**, will be playing an important co-investigator role.

With the perioperative consult service team continuing to grow, **Jennifer Jayaram, APRN**, was promoted to the roles of Advanced Practice Manager and Enhanced Recovery Program Coordinator.

**Matt Kynes, MD**, kicked off the Pediatric Panel at the annual meeting of the Tennessee Society of Anesthesiologists on Saturday, Feb. 22.

**Roy Neeley, MD**, was recognized for his participation on a 2019 United States Medical Licensing Examination Test Material Development Committee under the USMLE Pharmacology and Biochemistry MD category.

**Gwen Sanders, CRNA**, assumed the role of Center Specialist for the Ambulatory Division.

**Tiffany Richburg, MD**, has been appointed Associate Program Director of the Adult Cardiothoracic Anesthesiology Fellowship Program.

**Jenna Sobey, MD**, has been appointed Director of the Pediatric Anesthesiology Fellowship Program.

**Laura Sorabella, MD**, gave a review lecture at the annual meeting of the Tennessee Society of Anesthesiologists on Saturday, Feb. 22.

**Jonathan Wanderer, MD, MPhil**, gave a presentation for the Department of Anesthesiology at Yale School of Medicine on Friday, Feb. 21. His topic was "Better Living Through Data: Perioperative Informatics for Patient Care, Research, and Education."



**Jonathan Wanderer, MD, MPhil**, presented in Bogota at the XXVII CURSO ANUAL DE ANESTESIOLOGÍA CLÍNICA COLSANITAS.

**Lisa Weavind, MBBCh, FCCM, MMHC**, received a Presidential Citation from the Society of Critical Care Medicine for her service contributions to the Society.

# NEW DEPARTMENT MEMBERS



**Kellie Deffendall**  
Certified Registered Nurse  
Anesthetist

**EDUCATION:**

**MS**, Nurse Anesthesia, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN (2004)  
**BS**, Nursing, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN (1999)



**LaurieAnn Hembree**  
Associate Program Manager  
Anesthesiology Critical Care  
Medicine

**FUN FACT:**

I am a Star Wars and Harry Potter fan.



**Mark Hughes**  
Project Manager  
Center for Research and  
Innovation in Systems Safety

**FUN FACT:**

I have two sons and a grandson on the way (due June 2020). I enjoy reading, riding my motorcycle, and vacations on the beach.



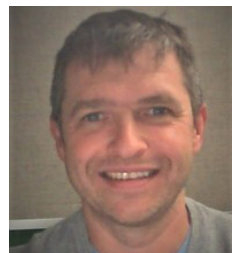
**Billi Lalka**  
Certified Registered Nurse  
Anesthetist

**EDUCATION:**

**MS**, Nurse Anesthesia, Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia, Madison, TN (2011)  
**BS**, Nursing, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN (2007)

**FUN FACT:**

I was born and raised in Nashville.



**Roman Lazarenko, PhD**  
Research Instructor  
Research

**EDUCATION:**

**PhD**, Biophysics, Bogomoletz Institute of Physiology, Kyiv, Ukraine (2005)  
**MS**, Biology, National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Kyiv, Ukraine (2001)  
**BS**, Biology, National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Kyiv, Ukraine (1999)

**FUN FACT:**

Received a President of Ukraine State Award for Young Scientists in 2005.



**Betsy Merritt**  
Project Manager  
Administration

**EDUCATION:**

**BS**, Business Management and Marketing, St Catherine University, Saint Paul, MN (2018)

**FUN FACT:**

I love to travel when I am not working, as well as trying new restaurants and experiences in local areas. I have a passion for cooking (especially trying new recipes in my instant pot) and I have a soft spot for anything Harry Potter.



**Shawn Miers**  
Certified Registered Nurse  
Anesthetist

**EDUCATION:**

**MS**, Nurse Anesthesia, Mount Marty College, Yankton, SD (1999)  
**BS**, Nursing, Grandview College, Des Moines, IA (1994)

**FUN FACT:**

I ran with the bulls in Spain.



**Tricia Oliver**  
Certified Registered Nurse  
Anesthetist

**EDUCATION:**

**MS**, Nurse Anesthesia, Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia, Madison, TN (2011)  
**BS**, Nursing, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, TN (2011)



**Dima Qu'd**  
Research Assistant  
Research

**EDUCATION:**

**BS**, Neuroscience, Belmont University, Nashville, TN (2019)

**FUN FACT:**

My name means "rain cloud" in Arabic.



**Sharae Shipp**  
Associate Program Manager  
Office of the Chair

**EDUCATION:**

**BS**, Biomedical Engineering, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN (2013)

**FUN FACT:**

I have a twin sister.

## Recent Publications

Afzal A, Figueroa EE, Kharade SV, Bittman K, Matlock BK, Flaherty DK, **Denton JS**. The LRRC8 volume-regulated anion channel inhibitor, DCPIB, inhibits mitochondrial respiration independently of the channel. *Physiol Rep*. 2019 Dec;7(23):e14303. doi: 10.14814/phy2.14303. PubMed PMID: 31814333; PubMed Central PMCID: PMC6900491.

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## Department Leadership



Warren S. Sandberg, MD, PhD  
Chair, Department of Anesthesiology  
Vanderbilt University Medical Center

**We provide uncompromising quality in clinical care, research and education. We are:**

**Compassionate:** Offering exceptional perioperative care and pain management to a complex population.

**Creative:** Advancing the frontiers of science, healthcare and technology.

**Committed:** Equipping future leaders with solid education and training, both here and abroad.

**Collaborative:** Working across Vanderbilt University Medical Center and beyond to achieve measurable outcomes.

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