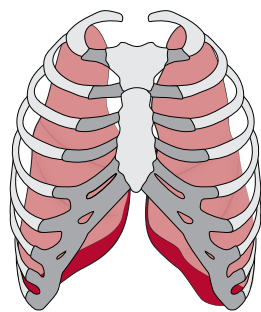




From left: Bryan Meyers, MD, MPH, and Benjamin Kozower, MD, MPH.

Section of
Thoracic Surgery



Board-certified, internationally recognized thoracic surgeons provide leading-edge respiratory medical and critical care, research and training. Treatments offered by Washington University general thoracic surgeons include airway surgery, procedures for benign esophageal disease, esophageal and lung cancer, and lung transplantation. The Lung Transplant Program at Barnes-Jewish Hospital is among the most active transplant centers in the world. These surgeons also train the next generation of thoracic surgeons through multiple fellowships.



1,677

operating room cases



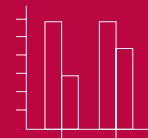
110

office procedures



8,542

visits



50

clinical research studies



9

faculty



\$4,022,430

research funding



Editors with Expertise

From left: Ruben Nava, MD, and Varun Puri, MD, MSCI.

The Thoracic Surgery Section at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis has an established tradition of leading the major publications in cardiothoracic surgery.

This year, **G. Alexander Patterson, MD**, the Joseph C. Bancroft Professor of Surgery, was appointed the new Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery (JTCVS). Patterson, a surgical innovator with a prolific career in cardiothoracic surgery, has served as Editor-in-Chief of the Annals of Thoracic Surgery since 2015. He was part of the team that performed the first successful long-term single-lung transplant in 1983, as well as the first successful long-term double-lung transplant for cystic fibrosis in 1988. A former associate editor of JTCVS, the American Journal of Lung Transplantation, and the Journal of Heart and Lung Transplantation, Patterson joined the School of Medicine in 1991.

“One of the things that makes Alec such a good role model to us all is his ability to draw us in and motivate us to become involved,” says Thoracic Surgery Chief **Bryan Meyers, MD, MPH**, the Patrick and Joy Williamson Professor of Surgery.

Multiple faculty hold leadership positions at the JTCVS. Meyers is a member of the Editorial Board. Cardiothoracic Surgery Residency Program Director **Varun Puri, MD, MSCI**, is Associate Statistical Editor, and Professor of Surgery **Benjamin Kozower, MD, MPH**, is

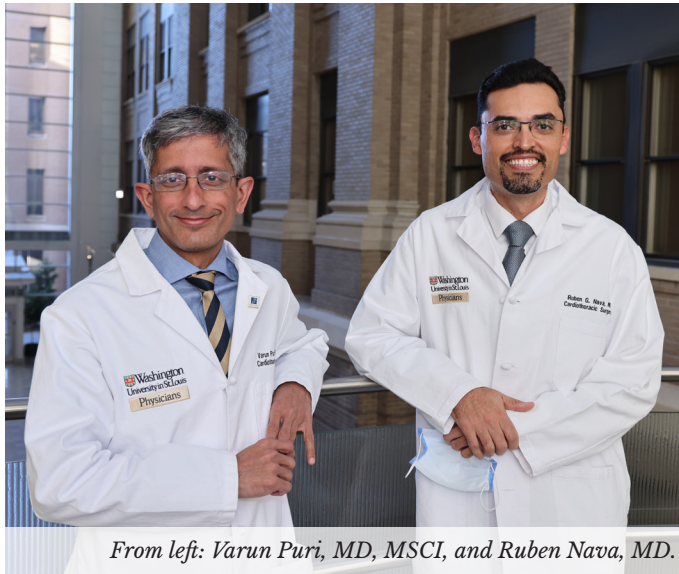
Deputy Statistical Editor. Thoracic surgeon **Ruben Nava, MD**, is the recipient of a 2021 Surgical Investigator Award from the American Association for Thoracic Surgery, which publishes JTCVS. Surgical Director of the Lung Transplant Program **Daniel Kreisel, MD, PhD**, is a member of the Editorial Board of Transplantation Proceedings. He is also Deputy Editor of the American Journal of Transplantation.

Meyers notes that the division has a rich history of leadership in editing cardiothoracic surgical journals. The late Thomas Ferguson, MD, professor emeritus of cardiothoracic surgery, served as editor of the Annals of Thoracic Surgery for 17 years, and other past and present cardiothoracic faculty have held numerous editorial positions over the years.

This tradition of excellence extends to cardiothoracic trainees. Thoracic Surgery Fellow **Kathryn Engelhardt, MD**, was named a 2020 Reviewer of the Year by the Annals of Thoracic Surgery. This award recognizes peer reviewers who consistently provide a combination of high-quality, thorough and professional reviews in a timely manner.

“We are contributing to the selection of current and future literature in thoracic surgery,” says Meyers. “Our editorial presence shows that there is a high density of expertise in thoracic surgery at Washington University. It is also a sign of our willingness to give back to the field as a whole by contributing time and expertise.”

Thoracic Surgery Highlights



From left: Varun Puri, MD, MSCI, and Ruben Nava, MD.

Clinical

Washington University cardiothoracic surgeons have expanded their services to a new lung and esophageal cancer clinic in Illinois. The clinic is located at the Siteman Cancer Center facility at Memorial Hospital Shiloh. The facility marks the sixth and newest Siteman location overall. Cardiothoracic surgeons **Varun Puri, MD, MSCI**, and **Ruben Nava, MD**, have begun surgical consultations at the lung and esophageal cancer clinic, led by Section Chief **Bryan Meyers, MD**, the Patrick and Joy Williamson Endowed Chair in Cardiothoracic Surgery. The clinic provides the latest advances in cancer care in a convenient location for patients in southern Illinois.

Research

Research programs in the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery provide excellent opportunities for trainees interested in pursuing a career in academic medicine to establish a robust curriculum vitae during residency training. General surgery resident **Brendan Heiden, MD, MPH**, has had an exemplary experience as a research resident in the division. This year Heiden published research in collaboration with Professor of Surgery **Varun Puri, MD, MSCI**, on the risks of delaying lung cancer surgery. He has also studied cost-effectiveness of robotic lung cancer surgery, lung cancer screening guidelines and readmissions following pulmonary lobectomy, leading to numerous publications and presentations.



Brendan Heiden, MD, MPH.

Education

Training programs in the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery offer complex cardiothoracic surgical experience and opportunities in established basic science and clinical research programs. General surgery resident **Hailey Shepherd, MD**, recently joined the laboratory of **Daniel Kreisel, MD, PhD**, the G. Alexander Patterson, MD/Mid-America Transplant Endowed Distinguished Chair in Lung Transplantation. Shepherd is collaborating with Cardiothoracic Surgery Residency Program Director **Varun Puri, MD, MSCI**, and thoracic surgeon **Ruben Nava, MD**, on lung transplant outcomes research. Her collaborative research, including a study of donor selection published this year in the *Journal of Thoracic Disease*, aims to expand the lung donor pool and improve lung transplant survival.



Hailey Shepherd, MD.



Collaborative Care in Lung Transplantation

Daniel Kreisel, MD, PhD.

The Lung Transplant Program at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis excels due to its emphasis on multidisciplinary collaboration, clinical expertise and innovative research. As part of the Lung Center at Barnes-Jewish Hospital, the program is ranked among the best in the country by U.S. News & World Report.

The program has reached new milestones under the leadership of Surgical Program Director **Daniel Kreisel, MD, PhD**, and Medical Program Director Ramsey Hachem, MD. In 2021, the Lung Transplant Program performed its 1,900th lung transplant.

“Our team is highly collaborative,” says Kreisel, Chief of Cardiothoracic Transplantation. “Our thoracic surgeons and colleagues in pulmonary medicine work

closely together to achieve the best outcomes for our patients.”

The team, which includes transplant coordinators, transplant pharmacists, respiratory therapists, dietitians, social workers and financial coordinators, partners to deliver world-class care for lung transplant recipients.

“The internal partnerships established within Washington University School of Medicine consistently allow patients to receive genuine tailored care,” says Hachem, the Tracey C. Marshall–Dr. Elbert P. Trulock Distinguished Professor of Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine.

Faculty advance the field of transplantation through collaborative basic science, translational research and

clinical studies. As Scientific Director of the Transplant Center, Kreisel led researchers to discover new clues as to why lung transplants are vulnerable to antibody-mediated rejection, a condition that leads to death for many transplant recipients. In an upcoming multicenter clinical study partnering with researchers from Harvard Medical School, Kreisel and Hachem will investigate a promising therapy for prevention of antibody-mediated rejection: a cytokine inhibitor targeting interleukin-6.

“The Lung Transplant Program has also made significant strides in optimizing the evaluation and management of lung donors, a critical step in ensuring good clinical outcomes,” says Associate Surgical Director **Varun Puri, MD, MSCI**. Puri is currently supported by an NIH grant to design optimal donor care pathways and leads a collaborative effort involving multiple organ procurement organizations nationwide. Puri and Professor of Surgery **Benjamin Kozower, MD, MPH**, are initiating additional collaborative research on the management of lung cancer patients.

“What differentiates the Lung Transplant Program at Washington University and Barnes-Jewish Hospital is that we combine excellence in clinical care, high clinical volume, and innovation in basic and translational research,” says Kreisel, the inaugural G. Alexander Patterson, MD/Mid-America Transplant Endowed Distinguished Chair in Lung Transplantation. “My vision is that within the next five years we will have personalized medicine for each lung transplant recipient that accounts for their unique characteristics.”