

# CCIV NEWSLETTER

CENTER FOR CHILDHOOD  
INFECTIONS AND VACCINES



## Fall Semester Newsletter – FY2026

As we enter 2026, the Center for Childhood Infections and Vaccines (CCIV) celebrates a year marked by groundbreaking research, prestigious awards, and impactful publications. Our investigators continue to lead the way in pediatric infectious disease research, advancing science and improving lives. Here's a look at the highlights from the past semester.

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# 9th Annual CCIV Symposium:

## A Record-Breaking Success



The Center for Childhood Infections and Vaccines (CCIV) proudly hosted its 9th Annual Symposium on November 6, 2025, bringing together researchers, clinicians, trainees, and partners for a full day of scientific exchange, collaboration, and community building. With 150 attendees, this year's symposium marked the largest turnout in CCIV history, reflecting the growing momentum and impact of pediatric infectious disease and vaccine research across Emory and partner institutions.

The scientific program featured 38 total abstracts, including 10 oral (rapid-fire) presentations and 28 poster presentations, highlighting innovative work spanning immunology, virology, vaccinology, antimicrobial resistance, and public health. The breadth and quality of the research underscored CCIV's mission to advance discoveries that improve child health locally and globally.

### Distinguished Keynote Speakers

The symposium was anchored by two nationally renowned keynote speakers whose work bridges science, policy, and real-world impact.

- **Paul A. Offit, MD**, Director of the Vaccine Education Center at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, delivered a compelling keynote on vaccine science, public trust, and the critical role of evidence-based medicine in protecting children worldwide.
- **Stephen W. Patrick, MD, MPH, MS, FAAP**, Chair of the Department of Health Policy and Management at Emory's Rollins School of Public Health, shared powerful insights on maternal and child health policy, substance use disorders, and translating research into meaningful systems-level change.

### CCIV Internal Guest Speakers

In addition to the external keynotes, the symposium showcased leadership from within CCIV. Jens Wrammert, PhD, and Christina "Kristy" Rostad, MD, both Associate Professors in the Division of Pediatric Infectious Diseases, delivered internal featured talks highlighting cutting-edge advances in human immune responses, vaccinology, and translational pediatric research. Their presentations emphasized the depth of expertise and innovation within the CCIV community.

# 9th Annual CCIV Symposium:

## A Record-Breaking Success



### Celebrating Trainee Excellence

A hallmark of the CCIV Symposium is its commitment to recognizing outstanding trainee contributions. During the closing awards session:

- **Barrett Breeze** received the Best Oral Abstract Presentation Award for excellence in scientific rigor and presentation.
- **Tyshawn Ferrell** was awarded Best Poster Presentation, recognizing the quality, clarity, and impact of their research.

CCIV congratulates both awardees and all trainees who presented their work, reflecting the strength of the next generation of scientists and clinicians.



### Partnership and Support

The success of the 9th Annual Symposium was made possible through generous support from our partners. CCIV gratefully acknowledges Sanofi and Pfizer for their sponsorship, as well as the philanthropic contribution from Javier and Dolores Goizueta, whose support continues to strengthen CCIV's mission and programming.

The 9th Annual CCIV Symposium exemplified the center's continued growth, collaborative spirit, and scientific excellence. We thank all speakers, presenters, sponsors, and attendees for making this record-breaking event a success and look forward to building on this momentum in the year ahead.





# 2025 Fall CCIV Seminar Series:

## Doubling Impact, Expanding Reach

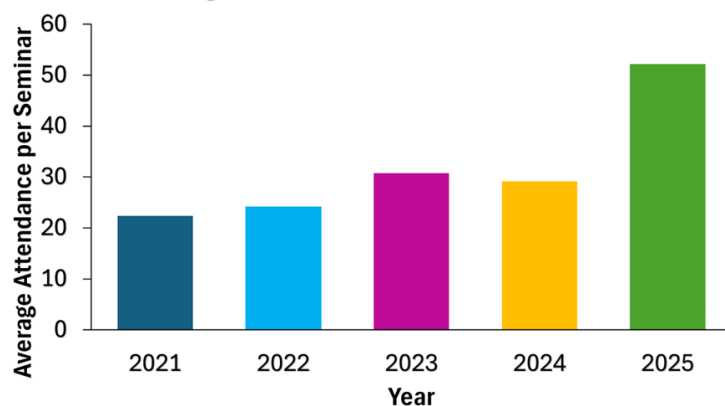


The CCIV Weekly Seminar Series has become a vital platform for advancing pediatric infectious disease research, and this year marked a significant milestone—overall attendance has doubled compared to previous years and semesters since 2021. This surge in participation reflects the growing interest and engagement across the research community, from faculty and clinicians to postdoctoral fellows and graduate students.

During the Fall 2025 semester, seminars were held every Monday from 1:00 to 2:00 PM in HSRB II Room N600 and simultaneously on Zoom, offering both in-person and virtual access to accommodate diverse schedules and preferences. The series ran from September through early December and featured a dynamic lineup of speakers who shared cutting-edge research on topics such as emerging and re-emerging infections, novel diagnostic tools, vaccine development, and therapeutic innovations.

What sets the CCIV Seminar Series apart is its commitment to fostering collaboration and professional development. It serves as a critical training ground for early-career researchers, providing them with opportunities to present their work, receive feedback, and build networks that can shape their careers. The interactive format encourages lively discussion and cross-disciplinary learning, strengthening the collective expertise of our research community.

**Average CCIV Seminar Attendance**



Looking ahead, the Spring 2026 Seminar Series will continue this momentum, returning in February and running through June at the same time and location. With an exciting roster of speakers already in the works, we look forward to another semester of discovery, dialogue, and scientific growth.



# Several CCIV faculty recognized among world's most influential researchers in 2025

Three faculty affiliated with the Center for Childhood Infections and Vaccines (CCIV) were named to the 2025 Clarivate Highly Cited Researchers list, a prestigious distinction reserved for scientists whose published research ranks in the top 1% by citations globally. This recognition highlights the sustained scholarly impact of CCIV investigators and reinforces Emory's leadership in infectious disease and immunology research. (Source: Emory News Center, November 11, 2025)

CCIV congratulates Drs. Ahmed, Lee, and Menachery for this prestigious recognition. Their contributions continue to elevate Emory's research profile and inspire collaborative discovery across disciplines.



**Rafi Ahmed, PhD**

*Charles Howard Candler Professor of Microbiology and Immunology*

Dr. Ahmed's pioneering work on T cell immunity and memory has shaped foundational understanding in immunology and influenced vaccine development research worldwide.



**Frances Eun-Hyung Lee, MD**

*Professor of Medicine & Director, Asthma, Allergy, and Immunology Program*

Dr. Lee's research bridges clinical and basic immunology, advancing insights into immune regulation relevant to allergic and infectious diseases.



**Vineet D. Menachery, PhD**

*Associate Professor of Pediatrics*

Dr. Menachery's contributions to viral immunology and pathogenesis strengthen CCIV's research portfolio and bolster pediatric infectious disease discovery.

## Recent Publications



**Dr. Andi Shane** served as first author on a comprehensive *Clinical Infectious Diseases* review (December 24, 2025) examining infectious diarrhea from a multidisciplinary clinical perspective. The publication provides updated guidance on diagnostics, antimicrobial resistance, emerging therapies, and patient management strategies, offering clinicians practical tools to improve care while addressing both individual and public health impacts of diarrheal disease.



**Dr. Kristy Murray** authored multiple global health studies addressing infectious diseases in vulnerable pediatric populations. As senior author of a major surveillance study in *The American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene* (published online December 4, 2025), Dr. Murray led an investigation enrolling over 5,000 patients across Belize to identify causes of acute febrile illness, uncovering dozens of pathogens and documenting the country's first reported case of acute Chagas disease. In an upcoming publication accepted by *Emerging Infectious Diseases* (December 12, 2025), Dr. Murray also examined two decades of pediatric Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever cases in Sonora, Mexico, revealing persistently high morbidity and mortality rates, particularly among underserved communities, highlighting the need for earlier diagnosis and targeted interventions.

## Recent Publications



**Dr. Vineet Menachery** contributed to several impactful publications exploring viral pathogenesis and host immune regulation. As senior author on a *Nature Communications* study (December 2, 2025), Dr. Menachery uncovered how a SARS-CoV-2 viral enzyme regulates RNA recombination and viral fitness, revealing molecular mechanisms that influence coronavirus evolution and disease severity. He also led a *Journal of Virology* publication (January 14, 2026) demonstrating how key SARS-CoV-2 proteins disrupt host stress responses to enable infection, identifying potential therapeutic targets. In joint work with Dr. Mehul Suthar in *PLoS Pathogens* (December 2, 2025), Dr. Menachery further characterized immune pathways that support vaccine protection, strengthening CCIV's contributions to translational COVID-19 research.



## Recent Publication



**Dr. Mehul Suthar** led multiple high-impact studies advancing understanding of COVID-19 vaccine immunity and host responses to SARS-CoV-2. As senior author on a *Science Translational Medicine* publication (September 3, 2025), Dr. Suthar demonstrated that the XBB.1.5 COVID-19 booster elicits durable and broad antibody responses, while also revealing how emerging variants continue to evade immunity, underscoring the importance of ongoing vaccine reformulation. In collaborative work with Dr. Vineet Menachery published in *PLoS Pathogens* (December 2, 2025), Dr. Suthar also helped identify a monocyte–eosinophil signaling axis that enhances vaccine-mediated protection, providing new insight into immune mechanisms underlying breakthrough infections and informing future vaccine design.

## Other CCIV-Related Highlights



### **Andres Camacho-Gonzalez, MD, MSc**

Dr. Camacho-Gonzalez was recognized as one of only 29 physicians and scientists selected for a prestigious professional distinction, highlighting his leadership in pediatric infectious diseases and his continued contributions to advancing clinical care and research within CCIV.



### **Pratik Patel, MD**

Dr. Patel received a major new grant supporting the Pediatric Fungal Network Study of Rare Invasive Fungal Infections, strengthening CCIV's role in addressing complex pediatric infectious diseases and expanding collaborative research across institutions.



### **Christina A. Rostad, MD**

Dr. Rostad was featured in national media coverage discussing emerging COVID-19 data, providing expert clinical perspective on vaccine effectiveness and reinforcing CCIV's visibility as a trusted source for pediatric infectious disease expertise.

## Other CCIV-Related Highlights



### **Latania K. Logan, MD, MSPH**

Dr. Logan was honored through Emory's MilliPub Club, which honors and recognizes current Emory faculty who have published one or more individual papers throughout their careers that have each garnered more than 1,000 citations. Such a paper is commonly considered a "citation classic" and represents high-impact scholarship.



### **Vineet Menachery, PhD**

Dr. Menachery received institutional recognition for his scientific leadership, with his work highlighted in Emory-wide communications celebrating faculty achievements. His continued contributions strengthen CCIV's profile in viral pathogenesis and translational research.



### **Rafi Ahmed, PhD**

Dr. Ahmed was recognized by Emory for his outstanding contributions to immunology and vaccine science, with institutional features highlighting his leadership and global impact on immune memory and vaccine development.



## Other CCIV-Related Highlights



### **Kristy Murray, DVM, PhD**

Dr. Murray received the Lucky Jain Bridge Builder Award, recognizing her exceptional efforts to connect disciplines and institutions in global infectious disease research, further advancing CCIV's mission to address pediatric health challenges worldwide.



### **Ann Chahrودي, MD, PhD**

Dr. Chahrودي earned a major professional honor from the American Society for Clinical Investigation, acknowledging her sustained excellence in translational research and her leadership in pediatric immunology.

# Other CCIV-Related Highlights



## **Emory Children's Center Vaccine Research Clinic**

The Emory Children's Center Vaccine Research Clinic, directed by Dr. Christina Rostad, received the Team Excellence Award for Research/Science in recognition of its outstanding contributions to vaccine development and clinical research. Comprising more than 30 clinicians, coordinators, laboratory specialists, analysts, and investigators, the team supports 18 active clinical trials funded by the NIH, CDC, Gates Foundation, and industry partners, completing more than 1,700 participant visits in the past year alone. The group played a pivotal role during the COVID-19 pandemic, conducting the first-in-human Phase I trial of Moderna's mRNA vaccine and contributing to studies that informed FDA approvals and CDC guidance. Current projects include two first-in-human rotavirus vaccine trials, featuring both an inactivated formulation and innovative dissolvable microneedle patch technology. Managing every aspect of study execution, from protocol design and regulatory oversight to AI-supported recruitment, the clinic exemplifies interdisciplinary collaboration while advancing safe, effective, and accessible vaccines for children worldwide.

## CCIV and Children's Publication Citation

Remember to cite CCIV and Children's Healthcare of Atlanta in your publications. This is vital to ensure recognition of our work by both Emory and Children's. This requirement applies to all center members, whether lab-based or non-lab based. Children's has been a significant supporter of the research operations that make all of our work possible and should be acknowledged.

The proper affiliation citation is: **Center for Childhood Infections and Vaccines (CCIV) of Children's Healthcare of Atlanta and Emory University Department of Pediatrics, Atlanta, GA USA.**



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## Looking Ahead

As CCIV looks ahead to the remainder of the 2025–2026 academic year, the Center builds on the momentum of a highly successful Fall Semester, highlighted by the record-setting 9th Annual CCIV Symposium. With growing partnerships, continued scholarly impact, and expanding clinical and translational research efforts, CCIV remains focused on advancing collaboration, innovation, and discovery to improve child health through vaccines and infectious disease research.