

# 2020 RESEARCH & TEACHING AWARDS



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**“To be a good physician, you have to keep up with what is new, which means you have to be involved in research and training. Patient care is our first obligation, and to maintain a high quality of care, we must also research and teach. And we do.”**

**- Morris F. Collen, MD**



The TPMG Research and Teaching Awards were established in 2003 to acknowledge the extraordinary accomplishments of practicing clinicians who also excel in research and teaching.

In 1948, Morris F. Collen, MD, became one of the seven founding physicians of The Permanente Medical Group. As a clinician, researcher and teacher, Dr. Collen made significant contributions to TPMG colleagues and Kaiser Permanente members. Today, he is recognized internationally for his pioneering work in applying computer technology to medicine.

From 1953 to 1961, Dr. Collen served as physician-in-chief at KP San Francisco. He became director of Medical Methods Research (now the KP Division of Research) in 1961, ending his

tenure in 1979 when he became director of the Division of Technology Assessment.

Dr. Collen's work in medical computing attracted national attention. He was elected to the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Science in 1981 and served as chair of the Library of Medicine's Board of Scientific Counselors from 1985 to 1987. As a scholar-in-residence from 1987 to 1993, he wrote a definitive history of medical applications of the computer. From 1983 onward, Dr. Collen served as a consultant with the KP Division of Research, where he remained an enthusiastic supporter of research and teaching in TPMG.

Dr. Collen passed away in 2014 at age 100.

Diane Chan, MD  
Pediatrics, KP North Valley



### Diane Chan, MD - Pediatrics, KP North Valley

Dr. Chan’s passion for teaching was sparked by the joy she found educating young patients and their caregivers during her pediatric training. She says what sustains that passion—and has inspired her to devote her nearly 20-year career in The Permanente Medical Group (TPMG) to teaching medical students, residents, and colleagues alike—has always been connection with others.

“Teaching is a privilege that provides an opportunity to share in someone’s journey and get to know the person wearing the white coat,” explains Dr. Chan. “I want to know what inspired them to pursue a medical career. What are they proud of? What do they see as their weaknesses at this point in their career? And most importantly, how can I help?”

Dr. Chan’s gift for listening and offering insightful pearls of wisdom has made her a legendary educator in the North Valley. In KP Roseville’s outpatient pediatric clinic, where she supervises and teaches medical students and residents, Dr. Chan takes learners under her wing, meeting with them individually to

discover their goals and aspirations. Even if she is not their primary preceptor, she mentors and builds a relationship with each student.

“Dr. Chan imparts not only the science but also the art of medicine, particularly around communication,” says Richard Florio, MD, physician-in-chief for KP Roseville. “She models empathy and emotional intelligence in every interaction. Thanks to her warmth and the

example she sets, we’ve recruited many of our best students and residents to become TPMG physicians.”

**“The role of a teacher is not to simply share everything you know about a particular topic. It’s meeting a student where they are, and figuring out how to help them become the physician they envision themselves to be.”**

Dr. Chan also serves as a guiding light for colleagues. For years she was a communication consultant, helping physicians strengthen their relationships with their patients. Today she teaches seasoned physicians how to mentor peers, leads a new physician seminar series, and serves as local co-chief of TPMG’s Joy and Meaning in Medicine and Exceptional Care Experience initiatives.

Years of experience have not dimmed her enthusiasm. “I’m just as passionate about teaching as I was my very first day,” she says.

Cheryl McBride, DO  
Emergency Medicine, KP Santa Rosa



Cheryl McBride, DO - Emergency Medicine, KP Santa Rosa

When it comes to modeling educational leadership, no one walks the talk more than Dr. McBride.

An inspiring rotation director within KP Santa Rosa's Family Medicine residency program, Dr. McBride provides remarkably innovative educational opportunities for emergency medicine residents and medical students, at the medical center and in the community.

She never loses an opportunity to combine her passion for sports medicine with her love of teaching. From participating in physician ski patrols to providing medical care at marathons and triathlons, it hasn't been unusual to see her volunteering her time with any number of resident physicians in tow.

The 2017 Tubbs fire in Sonoma County led her to focus her attention on an even greater need. While working in the Emergency Department as the full scope of the disaster unfolded and the hospital had to be evacuated, Dr. McBride also managed to help her husband and two young children evacuate. Although she and her family lost their home and all possessions,

Dr. McBride has turned the tragedy into an educational opportunity.

She developed a resident disaster preparedness curriculum, leveraging all that was learned in the Emergency Department during the hospital evacuation. She also set up informal educational sessions to offer insights gained through her own loss so that her colleagues, many of whom had also lost their homes, could learn from their experiences together.

"Her impact is widely felt throughout the medical center," says Michael Shulman, MD, KP Santa Rosa physician-in-chief. "Her teachings have been instrumental in how we as a medical group think about resiliency and preparedness. It's a tremendous gift."

Dr. McBride embraces education in her own life as well. In the last several years she's completed two teaching fellowships in addition to her sports medicine fellowship in 2007.

"Connecting my passions outside of medicine with my work as a physician has been a great way for me to practice resiliency," she says.

**"I like to take residents with me when I volunteer in the community so that they gain experience in their role, not only as practicing physicians, but also as members of the community."**

Dan Li, MD  
Gastroenterology, KP Santa Clara



### Dan Li, MD – Gastroenterology, KP Santa Clara

Dr. Li's passion for supporting patients with Lynch syndrome (LS) spans an entire career. Patients who have LS, a hereditary condition that greatly increases the risk of colorectal cancer (CRC) and other cancers, carry a lifetime risk of up to 80% for CRC, compared to a risk of about 6% in the general population. But when LS is diagnosed early and proactively managed, mortality is decreased for patients and their at-risk relatives.

Dr. Li developed a universal LS screening program in 2011 for all patients newly diagnosed with CRC in KP Northern California. The program, now one of the largest in the country, has since screened more than 9,000 patients and identified more than 100 with LS. However, because patients with LS tend to develop CRC at a young age, Dr. Li became interested in investigating the diagnostic yield and efficiency of screening elderly patients, and whether it is reasonable to stop screening above a certain age.

"It's not common for patients with Lynch to develop their first cancer in

their 70s or 80s," Dr. Li explains. "While several studies support the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of universal screening for those 70 or younger, the same type of data on older patients has been sparse."

**"I'm grateful for TPMG's strong support of universal Lynch syndrome screening, the collaboration among my colleagues in multiple specialties, and support from the KP Division of Research. This study would not have been possible without them."**

Dr. Li conducted a retrospective cohort study of 3,891 patients in KP Northern California with newly diagnosed CRC who had LS screening between 2011 and 2016. His findings, published in *Annals of Internal Medicine* in 2019, demonstrate a substantial decline in diagnosis of Lynch in elderly patients. Of the 63 Lynch cases in the cohort, only 5 were detected after age 70, and just 1 after age 80.

"We found that discontinuing reflex screening for LS after age 80 might be reasonable, particularly in resource-limited settings," says Dr. Li. "Although further studies in other health care settings are still needed, our study has the potential to inform clinical care providers and health policy makers, and may help national guideline committees refine future screening recommendations."

## Nareg Roubinian, MD

Pulmonary Medicine, KP Oakland



## Nareg Roubinian, MD - Pulmonary Medicine, KP Oakland

Dr. Roubinian is one of those physicians who thrives on wearing more than one hat. After finishing a fellowship in critical care medicine in 2011, he knew he wanted to be a clinician. Shortly afterward, an opportunity to do clinical research helped him discover he was just as passionate about clinical investigations as he was caring for patients. So when he joined TPMG in 2015 to practice as a pulmonologist while conducting research, he knew he'd discovered the best of both worlds.

Over the last decade, Dr. Roubinian has pursued research in the field of blood transfusion, noticing that much about its epidemiology, particularly as it relates to anemia, is unknown. Recognizing a lack of data on how patients with anemia should be managed following their intensive care and hospital stays, he embarked on a research collaboration to evaluate patient outcomes longitudinally, following hospital care.

Anemia is common in hospitalized patients and has been independently associated with morbidity and mortality. In the past, physicians often

treated anemia with transfusions to increase hemoglobin levels, but a series of randomized controlled trials showed similar outcomes with less frequent red blood cell transfusion.

Dr. Roubinian and his Division of Research colleagues followed a cohort of nearly half a million patients over 5 years. They found that a decline in the use of red blood cell transfusions was associated with an increase in anemia during and following hospitalization, but that this increase was not associated with adverse effects on long-term outcomes. In fact, what they found were improved outcomes in anemic patients in parallel with those of all other hospitalized patients in KP Northern California.

**“Until recently, outcome data guiding the management of anemic patients after hospitalization has been limited. But thanks to our integrated health care system, we’ve been able to follow anemic patients for months or years after they go home.”**

“Dr. Roubinian humbly and expertly strikes a perfect balance between clinical practice and research,” says Rita Ng, MD, co-physician-in-chief for KP East Bay. “This study adds to the evidence regarding the safety of transfusion

guidelines and hopefully will provide some reassurance to physicians when deciding whether to discharge a patient with anemia home.”

## Morris F. Collen Research Award

- 2019** **David Baer, MD, FACP**, Oncology, KP Oakland  
**Douglas Corley, MD, PhD**, Gastroenterology, KP San Francisco  
**Theodore Levin, MD**, Gastroenterology, KP Walnut Creek  
**Andrea Wickremasinghe, MD**, Neonatology, KP Santa Clara
- 2018** **Dustin Ballard, MD, MBE**, Emergency Medicine, KP San Rafael  
**Uli Chettipally, MD, MPH**, Emergency Medicine, KP South San Francisco  
**Tara Greenhow, MD**, Pediatric Infectious Diseases, KP San Francisco  
**Mamata Kene, MD**, Emergency Medicine, KP Fremont  
**Dustin Mark, MD**, Emergency Medicine, KP Oakland  
**Dana Sax, MD, MPH**, Emergency Medicine, KP Oakland  
**David Vinson, MD**, Emergency Medicine, KP Sacramento
- 2017** **Robert Lundstrom, MD**, Cardiology, KP San Francisco  
**Jamal Rana, MD**, Cardiology, KP Oakland
- 2016** **Harley Goldberg, DO**, Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, KP San Jose  
**Walter Kinney, MD**, Gynecologic Oncology, KP Sacramento
- 2015** **Douglas Corley, MD, PhD**, Gastroenterology, KP San Francisco  
**Elizabeth Suh-Burgmann, MD**, Ob-Gyn, KP Walnut Creek

## Teaching Award for Excellence in CME

- 2019** **Neelesh Kenia, MD**, Pediatrics & Sports Medicine, KP San Francisco
- 2018** **Victor Silvestre, MD**, Internal Medicine, KP Oakland
- 2017** **Cynthia Carmichael, MD**, Family Medicine, KP Pinole
- 2016** **Klaus Kernbach, DPM**, Podiatry, KP Vallejo
- 2015** **Ruma Kumar, MD**, Palliative Care, KP San Jose

## Teaching Award for Excellence in UME/GME

- 2019** **Mary Patton, MD, FACP**, Internal Medicine, KP Oakland
- 2018** **Gabriel Flaxman, MD**, Family Medicine, KP Vallejo
- 2017** **Diane Sklar, MD**, Urogynecology, KP San Francisco
- 2016** **Douglas Holsclaw, MD**, Ophthalmology, KP Redwood City  
**Matthew Lando, MD**, Head and Neck Surgery, KP Hayward
- 2015** **Laura Minikel, MD**, Ob-Gyn, KP Oakland