

Puerto Rico
Convention Center
San Juan, PR

Room 202C



2026 NMA PATHOLOGY SECTION PROGRAM

Pathology's Role Across Medicine



nmapathology.org
pathology@nmanet.org



Welcome

From our Section Chair



It is my distinct honor to welcome you to the Pathology Section program at the 2026 National Medical Association Annual Convention and Scientific Assembly in beautiful San Juan, Puerto Rico. This year marks two historic firsts for our Section: our inaugural visit to the Instituto de Ciencias Forenses de Puerto Rico, where we will engage with forensic colleagues in a truly unique educational setting, and the first-ever in-person poster session of our Young Scientist Forum. This poster session features talented young men from the Young Doctors Project – high school students who represent the next generation of physicians and who have been historically underrepresented in medicine. Witnessing their scholarship and passion for science firsthand is a moment we have long looked forward to, and we are proud to make it a reality here in San Juan.

We encourage all attendees to remain with us after our scheduled lectures for the social events we have planned. These gatherings are where connections are made and our community truly comes alive. Please visit our website at www.nmapathology.org for the latest updates on programming, speakers, and events. Finally, our work does not sustain itself. The Young Scientist Forum, our educational programming, and initiatives like the Young Doctors Project partnership depend on the generosity of supporters like you. We humbly ask that you consider making a donation through our website to help us continue this vital mission. Together, we are shaping the future of medicine, one young doctor at a time.

Warmly,
Sasha Breland, MD
Chair, Pathology Section
National Medical Association



Monday, July 27th

8:00 AM to 10:30 AM Instituto de Ciencias Forenses Visit: Group Excursion to Medical Examiner's Office - RSVP required (visit www.nmapathology.org to RSVP)



Exhibit Hall Open 11 AM to 1 PM

Break 1PM to 1:15 PM

1:15 PM to 2:15 PM

What You Don't See Still Matters: Identity, Context, and Interpretation in Pathology

Dr. Lulu (Uchenna L.Umeh, MD)
Physician
Educator | Life Coach

2:15 PM to 2:45 PM

Choosing Our Words Wisely: How the CURES Act is Shaping the Way Pathologists Communicate

Kristlyn Bellamy,
MD, Harvard University

2:45 PM to 3:15 PM

From Biopsy to Precision Medicine: Reducing Differences Across the Diffuse Large B Cell Lymphoma Care Continuum

Ifeyinwa E. Obiorah,
MD PhD, UVA Health



Monday, July 27th - continued

3:30 PM to 3:50 PM

Protect the Crown: A Clinicopathologic Approach to Hair Loss in the Black Community

Ms. Jessica Bell,
Student

3:50 PM to 4:20 PM

AI in Pathology: What's Real and What's Hype

Martin Burks IV, MD,
MBA, FCAP, Carolina
Pathology Group



Workshops

4:20 PM to 5:15 PM

Frozen Section Discussion

Kenechukwu Ojukwu, MD, MPP, MS UCLA

Rachel Kowal, MD, Indiana University

Sophia Bellegarde, MD, Harvard University

Break 5:15 PM to 5:30 PM

5:30 PM to 7:30 PM

Choose Your Boulders: Desirable Difficulties

Kenechukwu Ojukwu, MD, MPP, MS, UCLA

Nicole Jackson, MD, MPH, University of Washington

Freddy Ferguson, MD, UCLA

Abena Knight, MD, University of Washington

Kristinza Giese, MD, DC Office of the Chief Medical Examiner



Tuesday, July 28th

Forensic Symposium

9:00 AM to 9:30 AM

Microplastics and Mortality: Expanding the Role of Forensic Pathology in a Plastic Age

Kevin Monsalve Vargas, B.S., MI,
Howard University
College of Medicine

9:30 AM to 10:00 AM

An Overview of Environmental Deaths

Tatyana Zinger, DO,
DC Office of the
Chief Medical
Examiner

10:00 AM to 10:30 AM

Not Just Natural: The Forensic Reality of Maternal Deaths in Indiana

Jan M. Gorniak, DO,
MHSA, MSMEd, D-
ABMDI, World Peace
for Forensic
Consulting LLC

10:30 AM to 11:00 AM

Trouble in Paradise: A Review of Deaths at the Honolulu Medical Examiner's Office

Sasha Breland, MD,
City and County of
Honolulu,
Department of the
Medical Examiner

Exhibit Hall Open 11 AM to 1 PM

Break 1 PM to 1:15 PM

1:15 PM to 1:45 PM

Exploring the Utility of Screening Alternative Matrices for Postmortem Casework

Samantha Tolliver,
PhD, NRCC-TC, DC
Office of the Chief
Medical Examiner





Tuesday, July 28th - continued

Forensic Symposium cont.

1:45 PM to 2:15 PM	Beyond Hypertrophy: An Unexpected Cause of Sudden Death in a Teenager	Kristinza Giese, MD DC Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
2:15 PM to 2:30 PM	She Said it Hurt: Recognizing Placenta Accreta Before It's Too Late	Marcel Castor, MD DeKalb County Medical Examiner's Office, GA
2:30 PM to 3:15 PM	Leveraging Social Media as a Professional and Workforce Development Tool	Nicole Jackson, MD, MPH, University of Washington
3:30 PM to 3:50 PM	How Modern Forensic Toxicology Adapts to Emerging Drugs Using Surveillance	Reyna Alexander-Osborne DC Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
3:50PM to 4:30 PM	Homicide-Suicide Cases in Harris County, TX: A Five-Year Retrospective Review	Paulyann Maclayton, MD, Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences
4:30 PM to 5:00 PM	Key Concepts in Neoplastic and Non-Neoplastic Vulvar Pathology	Rachel Kowal, MD Indiana University
5:30 to 6:00 PM	Poster Presentations Including our Young Scientist Forum students	





Wednesday, July 29th

7:30 to 7:55 AM	Modernizing Death Investigation: Progress and Innovation at the Institute of Forensic Sciences of Puerto Rico	Paola Michelle Luna García, MPH, MD, Instituto de Ciencias Forenses
7:55 to 8:20 AM	The Development of a Human Identification Unit in Puerto Rico: Impact, Casework, and the Role of Full-Time Forensic Anthropologists	Meisshialette Ortiz-Quñones, MS, D-ABMDI; Damara M. Guevara-Morales, MS, Instituto de Ciencias Forenses
8:20 to 8:45 AM	Operational Validation of a Single Mobile Post-Mortem CT Unit for Mass-Fatality Management: The Puerto Rico 100-Case Exercise	Maria Conte-Miller, MD, JD, Instituto de Ciencias Forenses

Break 8:45 AM to 9:00 AM

9:00 AM to 9:25 AM	Can We Let Our Guard Down? The Era of Vaccine Skepticism	Nahimarys Colon Hernandez, M.D. DC Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
9:20 AM to 9:35 AM	Incidence and Characteristics of Labial Fusion in Human Body Donors	Beneshia Robinson, OMS4, RN, MA, Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences
9:35 AM to 10:05 AM	Pathology and the International Community: Building Bridges, Filling Gaps, and Showing Up — A Community-Centered Approach from Dominica	Denise Dailey, MD, Research Fellow
10:05 to 10:35 AM	Assessment of Sialylation in Skeletal Muscle of a Ground-Based Rat Model of Microgravity	Joshua Douglas Mathis, Xavier University

Break until 11:00 AM



Wednesday, July 29th - continued

11:00 to 11:30 AM

Vicarious Trauma

Rahn Bailey, MD, LSU Chair of Psychiatry, Forensic Psychiatry Program Director, Assistant Dean of Health Equity

Chikira Barker, M.A.

Project Advisor for Research, LSU Department of Psychiatry

11:30 to Noon

Pathology Section Awards Ceremony

Kristinza Giese, MD
DC Office of the Chief
Medical Examiner

Virtual Lectures

All Virtual Lectures Available On Demand via the Convention Platform

Commotio Cordis: Forensic-Pathological Perspectives on Sudden Cardiac Death in Sports and Assault-Related Events

Dr. Francesco Lupariello
University of Turin, Italy

Updated Organ Weight References for Adult and Pediatric Autopsies

Dr. Meagan Chambers, Assistant Professor of Autopsy and Neuropathology
Stanford Hospital, and Dr. Denise Dailey, Research Fellow

Small Patients, Big Diagnoses: High Yield Cases in Pediatric Dermatology

Sepideh Nikki Asadbeigi, MD FCAP,
Univ of Oklahoma

A Comparative Analysis Between Pathology and Dentistry as Preventive Practices

Chidubem Nnamani, Edward S. Marcus
High School Flower Mound, Texas

Forensic Pathology Subordinated to Law Enforcement? The Brazilian Hybrid Model and the Challenge of Institutional Independence

Daniel Cancado, MD
Forensic Medical Examiner
Organization

Please visit our website www.nmapathology.org to see additional Young Scientist Forum Virtual Lectures and Program Updates