



DUCCS Happy Hour

The bulletin of the Duke University Cooperative Cardiovascular Society

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DUCCS Mentoring Program Update

The DUCCS Mentoring Program is in full swing. The program, an initiative launched this fall to pair current Duke cardiology fellows with mentors outside Duke's walls, identified 25 pairs of fellows and mentors.

Many have already begun their mentoring relationship, including second-year fellow Sounok Sen and Yale Assistant Professor

Tariq Ahmad, a former DUCCS fellow liaison. Here's what Sounok has to say about the experience so far.



MANDARIN DUCK by cuatrok77 on flickr

I am a second year general cardiology fellow planning to pursue a career in advanced heart failure and cardiac transplantation.

The DUCCS mentoring program has been a fantastic way to meet and become connected with the vast network of Duke trained cardiologists around the world. The program interested me because it is uniquely designed to match each fellow with a Duke alumnus based on personal, clinical and research interests and a lot of careful thought is taken into matching each fellow with a specific mentor. Moreover, the program enables us to learn how to prepare for career progression both as a fellow at Duke and beyond.

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DUCCS Mentoring Program Update, Continued

So far, I have been able to quickly connect with my mentor, Dr. Tariq Ahmad, over e-mail and fortunately had a chance to meet and visit him in person at Yale when I was in the area. We had the opportunity to chat about his experience at Duke and how he has transitioned at Yale.

From the get-go, he graciously welcomed me as a member of the Duke cardiology family and introduced me to his new colleagues at his current institution and was incredibly kind to offer personalized advice on how to structure fellowship and career plans given our similar interests. Finally, we had a chance to re-connect at a recent conference which was an amazing way to see the strength of the DUCCS network in action.

I am excited to be a part of this exceptional network as a fellow and hope to carry on the tradition as I move forward in my training and career.

Reminder: Renew Your DUCCS Membership for 2018

Don't forget: If your membership expires in 2017, or if you've let it lapse, it's time to renew.

To pay your membership dues (\$300 for a 3-year membership or \$100 for a 1-year membership), please use one of the following options.

Check:

Make payable to **DUKE UNIVERSITY**,
Include in memo **DUCCS 392-9010**
Send to Robert Mentz, DCRI, Box 17969, Durham, NC
27715

Fund transfer (Duke faculty only):

Request a JV/fund transfer to the **DUCCS Educational Fund, 392-9010**

Credit Card (outside of Duke only):

Go to <https://www.gifts.duke.edu/>
Search for **DUCCS Educational Fund**
Choose **One Time Gift**
Enter payment details when prompted

****Please note: your payment is NOT tax-deductible****

IMPORTANT:

To assure that your payment is processed correctly, please email Robert Mentz (robert.mentz@duke.edu) with your NAME, INSTITUTION, PAYMENT DATE, PAYMENT AMOUNT, and PAYMENT METHOD.



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Spotlight On... Cardiology Fellow Ajar Kochar

We're using our Spotlight On... feature to get acquainted with current fellows, longtime DUCCS members, and more. This month, meet Duke Cardiology Fellow Ajar Kochar.

Clinical Interests: I am interested in the intersection between intervention and critical care; this includes cardiogenic shock, hemodynamics and mechanical circulatory support devices. I thoroughly enjoyed comprehensively caring for critically ill patients in the ICU setting. Next year, I am excited to add an interventional component to this evolving critical care skillset as I pursue further training in interventional cardiology at Duke.



Research Interests: My research interests align closely with my clinical interests and thus are focused around improving the care for critically ill patients. It is a tremendous privilege to work at Duke and the DCRI where the fellows are exposed to a plethora of phenomenal mentors. I'm interested in understanding how to optimize systems of care for patients with cardiogenic shock. For example, we looked at patients with cardiogenic shock in the Mission: Lifeline Accelerator program and determined that fewer than 40% of STEMI patients with cardiogenic shock achieved their guideline directed first medical contact to device time targets. We also submitted a proposal that would use dynamic machine learning techniques to predict cardiac decompensation among high risk cardiac patients prior to the onset of end-organ damage to maximize the likelihood of recovery or a long-term therapy like an LVAD or heart transplantation. I am also collaborating with our Duke engineering colleagues to develop computational fluid dynamic (CFD) models for patients deployed on ECMO. We are modeling flow in the coronary, renal and carotid beds and also assessing alterations in flow based on different cannulation strategies.

Something nobody knows about you: I grew up in Denmark and when I was younger I was involved in the acting scene. I was in a Danish children's musical movie, a UNICEF commercial and even made it on stage with Michael Jackson for a rendition of "Heal the World."

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Spotlight on Ajar Kochar, Continued

A question you hate being asked: Why do you watch cricket?
Because it is awesome. Moreover, you get to use cool terminology like: silly point, golden duke, and googly.

The story behind the photo: I am an avid reader of modern Indian history and in particular I have been inspired by MK Gandhi. The power of great ideas can transcend many differences, so I have always been fascinated by Martin Luther King borrowing principles from Gandhi to help lead the civil rights movement in the US. Thus my wife (Bharati) and I enjoy exposing our daughter (Sahana) to important historical sites like the Lincoln memorial and the location where Dr. King delivered the “I have a dream” speech. We have also, unsuccessfully, tried to stop Sahana from sucking her thumb.

A Fond Farewell



Goodbye... by epicnom on flickr

Megan Honig here – DUCCS program coordinator and the “voice” of the DUCCS Happy Hour Bulletin.

I have some bittersweet news to share: I am leaving Duke to pursue a new career. My last day will be January 4.

It has been a pleasure to get to know so many of you over the past two years, some in person at AHA and ACC, some over the phone, and some over email. DUCCS has a rich history, and I’ve been grateful to those of you who have shared with me your memories of the past and hopes for the future. I believe DUCCS’s future is bright and wish every one of you my best in the coming years.

We are in the process of identifying DUCCS’s next coordinator. In the meantime, please [contact Rob Mentz](#), our director, about any DUCCS-related matters.