

## WHO WE ARE



## Philanthropy



### Annette Dean Empowerment Fund

In 2024, Dr. Jaime Bohl and Dr. Emily Rivet established an empowerment fund in honor of Annette Dean, a key figure in the growth and success of the VCU Division of Colon and Rectal Surgery. This fund is dedicated to supporting the professional and educational development of residents, nurses, faculty, and staff within the division, and it will also fund an annual award to recognize an outstanding student in colon and rectal surgery who exemplifies the intellectual curiosity, tenacity, and compassion that Annette demonstrated throughout her career. She joined the division in 2015, where her years of experience and leadership were fundamental to its expansion. Through this fund, Annette's legacy will continue to inspire future generations in the field of colon and rectal surgery at VCU, ensuring that her influence and the lessons she imparted to colleagues and students will live on.

## AFFILIATED SITES



The Richmond Veterans Affairs Medical Center



Community Memorial Hospital

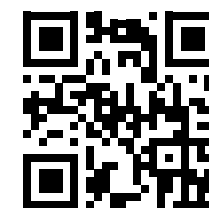


Tappahannock Hospital



### Department of Surgery

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## Department of Surgery 2024 Annual Report

# People Working Together



## People Working Together



Dear colleagues,

I am delighted to share with you the report from Surgery at VCU Health highlighting some of the key accomplishments of our faculty and teams working together to deliver the best care for our patients. Investment in innovation and research are crucial to our mission of delivering better care. All these are complimented by a passion for education of the next generation of surgeons and providers.

Sincerely,

**Vigneshwar Kasirajan, M.D.**  
 Stuart McGuire Professor and Chair, Department of Surgery

## Quality

VCU's Department of Surgery blends compassion with rigorous data analysis to continuously improve patient safety and outcomes. We know that this holistic, data-informed approach to surgery produces superior results. But it's not just about performing successful surgeries—it's about ensuring the best possible journey for each and every patient.

Focused PSI O:E  
**1.10**

7-Day Readmissions  
**5.04%**

Length of Stay O:E  
**1.18**

Mortality O:E  
**0.96**

● Within target range ● Outside the target range

## Excellence

The Department of Surgery is dedicated to inclusive excellence in medical education. The Hampton Scholarship supports underrepresented minority students by funding visiting sub-internships, helping to foster diversity in the field. We are proud to highlight Nat Araia as our first Mid-Atlantic American Urology Association (MA-AUA) PEP Scholar, who presented his research at the annual MA-AUA conference.



Additionally, Dr. Rebecca Zee received a \$5,000 grant from MA-AUA to further support this scholar, reinforcing our commitment to promoting excellence in urology.



## Education

VCU Department of Surgery continues to offer premier training for residents and fellows. The Department of Surgery is home to five residency programs including General Surgery, Plastic Surgery, Urology, and Integrated Vascular Surgery. The Department of Surgery is also home to eight fellowship programs including MIS, Burn Surgery, Colorectal Surgery, Surgical Critical Care, Surgical Oncology, Thoracic Surgery, Transplant Surgery and Vascular Surgery. Clinical training across the programs spans multiple sites including the downtown campus, the VA, and community training sites. The education team continues to monitor trainee feedback on their experiences to ensure top notch education. Each year, many VCU students successfully match into surgery or surgical subspecialties as a testament to our dedication to surgical education.



# DIVISIONS

## ACUTE CARE SURGICAL SERVICES

The Acute Care Surgical Services team is committed to delivering exceptional, high-quality care for patients in need of urgent and emergent surgical interventions. Throughout the year, the division has continued to achieve strong outcomes through clinical expertise, timely interventions, and seamless multidisciplinary collaboration. One standout case involved a patient who was critically injured in a bear attack. The patient's remarkable recovery, from arriving at VCU in critical condition to healing at home, highlights the division's unwavering dedication to patient care, its commitment to excellence, and the power of exceptional teamwork.



Total Case Volume:  
**2,384**

Total Discharges:  
**2,096**

Total Trauma Activations:  
**4,374**

## BARIATRIC AND GI SURGERY

The division of Bariatric and GI Surgery provides prompt, high-quality, state-of-the-art care for patients with foregut diseases, severe obesity, and general surgical conditions. With a focus on advancing surgical science and education, the team delivers personalized, effective therapies through a collaborative, multidisciplinary approach. A recent success story exemplifies this approach: a 62-year-old patient referred from another facility with a BMI of 48 and multiple comorbidities experienced significant improvements following metabolic surgery. Ten months post-surgery, his BMI has decreased to 28, and he is no longer insulin dependent, showcasing the transformative impact of the division's care.



Total Case Volume:  
**86,785**

Total Bariatric Cases:  
**877**

Total Clinic Visits:  
**11,575**

## CARDIOTHORACIC SURGERY

The Cardiothoracic Surgery Division has remained committed to providing exceptional care for complex cardiac and thoracic conditions. Dedicated to early detection and comprehensive care, the division expanded access through new clinic locations in Tappahannock, Williamsburg, the Ambulatory Care Center, Stony Point Women's Health, and Mayland. This year, 177 patients were referred for lung cancer screenings, with 123 deemed eligible. Of those, 8% required further clinical intervention, underscoring the division's proactive approach to patient care. Through innovative techniques, patient-centered care, and multidisciplinary collaboration, the division continues to enhance patient outcomes and quality of life.



Total Discharges:  
**1,080**

Total Cardiac Cases:  
**1820**

Total Thoracic Cases:  
**786**

Total Clinic Visits:  
**5,972**

## COLON AND RECTAL SURGERY

The Colon and Rectal Surgery Division remains committed to delivering outstanding care for patients with various colorectal conditions, driven by innovation, collaboration, and a strong focus on education. This year, the division raised awareness of anal cancer in women by working alongside both internal and external experts, engaging with the community, seeking academic insights, and tapping into specialized technical knowledge. The division also continued to advance patient care through innovative partnerships and collaboration. A notable example was the dual surgery with the Department of Gynecology, led by Dr. Wiegand and Dr. Cyszczon, highlighting its commitment to multidisciplinary care for complex cases.

Total Case Volume:  
**818**

Endoscopy Volume:  
**1,700**

Total Clinic Visits:  
**4,205**



Total Case Volume:  
**1,582**

Total Clinic Visits:  
**10,512**

Total Burn Surgery Volume:  
**3,505**

## PLASTICS

The Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Division at our Level 1 Trauma Center is setting a new standard of care by improving access to care and surgical outcomes through a dedicated team and close collaboration with microsurgeons and orthopedic trauma specialists. In 2024, we increased the number of free flaps performed annually by 50%, raising our flap success rate to 91% and reducing the time between orthopedic surgery and flap reconstruction to 2.72 days. This progress reflects our commitment to providing faster, more effective treatment for complex cases. A recent example of our success involved a young patient with a traumatic motor vehicle injury, resulting in significant loss of skin, tissue, and bone. With the combined efforts of orthopedic surgery, we used an innovative technique to reconstruct her elbow with a thigh flap and repair her missing humerus with a fibula bone graft. The patient showcases the power of collaboration and innovation in improving patient outcomes.

## SURGICAL ONCOLOGY

The Surgical Oncology Division continues to lead with innovative approaches, particularly through our groundbreaking HIPEC (Hyperthermic Intraperitoneal Chemotherapy) program. Utilizing a unique robotic technique, which few institutions have adopted, we have achieved significant improvements in patient outcomes, including reducing hospital stays by 5 days, minimizing blood loss, and decreasing the need for blood transfusions. Our pioneering work was recognized at the SAGES 2024 annual meeting in Cleveland, and our findings were subsequently published in the Surgical Endoscopy Journal. These achievements underscore our commitment to advancing surgical techniques and continuously improving patient care through innovation and collaboration.



Total Clinic Visits:  
**8,597**

Total Cases:  
**1,323**

## VASCULAR SURGERY

In 2024, the VCU Vascular Surgery Division achieved significant milestones, surpassing 1,000 cases for the first time since its inception in 1992, with a notable increase in case complexity. Faculty expanded their reach to Tappahannock, Williamsburg, and Colonial Heights, in addition to Stony Point and MCV campus. Collaborating with the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery, the Division became the region's only center for repairing thoracoabdominal aneurysms with Physician Modified Endografts (PMEGs) and the FDA-approved endovascular graft, led by Dr. Daniel Newton. Additionally, all four faculty members were recognized by Virginia Business as Top Vascular Surgeons in the state. On the educational front, the Division successfully matched its fourth Integrated Vascular Surgery Resident and developed a surgical animal model with Dr. Dixon, offering realistic, low-risk training that enhances early operative experience and trainee autonomy.



Total Clinic Visits:  
**991**

Total Cases:  
**5,442**

## PEDIATRIC UROLOGY

The Pediatric Urology Division provides exceptional care for children with a wide range of urological conditions, setting a new standard through a dedicated team and close collaboration with specialists in pediatric surgery and related fields to ensure the best outcomes for our patients. One notable example is a 36-week-old infant who was diagnosed with a rare kidney condition. Over the years, our pediatric urology and transplant teams collaborated on several life-saving interventions, culminating in a renal transplant at age 4 that changed his life. This story reflects our commitment to patient care, teamwork, and advancing research to improve the quality of life for children.



Total Case Volume:  
**883**

Total Clinic Visits:  
**9,325**



## TRANSPLANT

The Hume-Lee Transplant Center has made significant strides in patient care, research, and education. Key milestones include the 800th heart transplant, 100th living donor liver transplant and 100th Total Pancreatectomy with Islet Auto-Transplantation (TPIAT). Our use of advanced technologies like normothermic machine perfusion and robotic hepatectomy has established us as leaders in transplant care. In 2025, we will launch a new lung program, further expanding our services. With heart, lung, liver, and kidney transplant teams, we aim to remain among the top twenty transplant centers in the U.S., advancing patient outcomes and research.

Total Transplants:  
**587**

Total Cases:  
**862**

Total Clinic Visits:  
**6,199**

Ranked highest volume center in the state of Virginia in 2024

Highest volume year for the center since the program's start

# People Working Together

## Department of Surgery

