

Meeting Faculty

David E. Blumenthal, MD

Dr. Blumenthal is an Assistant Professor of Medicine in the Division of Rheumatology at Case Western Reserve University and University Hospitals Cleveland Medical Center.

Leonard Calabrese, DO

Dr. Leonard Calabrese is a Professor of Medicine, Vice Chair of the Cleveland Clinic's Department of Rheumatic and Immunologic Diseases and the Co-director of the Centre for Vasculitis Care and Research. He also serves as Director of the RJ Fasenmyer Centre for Clinical Immunology at the Cleveland Clinic. He also holds appointments in the Department of Infectious Diseases and the Wellness Institute.

He is a graduate of the Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences. He completed his internal medicine training at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation in Ohio, followed by a fellowship in rheumatic and immunologic disease. Professor Calabrese has received numerous awards, including honorary Doctorates of Humane Letters from the Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences and Alma College and the Leonard Tow Humanitarianism in Medicine award from the Arnold P Goldman MD Foundation.

He has particular interest in vascular inflammatory disease of the central nervous system, primary and secondary immunodeficiency states and the intersection of infections and autoimmunity. Over the course of his academic research career, Professor Calabrese has authored over 400 publications including book chapters and peer-reviewed journal articles.

Steve Echard

Steven Echard is a Certified Association Executive (CAE) and Graduate of the Institute of Organizational Management (IOM) at UCLA. He has served as Executive Director of several medical/scientific professional societies and medical research foundations. Mr. Echard currently serves as the Executive Vice President for the American College of Rheumatology (ACR), an international healthcare association committed to improving the care of patients with rheumatic disease and advancing the rheumatology subspecialty.

Before returning to ACR in 2019, Mr. Echard served as Chief Executive of the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD), an international healthcare association working to advance and disseminate the science and practice of hepatology, and to promote liver health and quality patient care. During his 5-year tenure, he was able to assist AASLD leadership refine its strategic plan and increase its program offerings, including the launch of a

new AASLD Foundation and large investment in Global Outreach. During his tenure, AASLD experienced significant growth in membership; program budget; and staff (34 staff to 60+).

Madelaine A. Feldman, MD, FACR

Dr. Madelaine Feldman is a rheumatologist in private practice with The Rheumatology Group in New Orleans, LA. She is President of the Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations. She is also Chair of the Alliance for Safe Biologic Medicines and past member of the American College of Rheumatology insurance subcommittee.

A Clinical Assistant Professor of Medicine at Tulane University School of Medicine, Dr. Feldman is passionate about advocacy and lectures extensively to patients, physicians, regulators, and legislators on a local and national level regarding the drug supply channel, access to care for patients, and the importance of maintaining the doctor-patient relationship.

She has testified before the Energy and Commerce subcommittee on Health regarding transparency in drug pricing and the drug supply chain (specifically PBMs), and several state legislative committees on PBMs and transparency.

Dr. Feldman received the Distinguished Service Award from Tulane Medical School and was named one of the Top Women in New Orleans by City Business in 2017. She is a former radio talk show host and has been on the Top Doctors list in New Orleans for over 15 years.

Milena Gianfrancesco, PhD, MPH

Dr. Milena Gianfrancesco is currently an Assistant Professor in the Division of Rheumatology, School of Medicine, at the University of California, San Francisco. She earned an MPH in Chronic Disease Epidemiology from Yale University, and a PhD in Epidemiology from the University of California, Berkeley. Her interests lie at the intersection of epidemiology, machine learning, and causal inference research, specifically as these fields relate to data utilizing electronic health records and genetic databases in rheumatic disease. She also serves as lead epidemiologist for the COVID-19 Global Rheumatology Alliance registry.

Edward W. Goldberger, MD

Born in Lorain, Ohio Dr. Goldberger attended McGill University undergraduate and graduated from the Medical College of Ohio in Toledo. After completing residency in Internal Medicine at Montefiore Hospital University of Pittsburgh and a rheumatology fellowship at SUNY Upstate Medical Center Syracuse, New York, he returned to Toledo, Ohio in 1991. Dr. Goldberger has been with Arthritis Associates of Northwest Ohio since then which is now a part of the Toledo Clinic. Dr. Goldberger lives in Maumee, Ohio with his wife Mary a family physician, 2 dogs and 1 guinea pig. He has 2 grown children.

Monica Hueckel

Monica Hueckel currently serves as Senior Director of Government Relations for the Ohio State Medical Association (OSMA). The OSMA enjoys a 168-year reputation as the voice of Ohio's medical profession. The OSMA represents 16,000 Ohio physicians, medical residents and medical students and collaborates at the local level with county medical societies and at the national level with the American Medical Association.

Previously Ms. Hueckel worked in Washington, DC for United States Congressman Steve Stivers, who currently represents Ohio's 15th Congressional District. Monica served as his Director of Operations and Legislative Assistant, focusing on health care policy and initiatives. Prior to that, she worked for a consulting firm in Columbus, Ohio where she lobbied the state legislature on behalf of numerous clients and focused on political fundraising.

Ms. Hueckel is a graduate of The Ohio State University and currently resides in Columbus, OH.

Dinesh Khanna, MD, MS

Dinesh Khanna, MD, MSc, is Professor of Medicine and Director, University of Michigan Scleroderma Program. He holds the Frederick G.L. Huetwell Professorship in Rheumatology. Dr. Khanna has published over 400 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters. He is the Principal Investigator on National Institutes of Health and industry-sponsored clinical studies. He won the 2015 Henry Kunkel award from the American College of Rheumatology.

Alexa Meara, MD, MS

Alexa Meara, MD is a graduate of the Georgetown University School of Medicine (2008). She completed her internal medicine training at East Carolina University (ECU) and Vidant Medical Center (2008-2011), then became Chief Resident in Internal Medicine at ECU (2011-2012). She was then recruited as the associate training Program Director for Internal Medicine (2012-2013). She pursued further training in Rheumatology at The Ohio State University from 2013-2015 and completed 2 extra years of fellowship to expand her research (2015-2017). She is an Assistant Professor of Immunology and Rheumatology at OSU. Currently she maintains a multidisciplinary vasculitis clinic and supervises a longitudinal registry of lupus nephritis and vasculitis patients. Her clinical research is understanding the immune related adverse events second to cancer immunotherapy. Her priority is understanding patients with pre-existing autoimmune disease and subsequent side effects from cancer immunotherapy. She also teaches medical students in the pre-clinical years and works with struggling learners.

Edward Oberle, MD, RhMSUS

Ed Oberle, MD, RhMSUS, is a pediatric rheumatologist practicing at Nationwide Children's Hospital and The Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio. Ed joined the group in July 2015

after completing his medical training at the Children's Hospital of Wisconsin and the Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, WI. His primary focus in rheumatology is the treatment of children with Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis and he has additional expertise in the use of musculoskeletal ultrasonography (MSKUS). Ed became trained in MSKUS during fellowship through the Ultrasound School of North American Rheumatologists (USSONAR) and via the help of a local mentor. Prior to his graduation, Ed received certification in MSKUS through the American College of Rheumatology (ACR – RhMSUS certification) and is one of only a few pediatric rheumatologists to hold this certification. Ed has collaborated with radiology at Nationwide Children's to establish a MSKUS program for clinical, research, and educational purposes. He is a mentor through the USSONAR program and has assisted with national ACR ultrasound training courses. Ed is also a co-chair and lead investigator on MSKUS research efforts for the Childhood Arthritis and Rheumatology and Research Association (CARRA). He is married and has two daughters, age 6 and 9, who both have been subjected to countless hours of being ultrasounded, enough to the point where they have been found playing "ultrasound" at home with their stuffed animals.

Stephanie J. Ott, MD, MWRA

Dr. Ott has been the President of the Ohio Association of Rheumatology since 2011. She is also the Director of Rheumatology with Fairfield Healthcare Professionals Rheumatology, Fairfield Medical Center and the Clinical Associate Professor of Rheumatology at The Ohio University College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Dr. Ott received her Doctor of Medicine Degree from the University of New Mexico in 2001 and then completed a residency at the university in 2004. She went on to complete a rheumatology fellowship at the Ohio State University from 2005-2007. She is on the Board of Directors and is a co-chair for Advocacy for the Association of Women in Rheumatology (AWIR).

Gregg J. Silverman, MD

Dr. Silverman is Professor of Medicine and Pathology, and the Director of the B Cell Immunobiology Laboratory, at NYU School of Medicine. In addition to his clinical practice, he leads a laboratory program that focuses on the pathogenetic and protective roles of B cells in autoimmunity, and the production of autoantibodies in patients with rheumatoid arthritis, SLE and Sjogren's syndrome. To understand the drivers of these responses he has begun investigations of the gut microbiome. Nationally, Dr. Silverman is a member of the American Society for Clinical Investigation, the Henry Kunkel Society, and the American College of Rheumatology Committee on Research. At NYU, Dr. Silverman serves as a lecturer in multiple courses for the Immunology training program, and for the Medical School curriculum.