



SSCI Tinsley Harrison Scholars – 2026



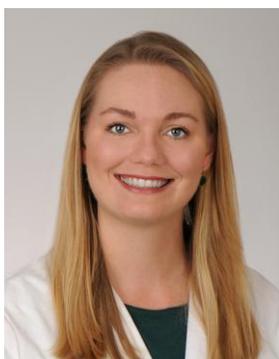
Flor Alvarado, MD, MHS, MPH – Tulane University School of Medicine, Section of Nephrology & Hypertension,

Dr. Alvarado's research focuses on understanding how social determinants and psychosocial factors influence clinical outcomes, self-management, and research participation among racial and ethnic minority populations and low-income communities. Her work seeks to translate evidence-based strategies into sustainable models of care that can be scaled across diverse, resource-limited settings



ZeNan Chang, MD, PhD – Washington University School of Medicine, Division of Gastroenterology

Dr. Chang's research focuses on investigating intestinal factors such as the gut microbiome and intestinal immune cells and their impact on extra-intestinal physiology. He is the first individual examining this in the context of pregnancy.



Jessica English, MD, MSCR – Medical University of South Carolina, Division of Rheumatology and Immunology

Dr. English is dedicated to improving the pregnancy outcomes of women with systemic lupus erythematosus. She currently utilizes cohort databases and mixed methods to identify immunologic and epidemiologic factors that may contribute to adverse pregnancy outcomes in SLE and SLE-related autoimmunity.



Sean Jones, MD, PhD – Medical University of South Carolina, Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology

Dr. Jones' research focuses on the effects of circadian disruption on the GI tract with a focus on mucosal barrier integrity, microbiome changes and inflammatory pathways. This research includes both an animal model (an acute DSS induced colitis model in mice in the setting of peripheral circadian misalignment) and human subject research (with a current focus on inflammatory bowel disease), with a goal of expanding into alcohol induced intestinal barrier dysfunction in the setting of circadian misalignment.



Ignacio Portales Castillo, MD – University of Washington in St. Louis, Division of Nephrology

Dr. Portales Castillo's research focuses on the proximal renal tubule and creatine metabolism. In particular, I want to understand why patients with heterozygous mutations in *GATM* develop renal failure and whether is possible to prevent this with creatine supplementation.



Michael Sciaudone, MD, MPH – Tulane University School of Medicine, Section of Infectious Diseases

Dr. Sciaudone's overarching objective as a physician-scientist is to find innovative ways to address health disparities and improve outcomes for vulnerable populations globally, so he chose to focus on diagnostics for tuberculosis because of the immediate and concrete impact that accurate, affordable, and rapid diagnosis can have on a patient's clinical outcome, and because rapid, accurate, and affordable diagnostics for this infection are sorely lacking. He seeks to tackle the problem of TB diagnosis from different approaches, including novel molecular techniques such as isothermal nucleic acid amplification, to expand the armamentarium of diagnostic tools available to clinicians and provide better sensitivity, affordability and turnaround time for TB diagnosis.



Jeffrey Singer, MD, PhD, Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Division of Gastroenterology, Hepatology & Nutrition

Dr. Singer is interested in why patients with decompensated cirrhosis are so prone to getting bacterial infections. His research explores the roles of metal dysregulation, nutritional immunity, and bacterial translocation in advanced liver disease.



Eli Wilber, MD, Emory University School of Medicine, Division of Infectious Diseases

Dr. Wilber's research centers on diagnostic stewardship, with a focus on optimizing microbiologic diagnostics and exploring how electronic medical record design influences clinical decision-making and patient care. I am also exploring the utility of the Epic Cosmos dataset to understand clinician diagnostic decision-making.



Crystal Zheng, MD, Tulane University School of Medicine, Division of Infectious Diseases

Dr. Zheng's research focuses on the intersection of infectious diseases and women's health. My current projects include investigation into the reproductive health consequences of Ebola disease and developing clinical prediction tools to guide treatment of latent tuberculosis infection during pregnancy.

Returning 2025 SSCI Tinsley Harrison Scholars



Kale Bongers, MD, PhD – University of Iowa, Division of Pulmonary, Critical Care & Occupational Medicine

Dr. Bongers' research focuses on how the gut microbiome mediates clinical heterogeneity during sepsis and critical illness. He is particularly interested in how gut bacteria influence skeletal muscle atrophy and weakness after sepsis



M. Clarissa Tio, MD, MPH – University of Mississippi Medical Center, Division of Nephrology

Dr. Tio's research interests include chronic kidney disease epidemiology and the intersection between kidney disease and heart failure.