

Critical Care Corner

MARCH 2026

Society of Critical Care Medicine
Texas Chapter

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President's Corner

Hello SCCM Texas Chapter Family,

It's a little hard to believe that this will be my final newsletter message to you as Chapter President. Serving in this role has been a meaningful and rewarding professional experience, and I am deeply grateful for the trust, collaboration, and camaraderie that define our Texas critical care community.



**Rebecca McClay, DNP, MS,
ACNPC-AG, NPD-BC, CCRN-
CMC-CSC**

As I look back over these past year, I'm incredibly proud of what we have accomplished together—expanding educational opportunities, strengthening member engagement, supporting research and professional development, and continuing to grow the reach and impact of our Chapter across the state. None of this happens because of one person; it happens because of committed volunteers, thoughtful leaders, and members who care deeply about advancing critical care.

I want to offer my heartfelt thanks to all of you for your support, encouragement, and willingness to step forward when the Chapter needed you. I am especially grateful to **Laura Blackburn**, whose steady guidance, institutional knowledge, and unwavering support have been invaluable to me and to the Chapter. Laura, thank you for being such a trusted partner and friend in this work.

I'm also delighted to share that **Melanie Madorsky** will be stepping into the role of SCCM Texas Chapter President, and **Deepa Gotur** will be coming on to the Executive Committee as President Elect at the end of March following the National SCCM Congress. This team brings energy, vision, and deep commitment to our mission, and I know the Chapter will thrive under their leadership. I hope you will join me in offering Melanie and Deepa your full support as we begin this next year.

Although my presidential term is ending, my connection to this Chapter certainly is not. I look forward to continuing to serve alongside you—and to seeing many of you at our 15th Annual SCCM Texas Chapter Symposium in Galveston at the beginning of October. It remains one of my favorite traditions and a highlight of our year together.

Thank you again for the privilege of serving as your President. It has truly been an honor.

With gratitude,

Rebecca McClay

SCCM Texas Chapter – Immediate Past President



**Beth Teegarden,
MD, FASA, FCCM**

Symposium Committee



**Kevin Proud,
MD, FCCP**

Planning is already underway for the **SCCM Texas Chapter's 15th Annual Symposium**, and the Symposium Committee is excited to begin shaping what promises to be another outstanding educational event for our critical care community. Each year, the symposium brings together multidisciplinary professionals from across Texas to learn, collaborate, and share innovations that advance the care of critically ill patients. We are looking forward to building a program that reflects the expertise and enthusiasm of our members.

We are pleased to announce that the 2026 SCCM Texas Chapter Symposium will take place **October 2–3, 2026, at William C. Levin Hall in Galveston, Texas**. This year's program is already taking shape, and we are especially excited to welcome our keynote speaker, **Jose L. Pascual, MD, PhD, FRCS(C), FACS, FCCM**, the 2025 President of the Society of Critical Care Medicine.

As always, our goal is to provide high-quality education while also creating space for meaningful networking and collaboration among colleagues from across the state. The Symposium Committee is actively working on programming, speakers, and opportunities to enhance the experience for attendees.

The committee warmly welcomes members who are interested in contributing ideas, helping shape the agenda, or simply getting more involved with the chapter. Committee meetings are open to members who would like to participate in the planning process, and we encourage anyone with an interest in the symposium to join us.

If you would like to receive invitations to upcoming Symposium Committee meetings or learn more about ways to get involved, please reach out to us at symposium@sccmtexaschapter.org. We would be delighted to have you join the conversation as we plan another memorable event for the Texas Chapter community.

We look forward to working with many of you in the months ahead and to welcoming everyone to Galveston this fall.



Communications Committee



Ada Jutba, PharmD, BCCCP

The Communications Committee is responsible for the dissemination of information between our chapter and its members.

Follow us for more information and to stay up to date on chapter activities:

Website: www.sccmtexaschapter.org

Facebook: SCCM Texas Chapter

Instagram: @sccmtxchapter

Bluesky: @sccmtxchapter.bsky.social

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/company/sccm-tx-chapter

We're looking for members to be featured on **#MemberMonday**.

Please reach out to us at communications@sccmtexaschapter.org to be featured!



Research Committee

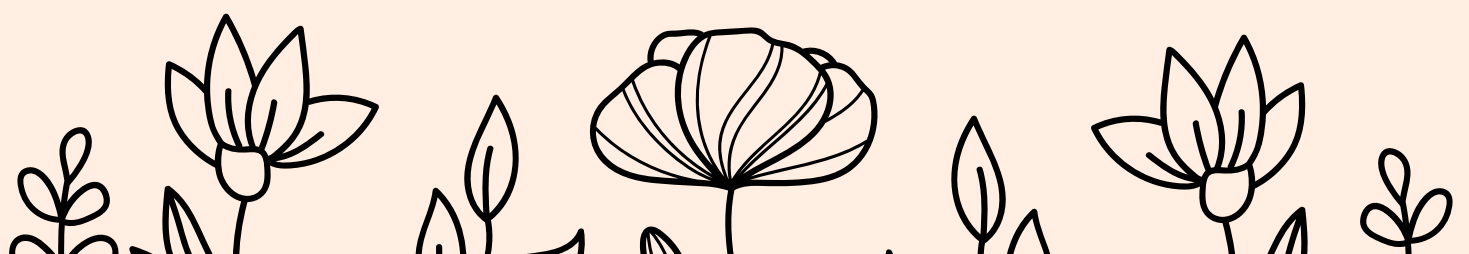


Emily Highsmith, PharmD, BCCCP

The research committee is excited to share and to congratulate the winners of the **Alan I. Fields Award**. First place was awarded to **Ariel Santos, MD**, for his abstract titled "Burned by Inequity: How Social and Geographic Disparities Shape Burn Mortality". **Shamali Nehete, MD**, received second place for her work "Treating the Trifecta: Central Venous Catheter Injury, Entrapped Lung, and Pneumothorax Ex Vacuo". Both Ariel and Shamali were given monetary awards that can be utilized towards travel expenses for SCCM Congress or the Texas Chapter's Annual Symposium and they will share their research with the chapter at our Annual Business Meeting on April 29th.

The research committee is in the process of reviewing applications for the **Joseph L. Nates Grant** and winners are expected to be announced at the end of March. The Joseph L. Nates Grant awards \$4,000 to SCCM Texas Chapter members conducting critical care research. We look forward to seeing our members make a valuable impact on patient care through their research efforts!

Finally, in an effort to increase the outreach of the research committee in the coming year, we are always looking for members who are interested in research to join our team! We are in particular need of nurses, nurse practitioners, respiratory therapists, dietitians, physical or occupational therapists, physicians assistants and other allied health professionals. Please review the information on the SCCM-Texas Chapter website Research tab or contact research@sccmtexaschapter.org for more information on joining the research committee.





Nominations Committee

Kyllie Ryan-Hummel,
PharmD, BCCCP

Thank you to everyone who nominated and participated in our elections this past winter. Please congratulate all of our new Executive Committee and Board of Directors members!

Executive committee:

President elect (3-year progressive term): Deepa Gotur, MD, EdD, FCCP, FCCM

Treasurer (2-year term): Zhen Lin, PhD, RN, FAMIA

Board of Directors:

Physician (3-year term): Brandy McKelvy, MD, FCCP

At-large (3-year term): Emily Highsmith, PharmD, BCCCP

We also want to congratulate our **2026 Texas Chapter SCCM FCCM inductees!**

Atiya Dhala MD, FACP

Beth Teegarden, MD, FASA

Melanie Madorsky, PharmD, BCPS, BCCP, BCCCP

Fong W. Lam, MD, FAAP

Call for volunteers!

We are always looking for volunteers to serve as mentors for our **FCCM mentorship program** and would love to hear from you. Be on the lookout for quarterly development sessions; reach out if you would like to get involved!

If you have any questions about the nominations process, FCCM Mentorship Program, or would like to get involved with the committee, please email us at:

nominations@sccmtexaschapter.org

Programs Committee

The SCCM Texas Chapter Programs Committee was delighted to welcome so many familiar and new faces at the Texas Chapter Reception March 22nd, during the 2026 SCCM Congress. Opportunities to connect with colleagues from across the state, nation, and disciplines are always energizing, and the reception provided a wonderful chance to celebrate our shared commitment to advancing critical care. Thank you to everyone who joined us and helped make the evening such a success.

We are excited to announce that the Programs Committee will be welcoming new leadership in April. We are pleased to share that **Christina Watkins, OTR, MOT, BCPR** will be stepping into the role of Programs Chair. We look forward to the ideas and energy she will bring as we continue developing engaging educational and networking opportunities for our membership.

As we move into the spring months, the Programs Committee has several wonderful regional activities already on the calendar. These events are a great way to continue the conversations started at Congress, exchange ideas with peers, and stay engaged with the Texas Chapter community throughout the year.

One event we are especially looking forward to is the **Texas Chapter Annual Business Meeting on April 29th**. This year's meeting will once again be held simultaneously in three locations—Houston, San Antonio, and Plano—making it easier for members across the state to attend and participate. In addition to important chapter updates, the evening will provide time to reconnect with colleagues and celebrate the accomplishments of our chapter and its members.

We encourage all members to join us at the location most convenient for you and take part in this important annual gathering. Your participation helps keep our chapter vibrant, engaged, and moving forward.

We look forward to seeing many of you this spring!



Membership Committee



**Rebecca McClay, DNP, MS,
ACNPC-AG, NPD-BC, CCRN-
CMC-CSC**

As I transition from my role as Chapter President, I'm genuinely excited to continue serving our community in a new (but very familiar) way—as Chair of the Membership Committee. Staying closely connected to our members has always been one of the most energizing parts of Chapter service for me, and I'm looking forward to building on the strong momentum our membership initiatives have developed.

First, a bit of good news for anyone who has ever kept an eye on their inbox hoping for tacos... our wildly popular **Taco Lunch Giveaway** will be back in 2026—and by popular demand, we're planning to offer it twice during the year. It's been such a fun way to celebrate our members and bring a little extra joy to busy clinical days, and we can't wait to keep that tradition going.

We're also bringing back another member favorite: engraved **SCCM Texas Chapter logo tumblers** as part of our membership drive later in the year. These were a huge hit previously, and we're excited to reintroduce them as a small thank-you for being part of our Chapter community.

Of course, the heart of membership growth is still you—our current members. Personal invitations and shared experiences remain the most powerful way to grow our Chapter. If you've benefited from SCCM Texas Chapter education, networking, research support, or leadership opportunities, I encourage you to share that with colleagues and trainees. Your voice and your experience truly matter.

If you have ideas for membership engagement, questions about joining or renewing, or would like materials to share with colleagues, please reach out anytime at membership@sccmtexaschapter.org. We're always happy to connect.

Thank you for continuing to make the SCCM Texas Chapter such a vibrant and welcoming professional home. I'm excited for all we'll accomplish together in 2026.

Awards Committee



**Frances Okpaluba,
MS, RN, APRN, CCRN**

Recognizing Excellence in Critical Care

The mission of the SCCM Texas Chapter Awards Committee is to recognize and celebrate members whose dedication, leadership, and professional contributions have advanced the care of critically ill patients throughout the past year. Each year, the chapter honors individuals who demonstrate outstanding commitment to clinical practice, education, research, professional development, and service to the Society of Critical Care Medicine community.

We are pleased to announce the 2025 SCCM Texas Chapter Award recipients, whose work continues to elevate the standards of critical care across our region.

Awards Evaluation Process

To ensure fairness, transparency, and consistency in recognizing excellence, the Awards Committee **uses structured evaluation rubrics for each award category.**

Professional Development Award

This award recognizes members who demonstrate meaningful professional growth and active engagement within SCCM. Evaluation criteria include longevity of membership in the Texas Chapter, participation in committees at both the state and national levels, and clear professional learning goals associated with attending the SCCM Congress. Applicants also receive recognition for outlining plans to apply and share new knowledge gained from Congress activities.

Excellence in Service Awards

The Excellence in Service Awards highlight outstanding achievement in three key areas of professional contribution:

Clinical Practice – Recognizing expertise demonstrated through advanced training, extensive critical care experience, participation in safety initiatives, and leadership in professional committees.

Education – Honoring individuals who contribute to teaching, faculty engagement, curriculum development, and mentorship of healthcare professionals.

Research and Quality Improvement (QI) – Celebrating scholarly productivity, including research publications, grant activity, presentations, and quality improvement initiatives that advance patient care.

Each category follows a structured scoring system to ensure equitable assessment of professional achievements.

Outstanding Member Award

The Outstanding Member Award recognizes exceptional commitment and service to the SCCM Texas Chapter. Criteria include leadership roles within committees, contributions to symposium planning, participation in chapter meetings, community engagement, and active involvement in both the SCCM Texas Symposium and the SCCM Congress.

2025 SCCM Texas Chapter Award Recipients

Professional Development Award

Four members were recognized this year for their dedication to professional growth and engagement within SCCM:

- Daniel Arellano, PhD, RN, ACNP-BC, CCAPP, FCCM, FAANP
- Ada Jutba, PharmD
- Jeannee Murray, PA
- Michelle Horng, PharmD

Outstanding Member Award

- Greg Pon

This award recognizes outstanding leadership, service, and commitment to advancing the mission of the SCCM Texas Chapter.

Excellence in Service Awards

- Clinical Practice: Daniel Arellano, PhD, RN, ACNP-BC, CCAPP, FCCM, FAANP
- Research and Quality Improvement: Payal K. Gurnani, PharmD, BCPS, BCCCP, FCCM
- Education: Mariah Sigala, PharmD, BCCCP

These individuals exemplify excellence across clinical care, scholarship, and education in critical care medicine.

Congratulations to Our Award Winners

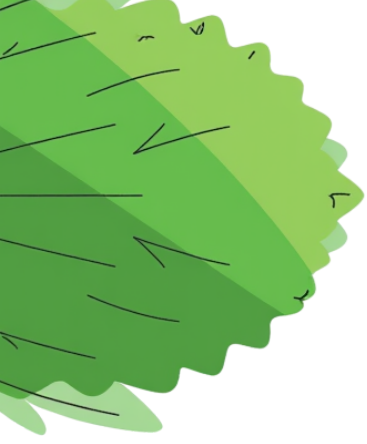
The SCCM Texas Chapter proudly celebrates the achievements of this year's award recipients. Their dedication, leadership, and contributions continue to strengthen our critical care community and improve outcomes for patients and families.

Get Involved

The Awards Committee welcomes members who are interested in supporting the recognition of excellence within our chapter. If you would like to become involved with the SCCM Texas Chapter Awards Committee, please reach out to: awards@sccmtexaschapter.org
Your participation helps ensure that the remarkable contributions of our colleagues in critical care continue to be recognized and celebrated.

Frances Okpaluba, PhD(c), APRN, AGACNP-BC

Olga Roduriguez, DNP, MSN, RN, CPHQ



Anne Rain Brown,
PharmD, FCCM

Community Engagement Committee

We have extended our food drive to help support our community. We are almost to our goal of raising **\$2000** for the Houston Food Bank and with **\$150** more in donations and the chapters match program, we can meet our goal! Please consider donating if you are able.

Do you have a great volunteer opportunity or need additional support for your current volunteer efforts? Let us know how the chapter can assist you in your endeavors.

Please reach out to Anne Rain Brown at **communityengagement@sccmtexaschapter.org** with any ideas or suggestions.



SCCM TEXAS CHAPTER

Let's Fight Food Insecurity Together

1

Donate directly to our fundraiser for Houston Food Bank at www.tinyurl.com/SCCMTxGives. We will match up to \$1,000!

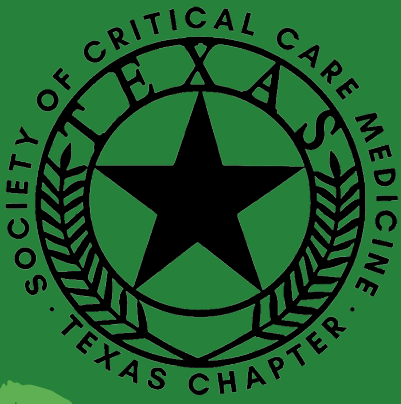


2

Volunteer with us at the Houston Food Bank! Contact communityengagement@sccmtexaschapter.org if you would like to join us to volunteer.

A photograph showing several volunteers in blue shirts and lanyards packing cardboard boxes with canned goods. The scene is focused on their hands and the boxes, with a semi-transparent text box overlaid in the center.

"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted." -Aesop



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