



SPP Quarterly Newsletter

Spring/Summer 2024

1. [Editorial Note](#)
2. [Interview with President-Elect Cristina Pacheco](#)
3. [SPP 2024 Spring Meeting Retrospective](#)
4. [Joint PPS/SPP Meeting Fall 2024](#)
5. [Committee Connection](#)
6. [SPP 25 Years Ago](#)
7. [SPP Retired Presidents on *What's Next?*](#)
8. [In Memorandum of Doctor Paul Dickman](#)
9. [Meet Our New Assistant Editor](#)

Editorial Note

Here in the South, our monsoon season continues, and we are getting yet more rain as Spring progresses. Sorry to say, my budget prevented me from making the Spring meeting in person, but I am able to download the meeting on the SPP education website. This gave me entry into the business meeting, where I learned that our hardworking President Linda Ernst will continue in the position until the Fall meeting. Thanks, Linda, for your hard work and diligence in sorting through a tough year. Thanks to her efforts, combined with those of our various committees and our new administrators, the SPP is to be in great shape for the coming year.

We welcome our incoming President Cristina Pacheco with my annual Presidential interview, and I look forward to working with her in producing the newsletter. I also welcome a new assistant editor Sonja Chen, who has contributed her first column. Sadly, we mourn the loss of Paul Dickman, whose recent demise has robbed us of a great pathologist, musician, friend, and colleague; Paul's presence at our meetings will be sorely missed.

An interesting series of articles on pathology learning have appeared in recent editions of the CAP flagship journal Archives of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine. In August 2023, an article compared the pass rates of the various pathology specialties on a temporal basis and with each other. Pediatric pathology showed the next to lowest pass rate, surpassed by only Clinical Informatics, but there was a heartening trend of improvement, with a pass rate of 88% for 2017-2021 as compared to 71% for 2012-2016, and other specialties showed similar gains. Sadly, the annual mean number of pediatric pathology fellows seeking certification also steadily dropped from 34 in 2007-2011 to 20 in 2017-2021.

A second pertinent article appeared in the May 2024 issue of Archives, reassessing the impact and significance of social media in pathology. One of the major claims was that trainees and practicing pathologists stand to make significant gains through participation in social media. One of these gains was educational as, as professional social media can serve for online medical education. This avenue releases the trainee from total dependence on local resources for learning. On the other hand, it was said to be non-directed, fragmentary, and unsystematic.

Has social media impacted the apparent rise in pass rates, or has it been the changes in resident/fellow education since the change in ACGME requirements? Regardless of the cause, we welcome the improvement and hope that we can reverse in problems seen with fellowship recruiting.

Have a great summer,

David

Interview with President-Elect Cristina Pacheco

Because of the SPP's transition to a new meeting schedule and to align our SPP meetings with the new format, our incoming SPP President, Cristina Pacheco, will not begin her term until the Fall meeting. I took this opportunity to interview her for the Spring edition of the SPP Newsletter.

Tell me about growing up and how you became interested in medicine and pathology.

I lived in a small community in Dayton Ohio until college. Both of my parents have been physicians, my mother a retired pediatrician and my father a retired hematologist-oncologist, so I grew up knowing about medicine. I was interested in science as a student but really didn't plan on being a physician until college. I did my undergraduate training at Colby College in Waterville, Maine, where I majored in chemistry and English literature.

Afterwards I began medical school at The University of Cincinnati College of Medicine. In spite of my family connection to medicine, I actually didn't learn about pathology as a career choice until after I began a preliminary year in internal medicine. During my medical school training, pathology seemed to be more a basic science than a medical discipline. However, I learned about its importance as an intern and switched to a pathology residency.

Who influenced you as a pathology resident and what inspired you to be a pediatric pathologist?

Following my 2000 medical school graduation, I stayed at Cincinnati for my pathology residency and pediatric pathology fellowship. My rotation in pediatric pathology was a huge influence on my career. At Cincinnati Children's, I met Dr. Kevin Bove, who made the topic fun and interesting. In particular, I really enjoyed his teaching of liver and gastrointestinal pathology. I found non-neoplastic diseases of children to be diverse and different from adult diseases, which seemed to be more centered around neoplastic disease. With Dr. Bove, I enjoyed doing projects on biliary atresia and Hirschsprung's disease. Dr. David Witte also acted as a great mentor and inspiration. Dr. Gail Deutsch was another mentor when I was a fellow, and we kept in touch after I finished my training. She later contacted me

for my current position in Seattle and now my office is right next door to her. I was a fellow from 2005 to 2007.

Tell me about your subsequent career path and who has influenced you.

I took my first job at Children's Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota and worked with Dr. Susan Simonton for 7 years. Susan was a fun, energetic person and a great first boss. At Minnesota, I worked as a generalist in pediatric pathology, performed autopsies, and oversaw send outs and reference laboratory testing.

I left Minnesota in 2014. I wanted to go into academic medicine, so I accepted an offer at Vanderbilt, where there were more opportunities for teaching and research. I worked there for the next 2 years.

There I taught residents, was briefly in charge of the fellowship, and participated in a few collaborative projects.

In 2017 I moved to Seattle Children's Hospital. In Seattle, I have continued my work in non-neoplastic liver and gastrointestinal pathology. Currently I have ongoing collaborations on celiac disease, and I am working as the site pathologist for the collaborative liver study – [The Childhood Liver Disease Research Network \(ChiLDRen\)](#).

What have you previously done in the SPP?

I was first encouraged to join the SPP by Dr. Bove, and I later became Practice Committee Chair. After that I became the Education Committee Chair, then the Secretary, and soon the next President. I have certainly learned a lot from my time in the SPP.

What would you consider to be the strengths and challenges of pediatric pathology and the SPP?

My favorite thing about being a pediatric pathologist is being a generalist and learning about things from a wider focus.

I love that the SPP is a tightknit group . I am excited that we are becoming a Companion Society of USCAP and hope that it will allow us to attract more residents into pediatric pathology fellowships. In order to sustain our field, we need to improve outreach to trainees. I have always felt the Fall meeting feels unique and I am looking forward to the new expanded Fall meeting schedule that will start in 2025.

I would like to see more mentorship opportunities within SPP. It seems that opportunities for mentorship in projects around pediatric neoplasms are well developed, but non-neoplastic disease has some catching up to do. Hopefully we will be able to better connect new fellows and attendings with more established pediatric pathologists to foster mentoring.

After dealing with some challenges, SPP is well positioned to move forward. Our new management group, AMI, is a strong asset, and I am confident they can help us as we try to streamline complicated processes for more nimble responses.

SPP 2024 Spring Meeting Retro

Thank You to Everyone Who Participated in Our 2024 Spring Meeting!

Check out some highlights from our time together:

- 12 Platform Presentations Given

- 47 Posters Presented
 - Farber-Landing Lecture by Dr. Hiroyuki Shimada, Neuroblastoma Pathology: 40 Years of Experience
 - Featured Symposium: Pediatric Thyroid Tumors: A Practical Update on The Classification, Molecular Diagnostics and Management Strategies
-

Awards Presented Include:

- **Presidential Distinguished Colleagues**
 - Cristina Pacheco, MD
 - Charles Timmons, MD, PhD
 - Bruce Pawel, MD
- **Neustein Award: John Van Arnam, MD**
 - Integrated Characterization of Soft Tissue and CNS CIC-Rearranged Sarcomas Reveals Shared Epigenetic Signatures Across Fusion Types and Anatomic Locations
- **Vawter Award: Yan Zhou, MD**
 - Molecular profiling in pediatric hepatocellular adenomas: does it help with the diagnosis and subtyping?
- **Benirschke Perinatal Award: Ansa Mehreen, MD**
 - Pregnancy Loss Associated with COVID-19 infection: Correlations with viral RNA in placental and fetal tissue
- **Enid Gilbert Barness Prize: Jennifer Pogoriler, MD, PhD**
 - Defining the spatial landscape of KRAS mutated congenital pulmonary airway malformations: a distinct entity with a spectrum of histopathologic features
- **Lotte Strauss Prize: Nicholas Willard, DO**
 - Integration of single nuclei RNA sequencing, spatial transcriptomics and histochemistry defines the complex microenvironment of NF1 associated plexiform neurofibromas
- **Best Paper of the Year: Jefferson Terry, MD**
 - Patterns of Interferon γ Expression and C4d Deposition in Chronic Intervillositis of Unknown Etiology
- **Young Investigator Research Grant: Virginia Chu Cheung, PhD**
 - Examining the cellular dynamics of the human implantation site using pluripotent stem cells
- **Annual Research Grant: Csaba Galambos, MD, PhD**
 - Endothelial-mesenchymal transition is a major driver of alveolar capillary remodeling in pulmonary venoocclusive disease

Credit claiming & recordings are available for in-person attendees at education.sponline.org until **June 23, 2024**. Please email info@sponline.org with any issues.

Recordings of our Spring Meeting are now available for purchase for those who did not attend in person. Content includes:

- 12 Platform Presentations
- Farber-Landing Lecture by Dr. Hiroyuki Shimada, Neuroblastoma Pathology: 40 Years of Experience
- Featured Symposium: Pediatric Thyroid Tumors: A Practical Update on The Classification, Molecular Diagnostics and Management Strategies
- Extra: SPP Business Meeting & President's Address (non-CME)

Cost: \$395 for all recordings

Purchase at education.spponline.org.

Purchase & credit claiming is available until August 31st, 2024.

Joint PPS/SPP Meeting



2024 PPS/SPP JOINT MEETING

September 12th - 14th, 2024
The Dublin Royal Convention Centre
Dublin, Ireland

September 12th - 14th | Dublin, Ireland

Registration is Live!

We hope you'll join us in Dublin this September.

For event details and hotel options, visit the [PPS site](#).

Early bird rates available until June 30th.

Registration link: <https://paedpath.org/meeting/register-meeting.php>

Abstract submissions have closed.

For questions regarding registration or abstracts, please email Grieg at greig@tiktokdesign.co.uk.

Committee Connection

Highlights from the I&C Committee:

The Pediatric and Developmental Pathology Podcast launched March 13th, with the second episode published on May 8th. Episodes feature interviews with authors of articles in PDP to highlight pediatric pathologists as well as their published works in the journal. The first episodes have featured discussions of eosinophilic gastrointestinal diseases and pediatric acute liver failure. Follow the podcast by searching your favorite podcast app for The Pediatric and Developmental Pathology Podcast!

The I&C committee is working with AMI and committee team leaders for FB, Twitter, LinkedIn, Forum and Job Boards to improve visibility of the SPP on social media as well as create and curate content. The committee is also working on collaborative efforts to develop atlas sections for the SPP website. Brand new atlases of placenta and soft tissue pathology are in development.

Thank you to SPP members who participated in recording video interviews at the Spring SPP meeting! Editing of these videos is nearly complete and we will be reaching out to contributors for their approval of the finished video before it appears on the SPP website.

Fellowship Committee Updates:

The fellowship committee in collaboration with the I&C recorder and in the process of fine tuning the short video interviews questions at the previous spring meeting. It will be posted on our website shortly. The list for fellowship programs has been updated and we are looking forward to welcoming 17 new colleagues after completing fellowships and boards this fall. For next academic year, starting July 2024, the ACGME decreased the numbers of required autopsies to 30 during the pediatric fellowship training. The AB-path board examinations will be available between September 9th - 28th, 2024, for the graduated fellows.

Membership Committee Updates:

In the last quarter the membership committee reviewed and approved 18 new members including eight regular members, four junior members, and four affiliate members. Welcome to SPP! Additionally, two regular members have changed to emeritus status.

Practice Committee Updates:

Solid tumor molecular testing Survey:

- Dr. Gestrich is leading efforts to draft a manuscript based on the results of the SPP Member survey of solid tumor molecular testing practices.

Fetal Genetic Testing Survey:

- Dr. Keisling finalized a survey to collect data on fetal genetic testing practices.
- The survey was approved by the Executive Committee and recently sent out to the membership.

CNS Tumors Survey:

- Dr. Sanda Alexandrescu, Dr. Bonnie Cole, and Dr. Veena Rajaram finalized a survey to collect data regarding molecular testing practices for CNS tumors.
- The survey was submitted to the Executive Committee for review.

CAP Requirements for Cytopathology

- A letter regarding Cytopathology workload screening and documentation requirements in pediatric pathology practice was submitted to the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Advisory Committee (CLIAC) for consideration.

The SPP - 25 Years Ago

The SPP welcomed new President Joe Rutledge, who reported on a successful meeting in San Francisco. In his first President's Message, he noted upcoming monetary challenges to the SPP, which included financing for professional assistance from the office staff, increasing institutional circulation of SPP-owned publications, identifying additional income streams besides member endowments, and funding to support new ideas coming to Council, particularly those related to perinatal pathology. He also noted that new educational requirements were pending, particularly in residency and board requirements.

Dr. Rutledge also commented on the pediatric pathology listserv, a world-wide group of about 280 pathologists who kept in daily contact via email messages that included all members of the group.

Also announced was a perinatal meeting to precede the Fall Meeting, which was to be held at Providence, RI. An entire day was planned for small group meetings, poster sessions, and a symposium on the clinicopathologic aspects of preterm birth.

SPP Retired Presidents on *What's Next?*

What comes after decades of immersion in the pediatric laboratory? We sought to answer that question by questioning retired past-presidents. We hope this provides some view of the future for you. Those responding to our questions have their responses identified by their initials [year represent SPP Presidency term]: David Parham 08, Kathy Patterson 11, John Buchino 96, Cindy Kaplan 10, Henry Krous02, Jim Dimmick 97, Denis Benjamin 04, and Blaise Favara 85. Several past presidents are still working away. The responses have been edited for brevity, but the full stories from some are very interesting. Most missed their colleagues, highlighting the importance of this aspect of one's career. Thanks to all for participating!

What is Your Favorite Activity During Retirement?

Stamp collecting & bird watching-DP

Worldwide travel to which I am not a stranger. Taking care of grandchild. Quilting-KP

Long walks, reading, travel, volunteering-JB

Fiber hobbies, reading beach walks, and seeing family--CK

Family, discussion groups including political, reading, book club, golf-HK

Family, non-medical writing, travel, cycling, and volunteering-JD

Travel, writing, painting, and mycology-DB

Enjoy being with my children, the youngest of which is 41-BF

Do You Keep Up with Pediatric pathology? Medicine? How Many Hours/Week?

Editing SPP newsletter, meetings, and educational offerings, about 2 hours/wk-DP

I keep up with science (that I missed for 45 years) instead of pathology-KP

I peruse ped path and pediatric journals and attend occasional grand rounds-JB

I completing editing Benirschke's book and working on medical malpractice cases, and I zoom to meetings a few hours a week.-CK

I do keep up especially with SIDS and SUDC maintaining some collaborations-HK

I keep up with basic science and primary and palliative care, the later since I am on a board for the local Family Practice Clinic and local Hospice Board (donations accepted).-JD

I do not keep up-DB

I do not keep up, though I started a pediatric practice in MT with 3000 patients over a decade-BF

Did You Retire at the Right Time? Too Early? Too Late?

Too early-DP

65 was a good time for me to retire-KP

Right time-JB

It was a good time to retire-CK

Losing a chunk of my grant funding at 69 forced me to retire prematurely and without planning, golf became the replacement-HK

Bureaucratic burnout made it the right time to retire though I did some part time work for a few years-JD

Retirement at the right time-DB

The right time to leave pathology, but I returned to general pediatric rural medicine-BF

What Aspects of Your Prior Work do You Most Miss, If Any?

The camaraderie of colleagues-DP

Interaction with my colleagues and lab staff. Helping patients while solving problem cases. Daily bike commute 18 miles RT-KP

I miss the checks-JB

I miss the routine and camaraderie of all I worked with and taught as well as the observation of new findings at autopsy-CK

I miss research participation and collaboration and meetings with colleagues including the SPP. I also miss the daily routine of pediatric pathology-HK
I miss my colleagues, clinical research, students, and residents-JD
Daily interaction with clinical colleagues-DB
Collaboration with colleagues-BF

If You Went Back to Medicine, What Would You Like to Do?

Will return to pediatric pathology 20 hr./wk-DP

I would return to pediatric pathology-KP

I would do hospital administration-JB

I would go back to the same with more research collaboration-CK

I would return to doing what was so rewarding over several decades-HK

Perinatal and pediatric pathology-JD

I would not consider a return-DB

I did go back to primary care including beginning a non-profit Child and Family Center in MT. I also worked at the Rocky Mountain Laboratories for a while-BF

In Memoriam of Doctor Paul Dickman

Paul Samuel Dickman, M.D.

September 28th, 1947 – March 25th, 2024

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of Dr. Paul S. Dickman on March 25th, 2024, in Phoenix, Arizona. He grew up in Spring Valley, New York,



Paul was a warm, friendly, funny fellow. His high school buddies thought of him as a 'regular guy'. But he really wasn't a regular guy: he was exceedingly bright, witty, and talented but so unassuming that few people ever knew the extent of his gifts and interests. He was the closest, most loyal of friends to classmates in elementary school, in high school, Boy Scouts and summer camp, in college, and in medical school.

He was always active: running, cycling, swimming, travelling, playing many musical instruments. He accompanied summer stock musicals on the piano, including Three Penny Opera, and loved to play Scott Joplin's rags.

In later years, he became a practicing Zen Buddhist, serving as a senior dharma teacher in the Kwan Um School of Zen; an avid vegetable gardener, growing enough produce to feed his family throughout the growing season; a devoted companion to four parrots; an avid birder all over the world, and a talented amateur musician, playing piano, clarinet, and saxophone. He always looked forward to the annual meeting of the Society for Pediatric Pathology, where he and his colleagues came together in a jazz band and performed during the Society dinner.

Professionally, Dr. Dickman was the first board-certified pediatric pathologist to practice in Arizona. In addition to his work as a clinician, he was a mentor, a teacher, and a researcher. He was an active member of the International Academy of Pathology, the Society for Pediatric Pathology, and the Arizona Society of Pathologists, as well as a fellow of the College of American Pathologists. He spoke and taught regularly at domestic and international conferences and collaborated with research colleagues around the world. He was a passionate teacher, having held professorships in the medical schools at the University of California, Los Angeles, the University of Pittsburgh, and the University of Arizona,

Tucson and Phoenix, training medical students, residents and fellows. To him, his students were always the source of great enthusiasm and delight.

Dr. Dickman graduated from Wesleyan University in 1969 and received his medical degree from Pennsylvania State University in 1973. He then served as Chief Resident in Pathology at both the Penn State Medical College and the University of California, San Diego. He was a research fellow at the National Institutes of Health and then served as a staff pathologist at UCLA-Harbor Medical Center and the University of Pittsburgh Children's Hospital. In 2002, Dr. Dickman established the laboratories at the Phoenix Children's Hospital. In addition to his residencies and his role at Phoenix Children's Hospital, he successively or concurrently held academic positions at the University of California, Los Angeles; the University of Pittsburgh; the University of Arizona, both in Tucson and Phoenix; and the Mayo Clinic.

Paul Dickman was Emeritus Professor and Clinical Scholar in Pathology and Child Health at the University of Arizona, the Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine, and Phoenix Children's Hospital. He had a particular interest in pediatric solid tumors, especially Ewing sarcoma. For many years, he was a study pathologist for clinical trials of Ewing sarcoma and rhabdomyosarcoma at the National Institutes of Health. Until his retirement in 2021, he collaborated with hematologist/oncologists at Phoenix Children's Hospital on studies of possible therapeutic targets in solid tumors. He was also interested in other pediatric diseases, such as microvillus inclusion disease.

Dr. Dickman is survived by his wife of 55 years, Dr. Frances Baker Dickman of Phoenix and his sister Margery Silverman of Reading, England. He also leaves nieces, nephews, and grandnieces and grandnephews in both the United States and the United Kingdom, as well as so many friends, colleagues and students who loved and admired him.

Donations in lieu of flowers can be directed to: The Phoenix Chamber Music Society, PCMSociety@aol.com, 602-252-0095, P.O. Box 34235, Phoenix, Arizona 85067 or the Laboratory Improvement Fund at the Phoenix Children's Foundation, foundation@phoenixchildrens.com 602-933-4483 2929 E. Camelback Road, Suite 122, Phoenix, Arizona 85016

Fran Dickman

Meet Our New Assistant Editor Sonja Chen

Sonja Chen was born and raised in the twin island republic of Trinidad and Tobago. As a child and teenager, art was integral in her development as a part of her culture - from music to costumery to painting on various media. Her love of art drew her to the love of medicine as an art form, and she enrolled in medical school at the University of the West Indies in Trinidad and Tobago. After completing medical school and one year of internship in the major public hospital in the capital, Port of Spain, she worked in the Pathology Department for over two years while studying for US examinations. When it came time to choose a residency, it was an easy and clear choice, as pathology in itself is an artform on many levels.



Sonja was fortunate enough to obtain an observership opportunity at the Brown University AP/CP program in Rhode Island, where she subsequently completed her four-year AP/CP residency. She moved to New York for a fellowship in Oncologic Surgical Pathology and subsequently to Boston

Children's Hospital for Pediatric Pathology. Following her pediatric pathology fellowship, she became staff at the AP/CP program at Brown, where she worked for four years as an assistant professor, Director of Pediatric Pathology, and Director of Observers and Medical Student Rotations. She subsequently moved to Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus Ohio, where she became Autopsy Director and more recently Associate Program Director for the Anatomic Pediatric Pathology Fellowship. She enjoys teaching learners of all ages, traveling, and learning about the history of other cultures and countries. Her areas of interest in pathology include soft tissue and bone tumors, genitourinary tumors, and autopsies. Her greatest joy is spending time with her husband and son.

Connect with SPP

Society for Pediatric Pathology

5727 Baker Way NW, Suite #200 | Gig Harbor, WA 98332

info@spponline.org

www.spponline.org

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[LinkedIn](#)