



Sarver Heart  
Center

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Sarver Heart Center



November 24, 2021

## We Choose Gratitude



During another year of challenges, unexpected twists and turns, with hope on the horizon, your continued support lifted our hearts. With much gratitude, we send our best wishes for your health and resilience.

With sincere thanks,  
All of us at the Sarver Heart Center

*Photo: Kwan S. Lee, MD*

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**Vascular Surgeon Leads NIH-  
funded Study of Brain Blood Flow  
and Alzheimer's Disease**



**Craig Weinkauf, MD, PhD**, is conducting research that may show a connection between carotid disease and Alzheimer's, a finding that could provide a new pathway for preventing dementia.

Carotid artery disease happens when fatty deposits clog blood vessels that deliver blood to the brain, and it causes about 10-20% of strokes. Carotid disease is a modifiable risk factor that can be slowed or reduced through lifestyle changes, medication and surgical intervention.

"It seems logical that severe blockages would affect things like thinking, clarity and memory. As a field, we don't treat patients with carotid disease based on cognitively defined outcomes; we don't even look for them," said Dr. Weinkauf, assistant professor of surgery, who also is a Sarver Heart Center member.

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## Study to Train Advanced Heart Disease Providers to Remove Bias

A clinical research project led by **Khadijah Breathett, MD, MS**, seeks to reduce bias and remove barriers to equitable treatment for advanced heart disease by training health care providers.

Building on prior health disparities research that identified physician bias, Dr. Breathett is leading a National Institutes of Health-funded study of the effectiveness of a training program that introduces standardized protocols to address barriers to equity and provides evidence-based bias training tailored for advanced heart disease providers.

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## Community Leader Honored with Founders Award



**Wanda F Moore**, chair of University of Arizona Sarver Heart Center's Minority Outreach Program, is the 2021 recipient of **Greater Tucson Leadership's Founders Award**. Since 2009, Wanda has expanded community education and outreach activities to underserved minority communities. She also serves on the Sarver Heart Center Board.

"African Americans bear a disproportionate burden of heart disease in the United States. Wanda has been personally impacted by heart disease, as have many members of her family. She has learned the factors impacting heart disease risk in her community and is highly engaged in reducing risk in herself, those she loves, and everyone in her community. We have much work ahead of us and I cannot express how grateful I am to have an ally like Wanda," said **Nancy K. Sweitzer, MD, PhD**, director of the Sarver Heart Center and professor of medicine at UArizona College of Medicine – Tucson.

*Pictured from left: Jennifer Turner and Katie Maass nominated Wanda F Moore for the Founders Award.*

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## Clinical Study Assesses Usefulness of Genetics Information in Heart Disease Care

**Dr. Joseph Alpert** is leading an observational study with the goals of helping the physician in the diagnosis process, minimizing the rate of adverse drug effects, and increasing patient engagement and satisfaction with treatment.

Both genetic and environmental factors determine cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk. A combination of lipid panels, blood pressure measurements, and lifestyle

questions are used to diagnosis and treat a patient. While genetics plays a major role in CVD, this information usually is not available since most physicians are not trained in this field. Knowing more about the genetic background of the patient, using samples from nasal swabs, may provide the clinician additional insights while diagnosing the patient.

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

## Your Support Has Big Impact - 35 Years of Simulation Education



Support from generous donors gives faculty resources necessary to educate the next generation of cardiologists. Throughout its 35-year history, Sarver Heart Center faculty have advanced the field of simulation training. "Harvey" has taught heart sounds to decades of residents and medical students.

This past summer, the **Steven M. Gootter Foundation** provided funding to purchase an advanced cardiovascular simulator that enables faculty, fellows and other trainees to learn and practice advanced catheter procedures before they ever touch patients. Now named the **Steven M. Gootter Cardiovascular Medicine Simulation**

**Center**, the training center was featured in a recent **Health Sciences Connect video: Harvey's Heart**.

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

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

[Contact SHC Staff](#)

