



January 28, 2022

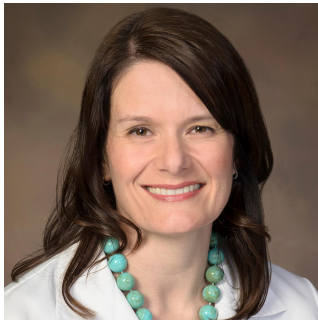
## Blood Pressure Levels Increased during the COVID-19 Pandemic



Blood pressure control worsened in both men and women with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States in 2020. Women and older adults had the highest blood pressures measured during the pandemic. "The pandemic upended so many routines, from personal lifestyle and disease prevention habits to healthcare delivery. This study illustrates the importance of knowing your numbers, monitoring your health and staying on top of preventive health care," said **Nancy K. Sweitzer, MD, PHD**, director of the University of Arizona Sarver Heart Center and professor of

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## Clinical Research to Study Vagus Nerve Stimulation for Heart Failure Patients



The University of Arizona Sarver Heart Center is participating in a multi-site clinical trial to study whether stimulation of the vagus nerve improves heart function in patients diagnosed with heart failure. **Elizabeth Juneman, MD**, associate professor of medicine and medical director of the **ADVANCED HEART DISEASE PROGRAM**, is the principal investigator at the Tucson site for the study called, "Autonomic Regulation Therapy to Enhance Myocardial Function and Reduce Progression of Heart Failure With Reduced Ejection Fraction" (ANTHEM-HFrEF).

Eligible patients with symptomatic heart failure and reduced left ventricular ejection fraction are randomized to one of two treatment groups. One group undergoes implantation of the VITARIA system adjacent to a long nerve running from the brain to the chest called the vagus nerve. The vagus nerve is one of the 12 cranial nerves, running from the brain to structures in the head and upper chest. The implant is about the size of a very thick credit card and must be added to optimal medical therapy for heart failure. The control group continues to receive medical therapy but does not undergo implantation. Participants in the trial are randomized to the two groups, meaning the patients and doctors have no control over the group to which a patient will be assigned. [Read More](#)

This is one example of the more than 20 clinical research studies underway in Sarver Heart Center's Cardiovascular Clinical Research Program. To learn more about clinical research at Sarver Heart Center, visit [SARVER HEART CENTER CLINICAL RESEARCH](#).

[Learn More About Participating in Clinical Research](#)

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## Your Support Has Big Impact - Hall Awards Help Medical Students in the College of Medicine – Phoenix

The **University of Arizona College of Medicine – Phoenix** selected two medical students to receive the Charles W. Hall Jr. and Virginia C. Hall Memorial Endowment Award - Sabrina Dahak and Rachel Schuurs.

Originally established at the Sarver Heart Center to inspire and reward the most outstanding trainees in medicine based on their performance and excellence in the Cardiac Care Unit, the Hall family recently expanded the focus to also support the College of Medicine -



Phoenix.

Mr. Charles W. Hall Jr. was a businessman from Illinois whose children are all UArizona Alumni. He was an active lobbyist for building the medical school in Tucson. The Charles W. Hall Jr. and Virginia C. Hall Memorial Endowment Award was established at the Sarver Heart Center through an effort led by his son and bolstered by their family and friends. **Meet the Award Recipients**

## Charlotte Todd Honored with 2021 Bateman Superb Service Award

Congratulations to Charlotte Todd, Sarver Heart Center's business manager, who was honored for her thoughtfulness, professionalism and hard work as the 2021 recipient of the Brian Bateman Superb Service Award.

"Charlotte makes every aspect of the Sarver Heart Center run smoothly and error-free. Her long service at the University of Arizona means she is familiar with all the rules and regulations and knows how to help us all get things done. She works very independently as the business manager of the center, ensuring we focus on our mission continuously and steward all our resources as wisely as possible. She has adapted without complaint to the ever-changing environment at the center during the past six years," said Nancy K. Sweitzer, MD, PhD, director of Sarver Heart Center and professor of medicine, UArizona College of Medicine - Tucson.



### Read about Brian Bateman and his ingredient to success, inspiration to the Service award

Please consider a gift to support the Sarver Heart Center mission of innovating life-saving patient care.

[Learn How To Give](#)

## Onward to a Healthy Retirement - Katie Maass Retires from Sarver Heart Center

The conversation with the Medicare consultant made me realize my job set me on a path to begin retirement in a healthier state than most. She asked me three times, "What prescriptions do you take?" And, each time I told her, "none, yet."

During the past 12 years, I've learned from the outstanding faculty at the University of Arizona Sarver Heart Center that while my family history increases my risks of developing heart disease, I can do much to



prevent and delay disease and severity.

**Read more of Katie's review of heart healthy messages she learned during her 12 years of exemplary service as the director of communications at the University of Arizona Sarver Heart Center.**

## **A Letter from Dr. Nancy K. Sweitzer on the New Director of Communications**

Please join me in welcoming **Colleen Menadier** as the University of Arizona Sarver Heart Center Director of Communications. Colleen is a Rocky Mountain Regional Emmy Award-winning television broadcast news producer with nine years of experience. She just wrapped up her last newscast with KOLD News 13, where she was an executive producer. As a producer, Colleen's experience includes generating and writing news stories, creating graphics, and managing social media.



Colleen, who recently served on the Sigma Kappa Advisory Board at the University of Arizona, graduated from the University of Missouri School of Journalism.

Colleen succeeds Katie Maass, who will officially be retired on January 25, 2022. We look forward to Colleen continuing the tradition of excellence in directing the Sarver Heart Center Newsletter, publications, web and social media, media relations and public outreach and education strategic plans.

"I am very excited to use my journalism skills in a new way, spreading awareness of the life-changing research at the Sarver Heart Center, and advocating for heart health," said Colleen.

Colleen can be reached at 626-4083 or **[cmenadier@email.arizona.edu](mailto:cmenadier@email.arizona.edu)**. She will be located in the Sarver Heart Center cubicle area 4143B1 located just outside of Dr. Juneman's office, 4143C.

**Sarver Heart Center**  
1501 North Campbell Avenue  
Tucson, Arizona 85724  
Phone: 520-626-2000  
Toll Free: 800-665-2328

**Contact SHC Staff**

