

## 2018-19 Hematology/Oncology Fellows

### Third Year

Aydah AlAwadhi, M.D.



**Hometown:** Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE)

**Medical School:** College of medicine and health sciences at UAE university

**Residency:** Saint Vincent Hospital, Worcester, MA

#### What are your career goals?

*I would like to practice oncology in the UAE and focus mainly on breast cancer care. Since the beginning of my training my main goal has been to improve quality and advance cancer care in the United Arab Emirates.*

#### Why did you chose MD Anderson?

*I wanted the opportunity to work with and gain experience from leaders in oncology in addition to being exposed to different subspecialties in oncology (including rare ones). MD Anderson was the place that could prepare me for an independent and innovative clinical practice.*

#### How has MD Anderson helped you in achieving your goals?

*As above and of course dedicated leadership!*

#### What do you like best about MD Anderson's fellowship program?

*Working with exceptional and down-to-earth faculty and of course best co-fellows to be and spend time with!*

**What do you like about living in Houston?**

*There is thousands of things to do in Houston including museums, kids activities, art, parks, theatres, many great places to hang out, etc....*

**What has surprised you most about living in Houston?**

*Houston is a booming city with cultural diversity!*

**What do you like to do outside of medicine?**

*Spend time with my family and having fun with my kids!*

# Melody Becnel, M.D.



**Hometown:** Vacherie, Louisiana

**Undergraduate:** : Nicholls State University

**Medical School:** Tulane University School of Medicine

**Residency:** Tulane University School of Medicine

## What are your career goals?

*My ultimate goal is to become an independent clinical investigator who is able to effectively apply the findings of my current and future studies to improve outcomes and quality of life for my future patients. Within the field of oncology, I have several areas of interest. From a clinical investigator perspective, I have a particular interest in the optimization of management of hematologic malignancies, particularly lymphoma and myeloma. With the ever-increasing use of and indications for immunotherapy, I am also interested in the complex interplay of the immune system and malignancy. I am particularly intrigued by (and hope to further investigate) the effect of underlying autoimmune diseases on the natural history of various lymphomas. I hope to use the information obtained through my current and future investigations to optimize targeted therapies that balance efficacy with quality of life via a more personalized approach to treatment. Additionally, having spent much of my prior medical career working with an underserved patient population, I have developed a strong interest in exploring disparities within oncology, particularly among women, minority populations, and the elderly as each of these populations experience unique challenges in terms of treatment and outcomes. I hope that enlightening others to the disparities that exist within oncology will bring us closer to closing these gaps.*

## Why did you chose MD Anderson?

*On my interview day, I learned quite a bit about the program and its philosophy. But I was most impressed with how much effort the fellowship puts into tailoring a fellowship path unique to each individual fellow. Of course, there are requirements that each fellow must meet, but aside from these, each fellow has the opportunity to tailor their 3 years of training towards their career goals, whether it is a more clinically oriented, research oriented, or some hybrid of the two. Additionally, as MD Anderson is a leader in oncology, and I looked forward to the opportunity to learn from and work with experts in the field.*

**How has MD Anderson helped you in achieving your goals?**

*I have had the opportunity to work with a fantastic group of attendings and mentors who have not only taught me the clinical skills needed to succeed in my future career, but they also taught me skills needed to be a successful clinical investigator. I still have quite a bit to learn, so I look forward to working closely with these individuals during the remainder of my fellowship.*

**What do you like best about MD Anderson's fellowship program?**

*My co-fellows are amazing. Having an awesome team of co-workers and friends around you makes the challenges of fellowship a little bit easier.*

*Another strength of this program is vast array of pathology that we are exposed to, and thus, have the opportunity to learn from. As a leading cancer hospital, MD Anderson is a place where, as a fellow, you will encounter extremely rare diseases, some that many physicians may never be exposed to. As fellows, we have the unique opportunity to learn the details of management for these often very challenging cases, but more importantly, we have the opportunity to be a part of an institution that gives patients hope by knowing that perhaps there is a innovative treatment option available here that may not be available at many other institutions.*

**What do you like about living in Houston?**

*I have family and friends in the area, so it is nice to be able to see them often.*

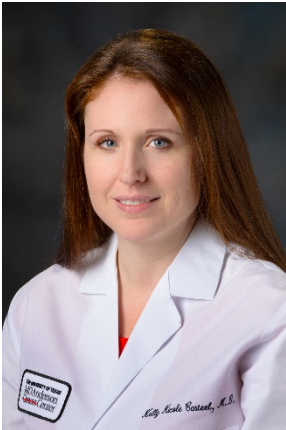
**What has surprised you most about living in Houston?**

*Not much. Having family in the area, I was pretty familiar with Houston prior to moving here.*

**What do you like to do outside of medicine?**

*If I'm not working, I enjoy spending time with my dogs and with my friends and family. I also like checking out all of the new restaurants that always seem to be popping up around Houston. As a result, my other favorite pastime is exercising and staying as active as possible (to balance my love of delicious food).*

# Kelly Casteel, M.D.



**Hometown:** Denver, Colorado

**Undergraduate:** Reed College, Portland, Oregon

**Medical School:** Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio

**Residency:** University of Texas at Houston

## **What are your career goals?**

*Clinical Investigator in Benign Hematology.*

## **Why did you chose MD Anderson?**

*Unparalleled support for research, career development, and balanced exposure to both general practice (at LBJ) and expert sub-specialty Hematology and Medical Oncology care.*

## **How has MD Anderson helped you in achieving your goals?**

*The program provides access to an amazing spectrum of hematology through rotations at four major academic centers (MD Anderson, Memorial Hermann Hospital, Baylor, and Methodist), where we have expert centers in leukemia, lymphoma, myeloma, hemophilia, sickle cell disease, and (of course) benign hematologic complications of cancer and its treatment. I have had amazing, supportive mentors and the ability to work with experts on pretty much any topic of interest.*

## **What do you like best about MD Anderson's fellowship program?**

*The LBJ clinic experience.*

## **What do you like about living in Houston?**

*Amazing restaurants and travel accessibility to both coasts and Mexico, with some non-stop flights to Europe and Asia.*

## **What has surprised you most about living in Houston?**

*Its incredible diversity.*

## **What do you like to do outside of medicine?**

*Travel with my family!*

# Jad Chahoud, M.D.



**Hometown:** Beirut, Lebanon

**Undergraduate:** The Lebanese University, Beirut

**Medical School:** The Lebanese University, Beirut

**Residency:** McGovern Medical School

## **What are your career goals?**

*To be a great clinician and clinical investigator.*

## **Why did you chose MD Anderson?**

*During my residency training I had the chance to rotate at MD Anderson and work on research projects. This experience helped me familiarize myself with program leadership, faculty and opportunities. For this reason I had no doubt that the hematology/ medical oncology fellowship at MD Anderson was the best fit for me.*

## **How has MD Anderson helped you in achieving your goals?**

*Through the support of the fellowship leadership and my mentors at MD Anderson I have been able to develop as a clinical researcher by participating at clinical trial workshops, developing clinical trials, securing grant support, publishing research and completing my Masters in Public Health.*

*The fellowship's focus on continuous learning and excellence in patient care has allowed me to grow as a clinician.*

## **What do you like best about MD Anderson's fellowship program?**

*The diverse patient population that we have the chance to care for.*

## **What do you like about living in Houston?**

*I enjoy the diversity of the city of Houston, as I am able to enjoy amazing Lebanese food and company.*

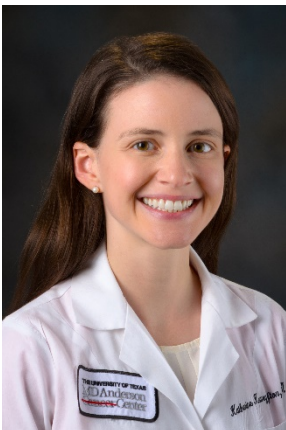
## **What has surprised you most about living in Houston?**

*The cultural diversity of the city of Houston.*

## **What do you like to do outside of medicine?**

*Watching football (AKA soccer) and traveling.*

## Katherine Clifton, M.D.



**Hometown:** Saint Louis, MO

**Undergraduate:** Saint Louis University

**Medical School:** : Loyola Chicago

**Residency:** Beth Israel Deaconess

**What are your career goals?**

*A career in academic oncology.*

**Why did you chose MD Anderson?**

*I was interested in the program's many opportunities for mentorship and clinical training.*

**How has MD Anderson helped you in achieving your goals?**

*Excellent mentorship and many opportunities for research.*

**What do you like best about MD Anderson's fellowship program?**

*My wonderful co-fellows.*

**What do you like about living in Houston?**

*The warm winters.*

**What has surprised you most about living in Houston?**

*The great food!*

**What do you like to do outside of medicine?**

*Spending time with my husband and daughter.*

## Ryan Huey, M.D.



**Hometown:** Tulsa, Oklahoma

**Undergraduate:** TCU – Texas Christian University

**Medical School:** : University of Oklahoma

**Residency:** Duke University Medical Center

### **What are your career goals?**

*I am interested in a career in academic oncology, likely GI malignancies, with research focusing on value based health care and the costs of delivering cancer care.*

### **Why did you chose MD Anderson?**

*The flexibility of the hematology and oncology fellowship program at MD Anderson makes it unique among fellowship programs in the country. It is equipped to provide outstanding clinical training but also achieve a diverse set of career goals, whether someone wants to become a clinical investigator, educator, or physician scientist. The program leadership makes it clear that they are willing to support a variety of career paths, but want us to become leaders in whatever field we choose. And finally, while many programs provide excellent training, the clinical expertise among the oncologists at MD Anderson are absolutely second to none.*

### **How has MD Anderson helped you in achieving your goals?**

*First and foremost, MD Anderson provides excellent clinical training. We learn from world experts in each and every field of oncology and consolidate our knowledge in the fellows' clinic at LBJ General Hospital, where we serve as the primary oncologist to patients at the county hospital.*

*My research time focuses on projects examining the costs of cancer care delivery and methods to provide value based health care. I have partnered with MD Anderson's Institute for Cancer Care Innovation to receive formal education in value-based care and to work on projects in the institution.*



**What do you like best about MD Anderson's fellowship program?**

*The fellowship program's strengths are the broad clinical experiences, especially in rare tumors. Fellows have protected time for weekly lectures with a structured curriculum. This is a time where all of the fellows are together and have the opportunity to learn from faculty and from one another. While some incoming fellows have a clear idea of their career path upon entering fellowship, many enter and want to explore their clinical and research options. MD Anderson gives fellows this time and space to develop and discover their interests. Furthermore, the scope of expertise among the faculty at MD Anderson is so broad that almost no matter what the project, fellows can find a faculty member to support them.*

**What do you like about living in Houston?**

*I like the unbelievable food scene and the diverse, metropolitan feel with the friendliness of the South. There's always a sporting event, festival, or concert happening. Also, when you need to travel, the airports will fly you direct just about anywhere. The thing that has exceeded all of my expectations is the quintessential annual event, the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, which is outstanding.*

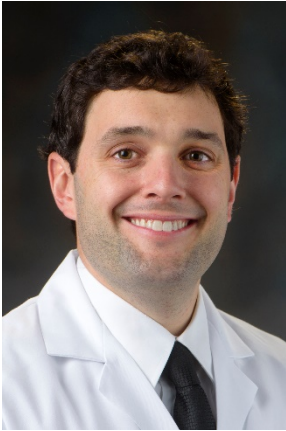
**What has surprised you most about living in Houston?**

*Even though Houston is a large city, the neighborhoods have their own unique feel and character. I have enjoyed exploring various parts of town and the different personalities they have. The resolve and unity of the people of Houston to bind together and support one another after Hurricane Harvey impressed as much as anywhere I've lived. It really served to show me how wonderful the people of this city are.*

**What do you like to do outside of medicine?**

*My wife and I love attending sporting events and have embraced the Houston sports scene. We enjoy trying new restaurants, spending time with friends and family, and traveling abroad.*

## Daniel Johnson, M.D.



**Hometown:** Metairie, LA

**Undergraduate:** Louisiana State University

**Medical School:** : Louisiana State University School of Medicine in New Orleans

**Residency:** Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center - Internal Medicine Residency

### **What are your career goals?**

*My career goals are to be a clinical investigator delivering new and innovative immunotherapy clinical trials to patients with an interest in management of immunotherapy toxicities.*

### **Why did you chose MD Anderson?**

*From personal family experience, I know the positive impact that the care at MD Anderson can provide for patients and their families. My ultimate goal once I knew that I wanted to specialize in oncology was to train at MD Anderson.*

### **How has MD Anderson helped you in achieving your goals?**

*Through close, pro-active mentorship, I now have experience or will have experience in all phases of clinical trial development/execution, translational research, and retrospective data/chart reviews. These are important skills to develop to be an effective clinical researcher as and academic medical oncologist.*

### **What do you like best about MD Anderson's fellowship program?**

*Out of all of the programs that I visited, MD Anderson best provides the balance of excellent clinical training in general medical oncology and opportunities for top nationally ranked, high-level research in any arena (basic science, clinical investigation, population medicine).*

### **What do you like about living in Houston?**

*Lots of family friendly things to do, excellent restaurants, and very good cost of living for a big city.*

**What has surprised you most about living in Houston?**

*The food! Coming from New Orleans, good food is very important to me. We have been quite impressed with restaurants in Houston.*

**What do you like to do outside of medicine?**

*I have young children, so I do what my kids like to do. But I like to cook too!*

## Amy Jones, M.D.



**Hometown:** Austin, TX

**Undergraduate:** Duke University

**Medical School:** UT Southwestern

**Residency:** Duke University

### **What are your career goals?**

*To be an academic medical oncologist with a focus on patient outcomes, quality improvement, and medical education.*

### **Why did you chose MD Anderson?**

*Variety and volume of cases, ability to train with outstanding faculty who are experts in their fields, the ability to have my own clinic at LBJ, and the fact that it was all in my home state.*

### **What do you like best about MD Anderson's fellowship program?**

*My amazing co-fellows—everyone is doing incredible things in their own area and its inspiring (and motivating!) to see them achieve so much.*

### **What has surprised you most about living in Houston?**

*The number and variety of green spaces within an hour of my house—some nice state parks, lots of bike paths along the bayous, city parks easily accessible.*

### **What do you like to do outside of medicine?**

*Run, hike, play with my toddler, read novels and travel with my husband (highlights of fellowship have been a BBQ tour of Texas and backpacking in Patagonia).*

# Andrew Laccetti, M.D.



**Hometown:** North Andover, MA

**Undergraduate:** Union College (Schenectady, NY)

**Medical School:** Albany Medical College

**Residency:** UT Southwestern

## **What are your career goals?**

*I aim to become an exemplary clinician and researcher with a focus on genitourinary medical oncology, clinical trial design, patient reported outcomes and expanded application of technology including electronic wearable activity monitors.*

## **Why did you chose MD Anderson?**

*MD Anderson provides an extremely well balanced training experience with emphasis on clinical autonomy and research excellence. It surrounds fellows with incredible faculty and co-trainees providing the opportunity to achieve whatever one wants within the field of oncology.*

## **How has MD Anderson helped you in achieving your goals?**

*MD Anderson has provided excellent faculty mentorship allowing me to cultivate interest and expertise in a non-traditional research field. My experience at LBJ has provided an incredible opportunity to develop skills and confidence as an independent oncologist, as well.*

## **What do you like best about MD Anderson's fellowship program?**

*I like my incredible co-fellows and the seamless balance between clinical rigor and research excellence facilitated by the fellowship program.*

## **What do you like about living in Houston?**

*Houston is an incredibly diverse city with amazing food and down-to-earth, friendly people. The cost of living and urban amenities are wonderful. Also, as a former Yankee, there is no snow!*

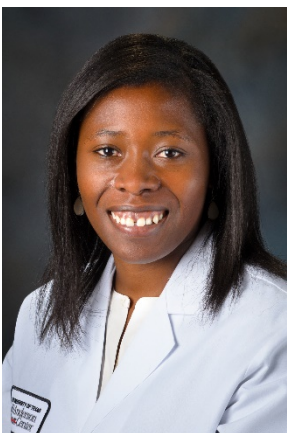
**What has surprised you most about living in Houston?**

*The international community and wonderful arts scene.*

**What do you like to do outside of medicine?**

*I love being outdoors including hiking, running and visiting local parks. I play in a recreation ice hockey league (Beer-League!) on Mondays. I also love exploring the boundless ethnic food opportunities in the city.*

## Oluchi Oke, M.D.



**Hometown:** Skokie, IL

**Undergraduate:** Northwestern University

**Medical School:** : University of Illinois College of Medicine at Peoria

**Residency:** Vanderbilt University

### **What are your career goals?**

*I am interested in pursuing a career in academic medicine or a hybrid practice with a focus on breast and or GU malignancies.*

### **Why did you chose MD Anderson?**

*I felt the many resources that MD Anderson provides from mentorship to exposure to cutting edge research would help me with my career goals.*

### **How has MD Anderson helped you in achieving your goals?**

*I have received great mentorship in the tumor types I am interested in and had the opportunity to perform scholarly activities with these mentors that have been of great benefit.*

### **What do you like best about MD Anderson's fellowship program?**

*The continuity clinic at LBJ.*

### **What do you like about living in Houston?**

*The warm weather and diversity of the city.*

### **What has surprised you most about living in Houston?**

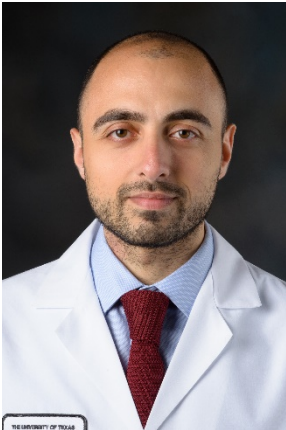
*How much driving you end up doing.*

**What do you like to do outside of medicine?**

*Cook and participate in activities with my church.*



# Paolo Strati, M.D.



**Hometown:** Reggio Calabria, Italy

**Undergraduate:** Università Vita-Salute San Raffaele of Milan, Italy

**Medical School:** Università Vita-Salute San Raffaele of Milan, Italy

**Residency:** Mayo Clinic, Rochester, MN

## What are your career goals?

*My goal is to develop an academic career as a clinical and translational investigator in the field of lymphoid malignancies. In particular, I am working on developing novel therapeutic strategies aimed at eradicating minimal residual disease in low grade lymphomas through targeting of the microenvironment.*

## Why did you choose MD Anderson?

*Because I want to be in a place where innovation is valued over tradition, and where I can have the resources to break the paradigm and make high-impact scientific advances.*

## How has MD Anderson helped you in achieving your goals?

*MD Anderson has exposed me from the beginning to endless research opportunities, allowing me to quickly get familiar both with clinical trials and cutting edge basic science. MD Anderson has also offered me the necessary mentorship to make a critical use of those opportunities and effectively advance my career.*

## What do you like best about MD Anderson's fellowship program?

*It is a perfect combination of standard of care (with the LBJ experience) and experimental medicine (with the in-house rotations); no other center offers this.*

## What do you like about living in Houston?

*It is very diverse, it is hard to feel a foreigner here, no matter how you sound or look.*

## What has surprised you most about living in Houston?

*Despite being a metropolitan city, it is very family friendly, with plenty of playgrounds and activities for families.*

**What do you like to do outside of medicine?**

*I am an avid runner, and the Rice University loop offers a nice space to exercise. Otherwise, I spend all my spare time with my wife and kids, exploring parks and playgrounds around the city.*

# Jason Willis, M.D., Ph.D.



**Hometown:** Albuquerque, NM

**Undergraduate:** Occidental College, Los Angeles, CA

**Medical School:** Weill Cornell Medical College, New York, NY

**Residency:** Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, MD

## **What are your career goals?**

*To become a physician scientist working in academia to help advance our understanding of how tumor genomic heterogeneity and evolution influence treatment outcomes.*

## **Why did you chose MD Anderson?**

*As an aspiring oncologist, I was looking for a training environment that provided not only exposure to cutting-edge clinical practice and education, but also the opportunity to serve in a community practice setting. As an aspiring scientist, I was looking for an environment that thrives on shared knowledge, collaboration, and has the infrastructure to answer large-scale questions. MD Anderson embodies all of these factors in a way that I feel is unmatched by cancer centers. I'm forever grateful for the chance to join this amazing place.*

## **How has MD Anderson helped you in achieving your goals?**

*From the beginning, I've encountered no shortage of enthusiastic scientists and clinicians willing to help nurture my development into an independent physician scientist. My outstanding mentors, Dr. Scott Kopetz and Dr. Eduardo Vilar Sanchez, have guided me in performing translational research with a focus on the clinical utility and application of colorectal cancer genomics.*

## **What do you like best about MD Anderson's fellowship program?**

*The program truly loves and supports its fellows. This is evident throughout all aspects of the program, from our team of dedicated administrative staff to our division leadership. As a result, we are granted an incredible amount of protected time for our professional growth and learning — exemplified best by our weekly "Academic Tuesday" didactic series.*

**What do you like about living in Houston?**

*It's an amazing place to live for families — full of diverse cultures, great schools, affordable living, and no shortage of things to do.*

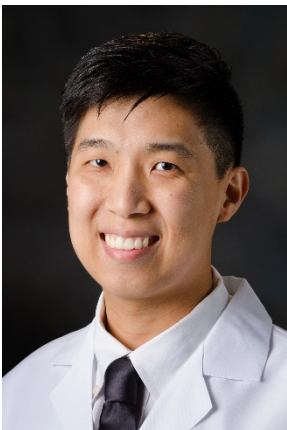
**What has surprised you most about living in Houston?**

*Despite one of the nation's largest cities, Houston has an amazing capacity to unite itself around shared challenges. There's no better example of this than the city's response and recovery from Hurricane Harvey.*

**What do you like to do outside of medicine?**

*My family and I love to explore farms and orchards in the Houston area.*

# Clinton Yam, MBBS



**Hometown:** Singapore

**Undergraduate:** National University of Singapore

**Medical School:** National University of Singapore

**Residency:** University of Pennsylvania

## **What are your career goals?**

*I would like to pursue an academic career in breast medical oncology as a translational researcher focused on understanding the molecular underpinnings of triple-negative breast cancer and leveraging such insights to develop novel combinatorial approaches for patients with this disease.*

## **Why did you chose MD Anderson?**

*It's MD Anderson.*

## **How has MD Anderson helped you in achieving your goals?**

*MD Anderson has given me amazing mentorship and unrestricted opportunities to explore my interests. The fellowship program has been incredibly supportive in tailoring our fellowship experiences according to our interests. Help is never more than a phone call (or email away).*

## **What do you like best about MD Anderson's fellowship program?**

*In no particular order, my co-fellows, the fellowship leadership and administrative team, and my amazing mentor!*

## **What do you like about living in Houston?**

*The huge apartments and the many awesome restaurants!*

## **What do you like to do outside of medicine?**

*I am a huge foodie and spend my spare time googling nice restaurants and checking them out.*

## Second Year

Omar Al Halabi, M.D.



**Hometown:** Damascus, Syria

**Medical School:** Damascus University

**Residency:** William Beaumont Hospital

**Why did you chose MD Anderson?**

*Because it's a robust academic program that graduates clinically competent researchers.*

**How has MD Anderson helped you in achieving your goals?**

*MD Anderson has a multitude of scientists that are passionate about studying and treating cancer. This offers a lot of opportunities to pick career mentors.*

**What do you like best about MD Anderson's fellowship program?**

*The program is greatly supportive and ensures you are connected to the right people. This is true whether it's for a personal, clinical or research matter. It's very collegial and fosters care and friendship among fellows.*

**What do you like about living in Houston?**

*I love Houston. It's a city that truly offers everything it has to you regardless of your background. It welcomes diversity and hard work. The city offers restaurants, theaters, trails, parks, and did I say restaurants!*

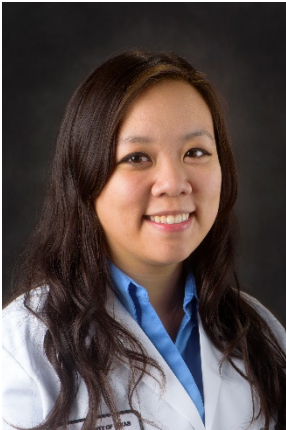
**What has surprised you most about living in Houston?**

*Flooding! Don't rent on the first floor!*

**What do you like to do outside of medicine?**

*I like to draw so I signed up to be a student at the museum of fine arts of Houston (glassell school of art). I also like rock-climbing and I go to TRG (Texas Rock Gym) with other friends from MD Anderson on a weekly basis. Finally, I joined a running group and we run memorial park every Wednesday then go get velvet tacos!*

# Kelly Chien, M.D.



**Hometown:** Sugar Land, Texas

**Undergraduate:** MIT

**Medical School:** Baylor College of Medicine

**Residency:** UT Southwestern

**What are your career goals?**

*Academic oncologist.*

**Why did you chose MD Anderson?**

*Reputation for clinical training and research.*

**How has MD Anderson helped you in achieving your goals?**

*Ample opportunities for research with excellent mentors.*

**What do you like best about MD Anderson's fellowship program?**

*Great cost of living and good multicultural food.*

**What do you like about living in Houston?**

*Much better food options than I remember from my high school and medical school days!*

**What has surprised you most about living in Houston?**

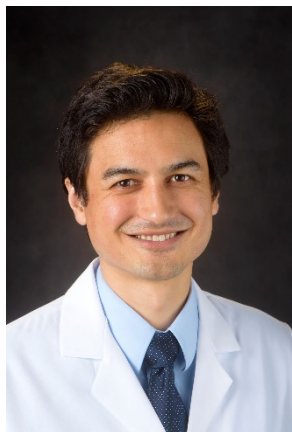
*Its incredible diversity.*

**What do you like to do outside of medicine?**

*Travel with my family! Travel around the world, eat good food, hike and take amateur landscape photos.*



## Eric Fountain, M.D.



**Hometown:** Many places

**Undergraduate:** Duke University

**Medical School:** University of Colorado

**Residency:** Duke University

**What are your career goals?**

*To work in academics as a professor in lymphoma conducting clinical trials and teaching the next generation of fellows.*

**Why did you chose MD Anderson?**

*I chose MD Anderson because I knew I'd have the opportunity to succeed at making a meaningful difference in patient outcomes through direct clinic care and research.*

**How has MD Anderson helped you in achieving your goals?**

*I couldn't have asked for more in terms of a collegial environment with excellent mentors and funding for projects and conferences.*

**What do you like best about MD Anderson's fellowship program?**

*We have the best administrative staff who will do anything to help you personally and professionally, and it's a direct reflection of how the program cares about your success.*

**What do you like about living in Houston?**

*Love the food and the 6 months of daily swimming with the kids you can only get with Houston heat.*

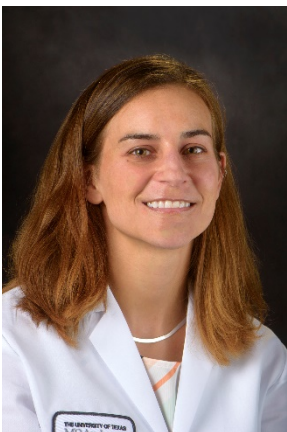
**What has surprised you most about living in Houston?**

*Honestly, I was pleasantly surprised by the diversity of the city population and the culture and food that accompanies it. It's been wonderful.*

**What do you like to do outside of medicine?**

*Swim, go to museums, the beach, new restaurants, and parks.*

# Haven Garber, M.D.



**Hometown:** Greensboro (NC) and Pickerington (OH)

**Undergraduate:** Duke University

**Medical School:** The Ohio State University

**Residency:** Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (Boston)

**What are your career goals?**

*To take great care of my patients and to hopefully make a contribution to improving immunotherapy for breast cancer.*

**Why did you chose MD Anderson?**

*I am not a fan of snow and Houston offers mild winters.*

**How has MD Anderson helped you in achieving your goals?**

*Kind and brilliant faculty and an incredible diversity of patient cases.*

**What do you like best about MD Anderson's fellowship program?**

*The generosity, kindness, and expertise of the teaching faculty.*

**What do you like about living in Houston?**

*No snow!*

**What has surprised you most about living in Houston?**

*I love Houston! It's a great place to raise young children – so much to do.*

**What do you like to do outside of medicine?**

*Spend time with my kiddos.*

# Joshua Gulvin, M.D.



**Hometown:** Clinton, WA

**Undergraduate:** University of Washington

**Medical School:** University of Washington

**Residency:** Virginia Mason

## **What are your career goals?**

*I would like to be a clinical investigator focusing on lung cancer. I also would like to work on issues regarding quality improvement and patient safety.*

## **Why did you chose MD Anderson?**

*I wanted the best training, the opportunity to do anything that I was interested in, and to receive great clinical training as well.*

## **How has MD Anderson helped you in achieving your goals?**

*MD Anderson allows me to pursue whatever interest I have.*

## **What do you like best about MD Anderson's fellowship program?**

*The friendliness and collegiality I have with the other fellows makes it really easy to come into the office each day.*

## **What do you like about living in Houston?**

*Its inexpensive, warm, and has great food.*

## **What has surprised you most about living in Houston?**

*The people here are so kind.*

## **What do you like to do outside of medicine?**

*I like to spend time with my wife and my little dog. If I'm not doing that I'm either at the gym, at the pool, or at the zoo.*

## Preetesh Jain, M.D., Ph.D.



**Hometown:** Udaipur, Rajasthan, India

**Medical School:** : Vijayanagar Institute of Medical Sciences, Bellary, Karnataka State, India

**Residency:** UT Houston

**What are your career goals?**

*Clinical and translational investigator in lymphoid malignancies.*

**Why did you chose MD Anderson?**

*Fits into my career goals.*

**How has MD Anderson helped you in achieving your goals?**

*Appropriate environment for my career.*

**What do you like best about MD Anderson's fellowship program?**

*Well organized.*

**What do you like about living in Houston?**

*Weather, family and my work.*

**What has surprised you most about living in Houston?**

*The weather.*

**What do you like to do outside of medicine?**

*Traveling, visiting beaches, and watching movies.*

## Jade Jones, M.D.



**Hometown:** St. Croix, US Virgin Islands

**Undergraduate:** Hampton University, Hampton Virginia

**Medical School:** University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina

**Residency:** Vanderbilt

### **Why did you chose MD Anderson?**

*On my interview day here at MDACC, I was really blown away by all the opportunities for clinical care and research at MDACC. I felt that if I came here I wouldn't be "boxed" in to being one type of Oncologist. Now that I have been here I feel the same way. I have had a shift in interest since starting fellowship and I have felt very supported. Given my interest in health disparities and caring for underserved populations, I also loved the fact that fellows had their own clinic at the county hospital. It was also an added plus that my eldest sister and her family lives here.*

### **What do you like best about MD Anderson's fellowship program?**

*The people, especially my co-fellows and the different attending's we have the opportunity to work with. Not only are they great physicians and researchers who are compassionate, caring and patient oriented, but they also are great human beings who come from different back grounds and bring different life experiences. Everyone is just really supportive. I also love that we rotate at LBJ and being able to provide care for underserved populations.*

### **What do you like about living in Houston?**

*I love being close to family. I also love how diverse the city is from the people to the food.*

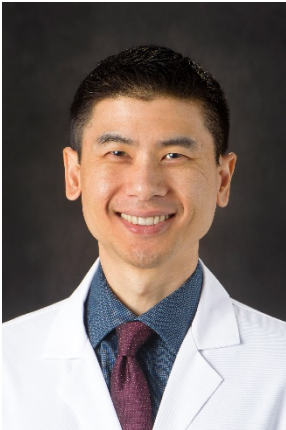
### **What has surprised you most about living in Houston?**

*I did not realize how diverse the city would be.*

### **What do you like to do outside of medicine?**

*I love spending time with family, traveling, trying new foods, going to museums, going hiking, and playing basketball.*

# Paul Lin, M.D.



**Hometown:** Cupertino, CA

**Undergraduate:** University of California, San Diego

**Medical School:** Case Western Reserve University

**Residency:** University Hospitals of Cleveland (Case Western)

## **What are your career goals?**

*I am interested in a lab based research career that combines both basic/translational research with clinical activity. My research interest includes cellular therapy with a focus on NK cell therapies.*

## **Why did you chose MD Anderson?**

*MD Anderson presented research opportunities that aligned with my interest. The size of the institution presented a vast number of opportunities that didn't exist elsewhere.*

## **How has MD Anderson helped you in achieving your goals?**

*MD Anderson has many research opportunities and everyone is excited to have you work with them. Everyone has been very helpful in introducing me to people whom I might be interested in working with. MD Anderson also has an advanced scholar year that gives you an opportunity to stay an extra year if needed to further develop your research career.*

## **What do you like best about MD Anderson's fellowship program?**

*Working with the other Fellows.*

## **What do you like about living in Houston?**

*The number of different restaurants available! You can find pretty much any type of food you want. I've never been out to eat more often than in Houston and we rarely visit the same restaurant twice.*

## **What has surprised you most about living in Houston?**

*I've been surprised by the variety of activities that you can do in Houston. For example, you could attend the Rodeo, watch the Rockets in the playoffs, listen to any number of concerts of different musical variety that pass through Houston, or watch a play at Hermann park.*

**What do you like to do outside of medicine?**

*Traveling, grilling/cooking, attending sporting events, going out with friends, movies, listening to podcasts, etc...*

# Kaysia Ludford, M.D.



**Hometown:** Jamaica

**Undergraduate:** Vassar College

**Medical School:** Yale School of Medicine

**Residency:** Brigham and Women's Hospital

**What are your career goals?**

*Long term goal is to serve underserved communities advancing cancer care through clinical care, research or both.*

**Why did you chose MD Anderson?**

*For a number of reasons: emphasis placed on education including dedicated half day for didactics, clinical training model with first year and a half spent in specialty clinics followed by a year and a half in general oncology clinic with increased autonomy, the opportunity to take care of underserved patients at the county hospital.*

**How has MD Anderson helped you in achieving your goals?**

*Working on it.*

**What do you like best about MD Anderson's fellowship program?**

*The people: co-fellows, administrative team, attendings, other providers have all been wonderful colleagues and friends. It is a nurturing environment that reminds me a lot of my residency program. I love having the opportunity to work both at LBJ, the county hospital and at the main hospital with experts in various sub-specialty fields.*

**What do you like about living in Houston?**

*The weather! I love the sunshine.*

**What has surprised you most about living in Houston?**

*The diversity.*



**What do you like to do outside of medicine?**

*I love traveling. My favorite go to spot is a parish in Jamaica called Portland that has the most scenic untouched beauty I have ever encountered, pristine white sand beaches and crystal clear rivers weaving through beautiful banks of lush green vegetation. Outside of Jamaica, my favorite destination has been Salta, Argentina.*

## Abhishek Maiti, M.D.



**Hometown:** Kolkata, India

**Medical School:** Nil Ratan Sircar Medical College

**Residency:** McGovern Medical School

**Why did you chose MD Anderson?**

*The opportunity for excellent clinical training and research opportunities.*

**What do you like best about MD Anderson's fellowship program?**

*The program leadership genuinely cares about all of the fellows.*

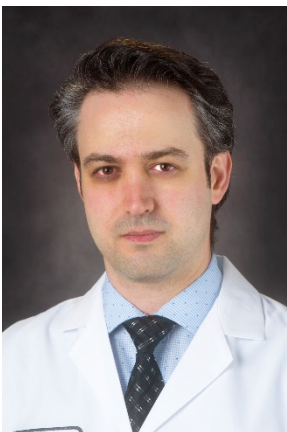
**What do you like about living in Houston?**

*The excellent food, and especially the Tacos.*

**What do you like to do outside of medicine?**

*Eat. Also, watch world cinema, listen to Indian classical music.*

# Amir Mehrvarz, M.D.



**Hometown:** Tehran - Iran

**Medical School:** Tehran University of Medical Sciences

**Residency:** McGovern Medical School

## **What are your career goals?**

*I plan to pursue a career in academic oncology. My ultimate career goal is to become a clinical investigator focused on the biology of gastrointestinal malignancies and development of new treatment strategies based on accompanying translational research studies.*

## **Why did you chose MD Anderson?**

*MD Anderson is a world-renowned cancer institution which provides excellent support and resources for high-quality clinical and translational research. The fellowship program is structured to provide adequate clinical training as well as protected time to build a future academic career. At MD Anderson, fellows have the opportunity to learn clinical and research skills from world-class research faculty to ultimately become leaders in their fields.*

## **What do you like best about MD Anderson's fellowship program?**

*My favorite time during the week would be our Academic Tuesdays. Our didactic schedule is organized to consolidate all seminars on Tuesday mornings. This is an invaluable time protected for learning in which all fellows are excused from their clinical and research responsibilities.*

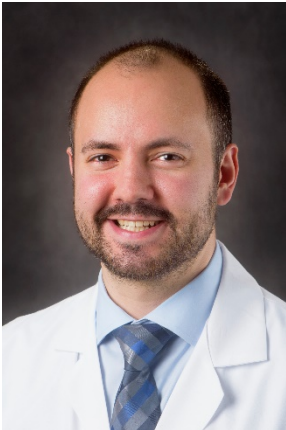
## **What do you like about living in Houston?**

*Houston is one of the most culturally diverse cities in the nation which offers a variety of entertainment options for everybody. You can find great restaurants, parks, shopping centers, museums, and orchestra halls all within a short distance from Texas Medical Center.*

## **What do you like to do outside of medicine?**

*I love to travel, play music and spend time with friends and family.*

# Jonathan Mizrahi, M.D.



**Hometown:** Jacksonville, Florida

**Undergraduate:** Harvard University

**Medical School:** University of Florida

**Residency:** Washington University in St. Louis

## **What are your career goals?**

*After fellowship, I plan to pursue a career in academic oncology with a special research and clinical focus in gastrointestinal malignancies.*

## **Why did you chose MD Anderson?**

*When I was on the interview trail, I found MD Anderson to be a perfect combination of outstanding clinical training and research opportunities. Having been here already more than a year, the institution has only reinforced both of these.*

## **How has MD Anderson helped you in achieving your goals?**

*The potential to do research and collaborate with some of the leaders in essentially every field of hematology and oncology has provided me ample opportunity to further my career goals.*

## **What do you like best about MD Anderson's fellowship program?**

*Honestly, it's my co-fellows. We have a great group of diverse but like-minded fellows who are interested in great patient care and learning. I learn just as much from my peers as I do from my mentors. They're even fun to hang out with outside the hospital!*

## **What do you like about living in Houston?**

*The food! But that's what everyone probably says, so I'll go with the diversity of the city. It's a wonderful city to meet people and experience so many cultures, because it is such a melting pot. You'll experience that at work in the hospital setting and in all of your adventures outside of it.*

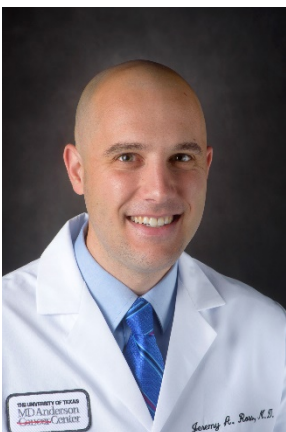
## **What has surprised you most about living in Houston?**

*People here love their sports, which is exciting for me. I am a big sports fan (though not particularly of Houston teams), so these things excite me. There is also enough music here for any type of music fan. It has all of those features of a large city.*

**What do you like to do outside of medicine?**

*I like sports (see above)... a lot. With the minimal time I have outside of watching (and pretending to play) sports and my medical responsibilities/interests, I am usually hanging out with my wife, eating, working out and being with friends.*

# Jeremy Ross, M.D.



**Hometown:** Fort Worth, Texas

**Undergraduate:** Texas Christian University

**Medical School:** Virginia Commonwealth University

**Residency:** McGovern Medical School

## **What are your career goals?**

*My career is dedicated to helping people with cancer in the best way that I possibly can.*

## **Why did you chose MD Anderson?**

*I had the opportunity to complete rotations at MD Anderson during my residency. From the moment that I stepped foot on campus as an intern, I knew that I wanted to train here. Beyond its clinical excellence, research accomplishments, and reputation, MD Anderson is unique in that the patients always come first. This commitment is a palpable part of the culture here and this aligned with my own mission more than at any other institution I considered.*

## **How has MD Anderson helped you in achieving your goals?**

*The world's best clinical oncologists are everywhere you turn here, and many of them are deeply passionate about the mentorship and sponsorship of the fellows. My own mentors have been effective teachers but have been committed to my development and success as a physician and person in general.*

## **What do you like best about MD Anderson's fellowship program?**

*The structure of the fellowship program and the carefully curated training environment gives each fellow the opportunity to pursue their own professional goals. There is a deep sense of camaraderie and support among the fellows, faculty, and administrative staff. Most of all, LBJ Hospital is a special place that gives us the opportunity to be the primary hematologist or oncologist for patients that often have nowhere else to turn.*

**What do you like about living in Houston?**

*We chose to live in one of Houston's heavily wooded northeastern suburbs and our community is best known for existing in harmony with nature. We enjoy our neighbors including the deer, fish, and birds that we encounter regularly around our home and at the parks and nature preserves. We spend a lot of time in the city as well and we have come to love so many Houston restaurants. Our children love visiting the zoo and riding the Hermann Park Railroad. We also enjoy being only a short drive from the ocean and take several trips to the beach every year.*

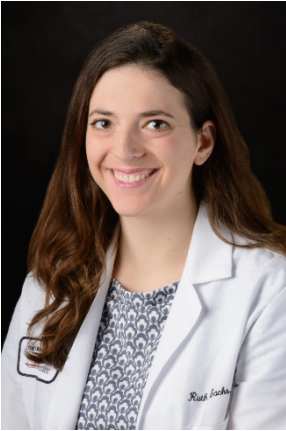
**What has surprised you most about living in Houston?**

*Exit one of Houston's admittedly overcrowded freeways and you will find a beautiful, diverse, thriving city with so much to do. The two things that have surprised me most about Houston are that the climate is actually quite mild (yes it's true), and how much I have come to love this place.*

**What do you like to do outside of medicine?**

*I enjoy camping and hiking in Big Bend and the Guadalupe Mountains although medical training and the raising of children has reduced the amount of time I can spend there. I am an avid runner and regularly compete in races around in Houston with some of the other fellows. Another passion of mine is aviation and I hope to obtain my private pilot license one day.*

## Ruth Sacks, M.D.



**Hometown:** Boca Raton, Florida

**Undergraduate:** Emory University

**Medical School:** University of Miami Miller School of Medicine

**Residency:** University of Texas Southwestern

### **Why did you chose MD Anderson?**

*I choose MD Anderson because it is a fellowship program rife with opportunities, no matter your career path. They have all the tools to equip you to become an outstanding clinician, researcher, innovator, or educator. It is a program that truly balances education and experience by allowing it's fellows to have exposure in multiple different clinical settings.*

### **How has MD Anderson helped you in achieving your goals?**

*The faculty and administrators are incredibly supportive and enthusiastic about assisting you in achieving your clinical and research aspirations. They are heavily invested in the growth and success of their fellows.*

### **What do you like best about MD Anderson's fellowship program?**

*The program is constantly asking fellows for constructive feedback and ways to improve that directly impacts the current and future directions of the fellowship. They have created an environment that is incredibly open and accessible to recommendations and suggestions.*

### **What do you like about living in Houston?**

*Houston is a great city to explore because there is a plethora of restaurants and activities at all times of the year. There is an abundance of places to listen to great music and see interesting art.*



**What has surprised you most about living in Houston?**

*Houston has numerous green spaces such as Discovery Green, Eleanor Tinsley Park, Memorial Park and Buffalo Bayou. All of these places are great locations to go running, walking, or just be outside. In addition, in some of these places you can see live music or movies during the summer.*

**What do you like to do outside of medicine?**

*I love being outdoors and exploring new places. My goal is to visit every national park in the US. In addition, I enjoy running, reading, and writing. I'm always up for trying weird and outlandish foods as well as new activities that will make good stories in the future.*