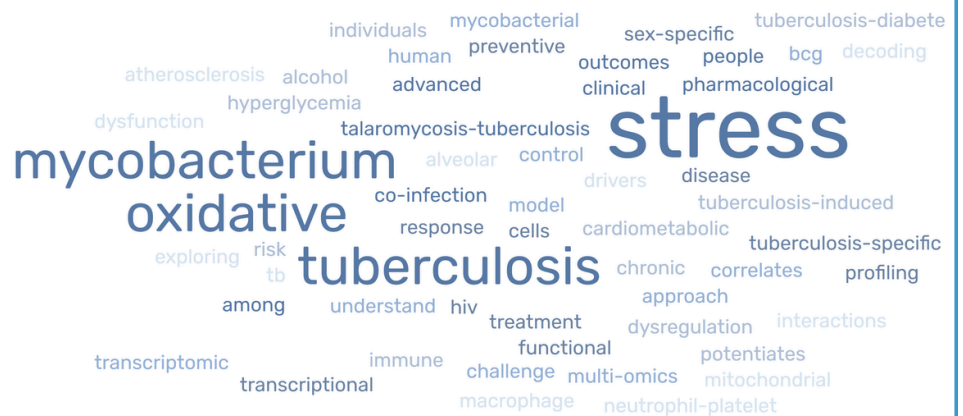


# Newsletter

## YEAR 4 PILOT AWARDS



### IN THIS ISSUE

#### Y4 PILOT AWARDS

#### TRACCOLDAES

#### PUBLICATION HIGHLIGHTS

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### BULLETIN BOARD & JOB POSTINGS

#### RECENT PUBLICATIONS

We are excited to announce the **Year 4 TRAC Pilot awards!** Through collaboration with the [Emory Global Diabetes Research Center](#) the TRAC funded five TRAC-03 awards at **\$40,000 per award**. We are excited to support early-stage investigators, including post-doctoral research fellows this year. Funded projects span sex-specific responses in vaccine models, co-infection with talaromycosis in persons infected with HIV, and co-morbidities, including cardiovascular health, diabetes, and chronic alcohol exposure.

Congratulations to Emory Infectious Disease Fellows **Emily Evans, MD**, and **Alex 'AJ' Warr, MD**, post-doctoral fellow **Zaynab Mousavian, PhD**, TRAC investigators **Daniel Graciaa, MD**, and **Rachel Kinsella, PhD**, and new to TB investigators **Samantha Yeligar, MS, PhD** and **Rebecca Levit, MD**.

We look forward to hearing more about these projects at upcoming TRAC events and supporting the projects through TRAC's [Core Services](#) where appropriate.

# Y4 Pilot Grant Awardees



## **TRAC-03: CLINICAL AND PHARMACOLOGICAL OUTCOMES IN TALAROMYCOSIS-TUBERCULOSIS CO-INFECTION AMONG PEOPLE WITH ADVANCED HIV DISEASE**

**Emily Evans, MD**, Infectious Diseases Fellow, Emory University School of Medicine

## **TRAC-03: FUNCTIONAL AND TRANSCRIPTIONAL PROFILING OF M. TUBERCULOSIS-SPECIFIC T CELLS IN RESPONSE TO TUBERCULOSIS PREVENTIVE TREATMENT**

**Alex 'AJ' Warr, MD**, Infectious Diseases Fellow, Emory University School of Medicine



## **TRAC-03: MULTI-OMICS APPROACH TO UNDERSTAND IMMUNE DYSREGULATION AND CARDIOMETABOLIC RISK IN INDIVIDUALS WITH TUBERCULOSIS-DIABETES AND STRESS HYPERGLYCEMIA**

**Zaynab Mousavian, PhD**, Postdoctoral Fellow, Emory Rollins School of Public Health

Co-funding support from:



**EMORY**  
UNIVERSITY

**Emory Global Diabetes  
Research Center**

*of the Woodruff Health Sciences Center*

## **TRAC-03: SEX-SPECIFIC TRANSCRIPTOMIC CORRELATES OF MYCOBACTERIAL CONTROL IN A HUMAN BCG CHALLENGE MODEL**

**Daniel Graciaa, MD**, Associate Professor, Division of Infectious Diseases, Emory University School of Medicine



## **TRAC-03: CHRONIC ALCOHOL POTENTIATES MYCOBACTERIUM TUBERCULOSIS-INDUCED ALVEOLAR MACROPHAGE OXIDATIVE STRESS AND MITOCHONDRIAL DYSFUNCTION**

**Samantha Yeligar, MS, PhD**, Associate Professor, Department of Medicine, Division of Pulmonary, Allergy, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine, Emory University School of Medicine



### TRAC-03: DECODING NEUTROPHIL-PLATELET INTERACTIONS AS DRIVERS OF ATHEROSCLEROSIS DURING TB

**Rachel Kinsella, PhD**, Assistant Professor of Medicine and  
**Rebecca Levit, MD**, Associate Professor of Medicine,  
Emory University

## Welcome



Welcome to **Juyoung Lee, PhD student** in Biomedical Informatics at Emory University working in [Anant Madabhushi's lab](#) in collaboration with several TRAC investigators, including Russell Kempker, MD, MSc, Matthew Magee, PhD, MPH, Sara Auld, MD, Msc, and Michael Marll, MD. Juyoung's thesis project is focused on post-TB sequelae and airway morphology.

Welcome to **Kenneth (Kenny) Trang, MD/PhD student** in Emory's School of Medicine. Kenny is interested in TB and the microbiome. He is currently exploring potential projects involving matrix metalloproteinases with Jeffrey Collins, MD, Msc and Cheryl Day PhD.



## TRAColades



Congratulations to **Ruth Demissie, MPH**, on acceptance of their first author publication titled '**Acceptability of Long Acting Injectables for Tuberculosis Preventative Treatment Among High-Risk Groups in Tbilisi, Georgia**' in The International Journal of Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (IJTLD)/IJTLD Open journal. This study was a collaboration between Emory investigators Russell Kempker, PhD, MSc, and Matthew Magee, PhD, MPH, and Georgian investigators at the Georgian National Center for TB and Lung Disease, including Maia Kipiani, MD, PhD, and Leila Goginashvili, MD.

Kudos to **Alawode Oladele, MD, MPH**, for recognition of his international work through the [CMG Global Foundation](#), for which he is co-founder. He will receive the **2026 Sheth Distinguished Alumni Award**, established by a generous gift from Dr. Jagdish and Madhu Sheth, which recognizes Emory University's alumni who have distinguished themselves in service to universities, governments, private sector firms, and/or non-governmental organizations. Dr. Oladele will receive the award on March 31, 2026, in Emory University's Convocation Hall.



A huge congrats to **Sara Auld, MD, MSc**, on her promotion to tenured Associate Professor of Medicine!



**Congrats!**



Congratulations to **Daniel Graciaa, MD, MPH, MSc**, on his promotion to Associate Professor of Medicine!



Congratulations to **Daniel Flanagan, MPH, MD/PhD student** in Emory's Rollins School of Public Health Epidemiology Department, on his fantastic impact score of 20 following resubmission of his NIH/NICHD Predoctoral MD/PhD Fellowship (F30) application titled "**Diagnosis and Prevention of Pediatric Tuberculosis in HIV-Endemic Settings**". We are very hopeful that his application will be funded - kudos!

Kudos to **Matheus Fernandes Gyorfy, MPH**, on receiving a prestigious New Investigator Scholarship to attend the [2026 Conference on Retroviruses & Opportunistic Infections](#) to present his poster titled '**Latent Tuberculosis Infection is Strongly Associated with Increased Epigenetic Aging**'. Matheus is a PhD student in Emory's Rollins School of Public Health Epidemiology Department.



## Publication Highlights



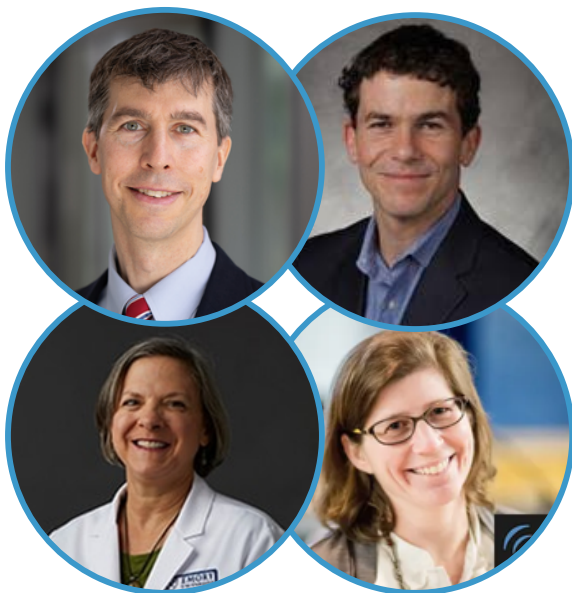
Congratulations to first and last authors **Russell Kempker, MD, MSc**, and **Matthew Magee, PhD, MPH**, on their highly collaborative publication titled '**High rates of post tuberculosis lung disease among persons successfully treated for drug susceptible and resistant tuberculosis**' in the journal Thorax. The study is a collaboration between Georgian investigators at the Georgian National Center for TB and Lung Disease, including **Maia Kipiani, MD, MPH**, The University of Georgia, European University and the David Tvildiani Medical University in Tbilisi, Georgia. The study also involved collaboration with investigators at Stanford University School of Medicine, Georgia State University and the University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School. The study found nearly three out of four individuals with microbial cure status for TB disease had prevalent post tuberculosis lung disease, regardless of drug resistance status. Persistent cavitory disease was associated with serum markers of inflammation and lung tissue remodeling.

Congratulations to **Cheryl Day, PhD**, on the recent publication '**Mtb-specific CFP-10/ESAT-6 CD4 and CD8 T cell non-IFN- $\gamma$ + responses are common in young Kenyan children despite low reported TB exposure**'. Due to reduced early life IFN- $\gamma$  production capacity, IFN- $\gamma$  release assays to detect *M. tuberculosis* -specific responses in young children may have limited sensitivity. The study found that Mtb-specific CD4/CD8 responses were common among young Kenyan children up to 24 months of age and non-IFN- $\gamma$ + T cell cytokine expression identified more children than IFN- $\gamma$ + who would be potentially missed by commercially available IFN- $\gamma$  release assays.

Additional kudos to Dr. Day for her 1-year collaborative Pilot Award from the **Emory Center for Health in Aging** to conduct a project titled '**Plasma biomarker signatures of risk of frailty in older women living with and without HIV**'. Vince Marconi, MD, Emory School of Medicine, and Max Lau, PhD, Rollins School of Public Healthcare are also co-investigators on the pilot project.



Congrats to **Aniruddh Sarkar, PhD**, (Dept. of Biomedical Engineering, Georgia Institute of Technology) on his publication titled '**Inexpensive Multiplexed Cytokine Detection for Tuberculosis Diagnostics Using Amplified Enzymatic Metallization**' a collaboration with **Cheryl Day, PhD**, and collaborators at the Kenya Medical Research Institute. They describe a platform based on amplified enzymatic silver metallization on a plastic substrate, a commonly available plastic petri dish. The dry readout of the deposited silver can be obtained using a cell phone camera. They measured clinically relevant sub-picomolar levels of multiple cytokines, including IFN- $\gamma$ , interleukin-2, and tumor necrosis factor alpha from a small volume of the same blood sample used in an interferon-gamma release assay (IGRA). Furthermore, they demonstrate the use of this assay to distinguish IGRA+ and IGRA- participant samples from a TB endemic setting.



**'Relapse and Emergent Resistance With Novel Short-Course Regimens for Multidrug-Resistant Tuberculosis, United States, 2022-2024'**

describes a case series of 8 US patients with TB treated with a bedaquiline, pretomanid, and linezolid with or without moxifloxacin-containing regimen, who experienced adverse outcomes. The study highlights consequences, both for the individual and for public health, including relapse and treatment failure in real-life operational settings that may not be readily evident in well-controlled and well-resourced clinical trials. Despite the advent of shorter and

better tolerated bedaquiline-based regimens, US clinicians continue to face challenges in managing drug-resistant TB. TRAC members **James Brust, MD** (Albert Einstein College of Medicine), **Marcos Schechter, MD, MSc**, **Susan Ray, MD**, and **Caitlin Reed, MD** (CDC) were co-authors.

# Upcoming Events



**TUESDAY MARCH 24TH, 2-6PM**  
**EMORY, RSPH, RRR BALLROOM & ZOOM**



**Aniruddh Sarkar, PhD, Assist. Professor, Wallace H. Coulter Dept. of Biomedical Engineering, Georgia Institute of Technology**  
*Assessment of Tuberculosis Antibodies in the CSF Study (ATTAC Study)*



**Rachel Kinsella, PhD, Assist. Professor, Division of Infectious Diseases, Emory Vaccine Center**  
*When Shape Matters: Neutrophil Responses to Rough and Smooth Mycobacterium abscessus*



**Thomas Manning, PhD, MS, Professor of Chemistry, Valdosta State University**  
*Copper, Cancer, POX Viruses and Slowing TB*



**Louis Hopkins, PhD Candidate, Emory University**  
*CD40 induces dendritic cell metabolic switch that drives anti-Mtb immune responses*



**Matheus Fernandes Gyorfy, PhD Candidate, Emory University**  
*Latent Tuberculosis Infection is Strongly Associated with Increased Epigenetic Aging*



**Frederick Quinn, PhD, Athletic Association Professor of Infectious Diseases, Professor, University of Georgia**  
*Seeking a Better Understanding of Tuberculosis Transmission Dynamics*

**TALKS FOLLOWED BY HONORS RECOGNITION & RECEPTION**

[tb.emory.edu](http://tb.emory.edu)



[tb.emory.edu](http://tb.emory.edu)

## **THESIS PROPOSAL: ADVANCING DIAGNOSIS AND PREVENTION OF PEDIATRIC TUBERCULOSIS IN HIV-ENDEMIC SETTINGS**

**Tuesday, March 31st, 2pm - 3pm  
RSPH, CNR Room 2001 and [Zoom](#)**



**Daniel T. Flanagan, MPH, MD/PhD** Candidate in Emory's Rollins School of Public Health Epidemiology Department. The overarching goal of Daniel's dissertation is to integrate molecular, genomic, and spatial epidemiology methods to inform evidence-based approaches for the diagnosis and prevention of pediatric TB disease in high-burden, HIV-prevalent settings.

## **THESIS DEFENSE: CAUSAL INFERENCE METHODS TO QUANTIFY IMPACTS OF HEALTH POLICIES: APPLICATIONS TO MEASURE HIV AND TB TREATMENT AND PREVENTION EFFECTIVENESS IN GLOBAL PUBLIC HEALTH SETTINGS**

**Thursday, April 2, 2:00-3:00pm  
RSPH, CNR Room 4001 and [Zoom](#)**



**Seth Zissette, MS, PhD** Candidate in Emory's Rollins School of Public Health Epidemiology Department. The overarching goal of Seth's dissertation was to apply target trial emulation and causal inference methods to quantify the effectiveness of large-scale pharmaceutical interventions for the treatment and prevention of HIV and TB in global public health settings using observational data.



**SYSTEMS BIOLOGY**  
**VIRTUAL & IN-PERSON**  
**OFFICE HOURS**

4th Thursday of the month February-May 2026

Drop in to receive one-on-one support from Emory University informaticists with 'omics' study design and data analysis for **tuberculosis research** - including bulk and single cell transcriptomics, metabolomics and lipidomics.






Jeffrey Collins, MD, MS    Xin Hu, PhD    Ashish Sharma, PhD    Boris Minasenkov, MS

🕒 10-11am    📍 RSPH, RRR 205 & Zoom  
<https://zoom.us/j/96877996640>

FEBRUARY THU 26    MARCH THU 26  
APRIL THU 23    MAY THU 28

MORE INFO: [jeffrey.michael.collin@emory.edu](mailto:jeffrey.michael.collin@emory.edu)

Add to calendar

## Bulletin Board

### Research Program Coordinator Position

The Andrews Lab in the Department of Medicine at Stanford University is seeking a Program Coordinator for a research group at Stanford University focused on clinical, translational and epidemiologic studies of infectious diseases. Our interdisciplinary research team conducts field studies of new strategies for diagnosis, surveillance, treatment and prevention of tuberculosis and tropical diseases in close collaboration with investigators in Brazil, Nepal, India and other countries. See job posting [here](#).

**Stanford**  
University



NIH's Implementation of Common Forms for Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending (Other) Support for Due Dates on or after January 25, 2026 ([NIH Notice NOT-OD-26-018](#))

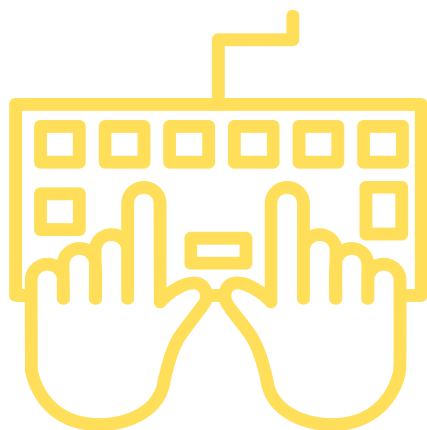
**Resources:** [View the SciENCv FAQs](#) and a document that details the steps for [creating SciENCv documents](#). Currently, there are only instructions for the NSF format OS, but the steps will be the same for the NIH format. **Other helpful how-to guides:** [SciENCv quick guide for Emory](#), [NIH Common Forms mapping for biosketches](#).



## NIH Notices and Updates



- [Updated NIH Policy on Foreign Subawards](#), NOT-OD-25-104, May 1, 2025
- [New Application Structure for NIH-Funded International Collaborations](#), NOT-OD-25-155, September 12, 2025
  - [FAQs for Foreign Subawards](#) (applications with foreign subawards will be withdrawn for due dates on or after September 25, 2025).
- [Updated NH Processes for No-Cost Extensions](#), NOT-OD-25-110, May 7, 2025
- [Update: No-Cost Extension Functionality in eRA](#), NOT-OD-25-142, August 7, 2025
- [Early-Stage Investigator \(ESI\) Eligibility Extension and Reinstatement](#). NIH has granted automatic extension of ESI eligibility for those impacted by delays in grant application submissions, peer review, or award processing timelines between January 1 - May 20, 2025. See [FAQs](#)
- [Supporting Fairness and Originality in NIH Research Applications](#), NOT-OF-25-132, July 15, 2025
  - NIH will only accept six new, renewal or revision applications from a PD/PI for all council rounds in a calendar year. See updated [FAQs](#).
- [NIH Will Stop Posting Notices of Funding Opportunities in the NIH Guide for Grants and Contracts in FY2026](#), NOT-OD-25-143, August 14, 2025
- [NIH Director Statement: Advancing NIH's Mission Through a Unified Strategy - NIH Priorities](#), August 15, 2025
- [NIH's Implementation of Common Forms for Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending \(Other\) Support for Due Dates on or after January 25, 2026](#), December 2, 2025



*Have items to include in  
a future newsletter?*

*Email:*

*[lisa.sharling@emory.edu](mailto:lisa.sharling@emory.edu)*

## January & February Publications

**Buziashvili M**, Baliashvili D, Abutidze A, Chkhartishvili N, **Tukvadze N**, Chokoshvili O, DeHovitz J, Djibuti M. *Analysis of Tuberculosis Preventive Treatment Cascade Among People With Human Immunodeficiency Virus in Georgia: A Mixed-Methods Study.* *Open Forum Infect Dis.* 2026;13(1):ofaf768. DOI: 10.1093/ofid/ofaf768.

Elkhiyari K, Kaszala B, Hashim A, Rallapalli Y, Khayumbi J, Ongalo J, Tonui J, **Day CL**, **Sarkar A**. *Inexpensive High-Throughput Multiplexed Cytokine Detection for Tuberculosis Diagnostics Using Amplified Enzymatic Metallization.* *bioRxiv.* 2026. DOI: 10.64898/2026.01.27.700981.

**Kempker RR**, Salindri AD, Avaliani T, Kornfeld H, **Auld SC**, Jakobia N, **Day CL**, **Subuddhi A**, Krish KN, Vashakidze S, Avaliani Z, Goginashvili L, Bryan C, Bernheim A, **Kipiani M**, **Magee MJ**. *High rates of post-tuberculosis lung disease among persons successfully treated for drug-susceptible and resistant tuberculosis.* *Thorax.* 2026;81(2):170-8. DOI: 10.1136/thorax-2024-222350.

**Kiwanuka N**, Quach HT, Kakaire R, Zalwango S, Jingo JP, Nalukwago S, Chervenak K, **Sekandi J**, Boom WH, **Whalen CC**, Bark CM. *Incidence of Mycobacterium tuberculosis infection in an African city with endemic TB.* *Int J Tuberc Lung Dis.* 2026;30(2):70-6. DOI: 10.5588/ijtld.25.0299.

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**Loveday M**, Clarence E, Hlangu S, Singh N, Chotoo S, **Brust JCM**, Waitt C, Court R, Furin J. *Pregnant women with MDR/RR-TB and the all-oral 6-month regimen: experiences from a patient series in South Africa.* *Clin Infect Dis.* 2026. DOI: 10.1093/cid/ciag032.

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Mesfin E, **Blumberg HM**. *Nosocomial tuberculosis: the blind spot in global tuberculosis prevention and care.* *Clin Microbiol Infect.* 2026. DOI: 10.1016/j.cmi.2026.01.008.

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**Collins JM**, **Wassie L**, **Bobosha K**, **Gandhi NR**, Liu KH, Day CL, **Rengarajan J**, **Kempker RR**, **Lau MSY**, Nellis M, Nizam A, Maner-Smith K, Ortlund EA, Sakai S, Kauffman KD, **Magee MJ**, Jones DP, Ernst JD, Barber DL, **Blumberg HM**. *Infection with Mycobacterium tuberculosis depletes host fatty acids in humans and non-human primates.* EBioMedicine. 2026;125:106193. DOI: 10.1016/j.ebiom.2026.106193.

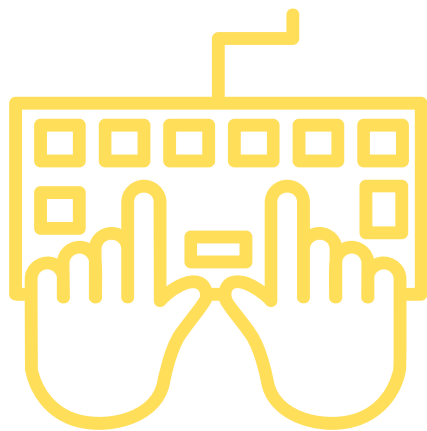
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a future newsletter?

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