



LSU Health New Orleans at Lafayette Family Medicine Residency Program Program Director: Marilyn D. Marshall, MD

The 2025–2026 academic year marked a period of significant change for Family Medicine in Lafayette.

The Family Medicine Administrative Department has recently undergone several staffing changes and promotions. In October 2025, we welcomed Alana Lovato as our new Department Coordinator. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of New Mexico and primarily supports faculty with daily departmental operations and needs. She also works with the Geriatric Fellowship Program providing administrative support.

In August 2025, several of our residents submitted posters for the 2025 LAFP Research Poster Competition:

David Mas, MD, MPH – *“Un Momento: Can we talk?”* – **1st Place**

Gabriel Navar, MD – *“Blast from the Past: To be or not to be?”*

Logan Pittman, MD – *“The Last Hurrah: A Cheerful Approach to End-of-Life Care”*

Stephen Igwe, MD – *“Improving Informed Consent Practices in Family Medicine: A Quality Improvement Initiative”*

Joshua Paek, MD – *“Understanding of expired or unused pill disposal”*

Thomas Vu, MD – *“From Shrugs to Skills: Mastering the Shoulder Exam in the Family Medicine Clinic”*

The program benefits the Acadiana community by providing care for a diverse population, including infants and maternity care; inpatient care at OUHC and OLGMC; team physicians for 5 local high schools and the University of Louisiana at Lafayette; geriatric care in the clinical setting and at a local nursing home; and healthcare screenings at a variety of community-based events. Many of the community-based programs are being restructured to include varying health needs.

We are pleased to congratulate Dennes Chen, MD, and Natalie Touchet, MD on their selection as Chief Residents for the 2026–2027 academic year. We also extend our sincere appreciation to Arden Lagrone, MD, and Artesia Simon, DO for their dedication and outstanding service as Chief Residents during the 2025–2026 year.

We successfully completed the 20th annual Education Day held in May. During Education Day, PGY3 residents design and propose a critical appraisal / literature review. Residents then organize and present their research ideas to Family Medicine residents and faculty.

The 2026 Education Day titles were:

“Intraosseous vs. Intravenous Access in Out-of-hospital Cardiac Arrest: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis of Clinical Outcomes” – Austin Hannah, MD

“Efficiency and Safety of Baroflex Activation Therapy for Heart Failure with Reduced Ejection Fraction: Systemic Review” – Stephen Igwe, MD

“Burn Baby Burn...Reducing Burnout in Residency” – Arden Lagrone, MD

“Can Short Workouts Save Lives?” – Cynthia Lanipekun, MD

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"Who Owns the Incidentaloma" – Madelyn Lavergne, MD

"Exergaming for Depression" – David Mas, MD

"Grounded – Electrical Nutrition" – Gabriel Navar, MD

"Snap, Crackle, Pop...a Systemic Review: OMT Safety & Efficacy" – Artesia Simon, MD

"Gender Disparity in Full Professor Rank Among Academic Physicians: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis" – Katelyn St. Germain, DO

"Effectiveness of Wearable Technologies in Supporting Physical Activity and Metabolic Health in Adults with Type 2 Diabetes: A Systematic-Narrative Hybrid Review" – Thomas Vu, MD

Margaret Smith, MSW, LCSW-BACS, supports our integrated behavioral health model, bringing a comprehensive approach to patient care that addresses both clinical needs and social determinants of health. She leads the behavioral health curriculum, coordinates community outreach initiatives, and promotes resident wellness through programs designed to foster connection and resilience. Notably, she organizes the annual resident retreat, providing residents with an opportunity to build meaningful relationships and strengthen collegial support outside the clinical environment. In addition, Margaret collaborates with residents and faculty on quality improvement initiatives aimed at enhancing patient care delivery and overall services.

On June 19, 2026, we celebrated the graduation of an exceptional class of residents. Our graduating class included Austin Hannah, MD; Stephen Igwe, MD; Arden Lagrone, MD; Cynthia Lanipekun, MD; Madelyn Lavergne, MD; David Mas, MD; Gabriel Navar, MD; Artesia Simon, DO; Katelyn St. Germain, DO; and Thomas Vu, MD. These graduates will pursue careers in private practice, urgent care, hospital medicine, and emergency medicine. One graduate, Dr. Vu, was accepted to a Sports Medicine Fellowship.

In addition, all third-year residents in the Class of 2026 successfully passed the ABFM Certification Examination, resulting in a 100% first-time board pass rate for the thirteenth consecutive year for our program.

Our program received a large volume of applications through ERAS, with a total of 1,271 candidates applying for 10 positions in the Match. We interviewed 82 applicants and initially filled six positions. The remaining four positions were successfully filled through the SOAP process.

Lastly, on July 1, 2026, we proudly welcomed a diverse class of ten new physicians to our program and look forward to supporting them throughout their training journey.

Our intern class consists of five graduates from LSU New Orleans: Anna Latoff, MD, Caroline Jodon, MD, Oygul Mirzalieva, MD, Andre Phearse, MD and Catherine Thibodeaux, MD; one graduate from LSU Shreveport – Mason Granger, MD; one graduate from Rocky Vista University College of Osteopathic Medicine – Stacey Clark, DO; one graduate from Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine – Emma Broussard, DO; one graduate from Ross University School of Medicine – Mukudzei Chiweshe, MD; and one graduate from St. George's University School of Medicine – Teryn Daniel, MD.

Our program continues to strive for excellence in residency medical education and patient care.

Geriatric Medicine Fellowship

Dr. Susila Shanmuganathan (Dr. Shan) is the Program Director for the Geriatric Medicine Fellowship Program and is also

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the course director for the Geriatrics rotation for Family Medicine and Internal Medicine residents. She continues to participate in her own scholarly activity every year in addition to leading residents and fellows in their projects. She, along with the fellows and faculty, presented 3 posters during the AGS 2026 Annual Scientific Meeting, held virtually this year, 2 of which were quality improvement projects for the clinic. She continues to serve on the Board of Directors for the Lafayette Council on Aging (LCOA) and is committed to the mission of LCOA. She was awarded the Degree of Fellow with the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) in March 2026. She has also had several medical students complete a Geriatrics elective rotation under her direction. She continues to create and implement a diverse and comprehensive rotation for residents and fellows, including experiences in multiple settings.

Dr. Ramamurthi (Dr. Rama), Geriatrics Faculty, continues to be a strong advocate and integral educator for resident and fellow training. She also co-presented 2 posters at AGS 2026. As an Epic super-user, she integrates smart phrases and templates for thorough Geriatric assessment and documentation, which has been a beneficial learning tool for our residents and fellows. She also provides excellent lectures during both FM and Geriatrics didactic sessions.

The Geriatric Medicine Fellowship Program is lucky to have had 3 fellows this past year. Dr. Meighan Anderson completed her fellowship this past February and started as Faculty in March of 2026. Dr. Anderson is a graduate of Meharry Medical School and completed her residency with LSU Family Medicine – Lafayette in 2019. She has played an integral role in developing our recruitment program, which includes visiting the FM residency programs in South Louisiana to promote the fellowship, as well as providing high yield didactic lectures in Geriatrics. Drs. Claudius Jean Baptiste and Joshua Paek will be completing the fellowship this summer! Dr. Jean Baptiste will be staying in the Acadiana region, while Dr. Paek plans on returning to Texas to be closer to family.

In addition to faculty, we also have the pleasure of introducing our new Program Coordinator, Ms. Alana Lovato, who joined us in October 2025. She has been integral for maintaining the structure and organization of the program. She has been a great support staff for our fellows and faculty.

Sports Medicine Fellowship

The LSUHSC Lafayette Sports Medicine Fellowship continues to grow and thrive as we complete another outstanding academic year. The 2025–2026 year was marked by continued expansion in fellowship education, scholarly activity, and hands-on clinical training in the care of athletes across all levels of competition.

This year, we proudly celebrate the graduation of Kwasi Boateng, Jonathan Deck, and Jake Fries. Throughout the year, they demonstrated professionalism, compassion, and dedication to athlete care while contributing significantly to the educational and clinical mission of the fellowship. We are excited to follow their future careers in Sports Medicine.

We are equally excited to welcome our incoming 2026–2027 fellowship class: Chris LaBorde, TJ Morgan, and Philip Ross. Their arrival coincides with the program's recent expansion to a three-fellow complement and the addition of expanded clinical and educational space at the Bertrand office, enhancing opportunities for ultrasound education, procedures, and collaborative learning.

Our fellows and faculty remained active academically this year, presenting scholarly work at the annual meeting of the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine. Coverage of University of Louisiana at Lafayette athletics continues to serve as a cornerstone of fellowship training, providing extensive sideline and team physician experience in a high-level collegiate environment.

Among the incoming class, Dr. LaBorde is a Lafayette native and former collegiate athlete who completed Internal Medicine residency training through LSU in Baton Rouge. Dr. Ross joins the program from Colorado after completing Family Medicine residency in Arkansas, with strong interests in ultrasound-guided procedures and orthobiologics. Dr.

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Morgan, originally from New Jersey, completed Family Medicine residency through Rowan/Virtua and brings a strong background in soccer and sideline athletics coverage.

The fellowship program also continues to strengthen its faculty mentorship model with the addition of Dr. Tianna Morton as faculty following completion of fellowship training, alongside continued leadership from Alexander Sin in pediatric sports medicine education.

As we look ahead, the LSUHSC Lafayette Sports Medicine Fellowship remains committed to mentorship, hands-on training, scholarly activity, and excellence in athlete care.

Respectfully Submitted,
Marilyn D. Marshall, MD
Family Medicine Program Director