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General Assembly – July 26, 2024 – Destin, FL

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## **LSUHSC - New Orleans at Lake Charles Family Medicine Residency Program**

Program Director: Danette Null, MD, FAAFP

Happy Spring! The flowers are in bloom and the bees are buzzing around here in Southwest Louisiana in between thunderstorms that arrived in May instead of April. Here in Lake Charles, this time of year is a bit hectic with the culmination of baseball season playoffs and the end of year school testing and socializing. Having a child graduate from high school has added a new layer of complexity to my calendar.

Spring is a time of celebrating new life and our residency family is no exception. We have two baby showers happening this month and will continue with more baby showers over the next three months. Our family is growing quickly! I would like to announce our newest members for the coming academic year. They are Annalise Bricca, MD from Portland, OR, a graduate of School of Medicine, University of Zagreb in Croatia; Ryan Chetram, MD from Houston, TX, a graduate of Caribbean Medical University School of Medicine; Rikki Gilmore, MD from Lake Charles, LA, a graduate of Louisiana State University Health Sciences Shreveport; Shreyas Peddigari, MD from Boerne, TX, a graduate of All Saints University School of Medicine Dominica; Joe Stringfellow, DO from Crowley, LA, a graduate of Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine – Monroe, LA campus ; Katelyn Thompson, DO from Lake Charles, LA, a graduate of Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine – Monroe, LA campus; and Anurag Vootla, MBBS from Pradesh, India, a graduate of Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Medical Sciences, Kadapa. We are very excited to have each of them join us here in Lake Charles!

We are blessed to have a wonderfully supportive sponsoring institution—Lake Charles Memorial Health System (LCMHS). Through this support, we have access to an online point of care ultrasound (POCUS) curriculum for residents and faculty. Faculty teach residents ultrasound scanning techniques with workshops throughout the year and residents learn POCUS during a dedicated inpatient rotation. Thanks to our innovative faculty, we are incorporating POCUS into more and more areas of our curriculum. We are always looking for partners and sponsors to assist us in expanding the ultrasound equipment and educational experiences for our residents.

As the face of medicine changes and the way we educate doctors evolves, we want to keep the care of the patient in front of us as our focus. We try to do that each day as well as by partnering with our community when needs arise and by working together with other residencies across the state to improve patient care, promote excellence in residency education, and advocate for Family Medicine. Our residents and faculty provided sports pre-participation physicals to over 500 students in our surrounding 5 parish area this past weekend. The residents provide sideline sports coverage at high school and college athletic events throughout the year for varying sports as well as other sporting events held in our community. The residency is continuing the tradition of another free cancer screening event in partnership with LCMHS. Through the efforts of the Family Medicine Departments of Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center New Orleans and Tulane, residencies across south Louisiana are forming a collaborative network. It has already been a useful resource as we get ready for our transition from one electronic medical record to another—Epic.

Change is a constant in life and keeps boredom at bay. Are you looking for something mentally stimulating, invigorating, and exciting? Would you like to be part of developing the next generation of doctors for our state? Do you want to leave a Family Medicine legacy that outlives you? Academic medicine does that. We are always looking for the next enthusiastic Family Medicine educator to join our ranks.

## Family Medicine Residency Program Director Reports, continued

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Time for the gardening report. I have weeded most of my yard and put down a thicker layer of straw in the flower/landscape beds. This year I am turning my attention to the plants inside my office and home. My nephew oversees the greenhouse at a local plant nursery, and he has been supplying me with great tips to keep these beautiful creations looking their best. Orchids prefer chunky soil that resembles tree bark and allows water to drain through it easily. The two in my office have been around for years and are putting out showy blooms. They like the light coming in from the north while the orchid in my kitchen enjoys the light from the west. Like humans, plants do best when given loving attention consistently over time. I will not be planting any new plants in the yard this spring because they will require frequent watering over the late spring and hot summer months. My son is heading off to college in Maryland and I have a feeling some of my weekends will be preoccupied.

I hope you have upcoming plans to be with your loved ones. May you be purposeful in cultivating those relationships and fostering new ones. Life moves fast and seems to speed up as we get older. May you take a moment to smell a flower, be in awe of its beauty, and call a friend to catch up “just because.” The simple things in life are the best and bring healing to your soul.

God bless,

**Respectfully Submitted,  
Danette Null, MD, FAAFP  
Program Director**