



# NEWSLETTER



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## *From our Center Director*

I am delighted to share these updates from the GENI Center. In this issue, we introduce new members who have joined GENI since our last Newsletter in 2025. Drawn from multiple Departments at Emory University as well as nearby institutions - Georgia State University and Kennesaw State University, these faculty all share common interests in childhood nutrition, obesity, and metabolic health. GENI was very well represented at the 2025 Annual Meeting of the Obesity Society, the leading professional society focused on obesity science, treatment and prevention. That included numerous abstracts accepted for oral or poster presentations, an abstract award, and participation in meeting workshops. I would like to call your attention to the Feeding Lab Corner which highlights the recent 2026 Avoidant/Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID) Conference at Arthur M. Blank Hospital and recent launch of the Center for Feeding Ethics, a national initiative dedicated to the ethical exploration and standards in feeding disorders. Please also note the 2026 Call for Pediatric Research Alliance Pilots - Junior Faculty Focused Awards and Center Awards.

I am particularly excited to announce a Workshop co-sponsored by GENI, REACH and Strong4Life to Advance Pediatric Obesity Research at Emory and Children's scheduled for October 2nd. The Workshop will include keynote speakers, abstracts, rapid-fire partner talks, posters, and round table breakout sessions with the goal of making research connections, accelerating research projects / collaborations, and providing information or answers to overcome research obstacles.

*~Paul*



# New GENI members



**Shari Barkin, MD, MSHS**

*Department of Pediatrics (Administration)*

**Anna Tanner, MD, FAAP**

*Department of Pediatrics (General)*



**Shanthi Srinivasan, MD**

*Department of Medicine (Digestive Disorders)*

**Katherine Ingram, PhD**

*Department of Exercise Science and Sport Management, Kennesaw State University*



**Rani Singh, PhD, RDN, LD**

*Department of Human Genetics (Medical Genetics)*

**Desiree Wanders, PhD**

*Department of Nutrition  
Georgia State University*



**Tanicia Daley, MD, MPH**

*Department of Pediatrics (Endocrinology)*

**Iboro Umana, MD, PhD**

*Department of Medicine (Digestive Disorders)*



**Kera McNelis, MD, MS**

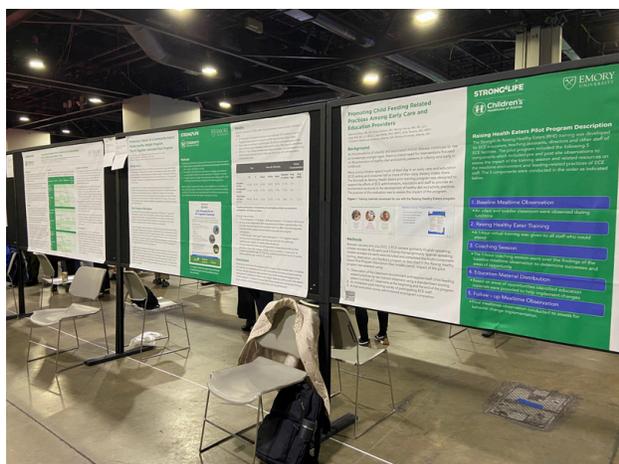
*Department of Pediatrics (Neonatology)*

# GENI at Obesity Week 2025

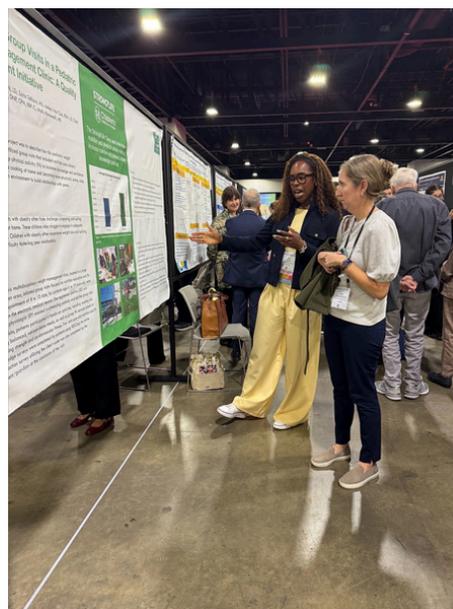


## GENI was well represented at Obesity Week this year!

- **Jessica Reilly, MD**, Strong4Life Medical Director, co-authored 4 of 11 abstracts from Emory/Children's that were accepted for poster presentation
- **Jean Welsh, PhD, MPH, RN**, Strong4Life Research Director, co-authored 8 abstracts accepted for poster presentation
- **Daniel Hsia, MD**, Associate Division Chief of Endocrinology, helped facilitate a Clinical Practice Committee workshop entitled *When Teamwork Makes the Dream Work - Tackling Clinical Dilemmas in Weight Management with an Interdisciplinary Approach*
- **Cristian Sanchez-Torres, MD**, medical fellow mentee of Jean Welsh, won the Outstanding Abstract Award for *Trends in Beverage Consumption Among U.S. Children: A Decade of Change (2011–2023)*
- **Brittney Baumert, PhD, MPH**, GENI member and new GENI faculty as of July 2026, received the Top Population and Public Health Abstract for her paper *PFAS Exposure and Postoperative Weight Regain in Adolescents After Bariatric Surgery: Findings From the Teen-LABS Study*



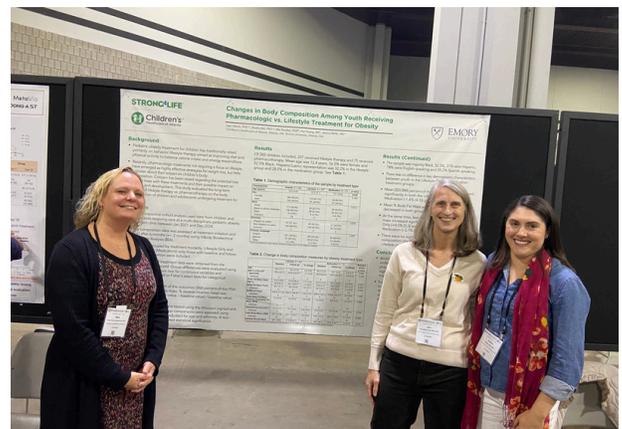
Posters



# GENI at Obesity Week 2025



Dr. Cristian Sanchez-Torres presenting



# Feeding Lab Corner

## *GENI Special Interest Group*

### 2026 ARFID Conference - March 4

The Multidisciplinary Feeding Program, in collaboration with Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, Monte Nido, and iadep Foundation, hosted the 2026 Avoidant/Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID) Conference at Arthur M. Blank Hospital. The panel of speakers included Kait Proctor, PhD, ABPP (GENI member), Raven Holmes, MS, RD, LD, & William Sharp, PhD (GENI member) from the Feeding Program, as well as colleagues from Children's and Emory, including David I. Rappaport, MD, FAAP, Laura Doerr, MD, FAAP, and Anna Tanner, MD, FAAP, FSAHM, CEDS-C, FAED (GENI member).



### Feeding Matters: Center for Feeding Ethics

Feeding Matters, in collaboration with Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, has launched the Center for Feeding Ethics, a first-of-its-kind national initiative dedicated to ethical exploration and standards in feeding disorders and differences such as pediatric feeding disorder (PFD) and avoidant/restrictive food intake disorder (ARFID) care. The Center for Feeding Ethics was born from the growing calls within the field to acknowledge historical harms and integrate lived experience into research, training, and care models. Most recently, national consensus efforts and patient- and family-centered research groups have emphasized the need for recognizing trauma history and embedding these lessons into future best practices. Click [HERE](#) for press release.

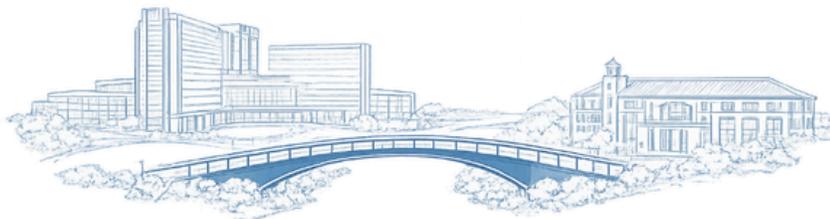


# GENI / REACH / S4L Event

**SAVE THE DATE!**

## BUILDING BRIDGES

*A Workshop to Advance Pediatric Obesity Research at Emory and Children's*



### Conference Highlights:

- Overview of pediatric obesity landscape & related research priorities
- Round table discussions
- Poster presentations
- Networking and professional development opportunities



**2 OCTOBER  
2026**



**8 AM - 5 PM**



Emory University  
Health Sciences Research Building I  
Rollins Auditorium & Cafe  
In-Person ONLY

**STRONG<sup>4</sup>LIFE™**



**Children's™**  
Healthcare of Atlanta



**GENI**

CENTER FOR GASTROENTEROLOGY,  
ENDOCRINOLOGY, AND NUTRITION  
INNOVATION



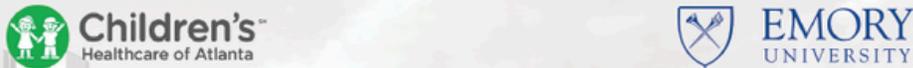
**REACH**  
Research and Epidemiology for  
Adolescent and Child Health



**EMORY**  
UNIVERSITY



# Upcoming Pediatrics Events



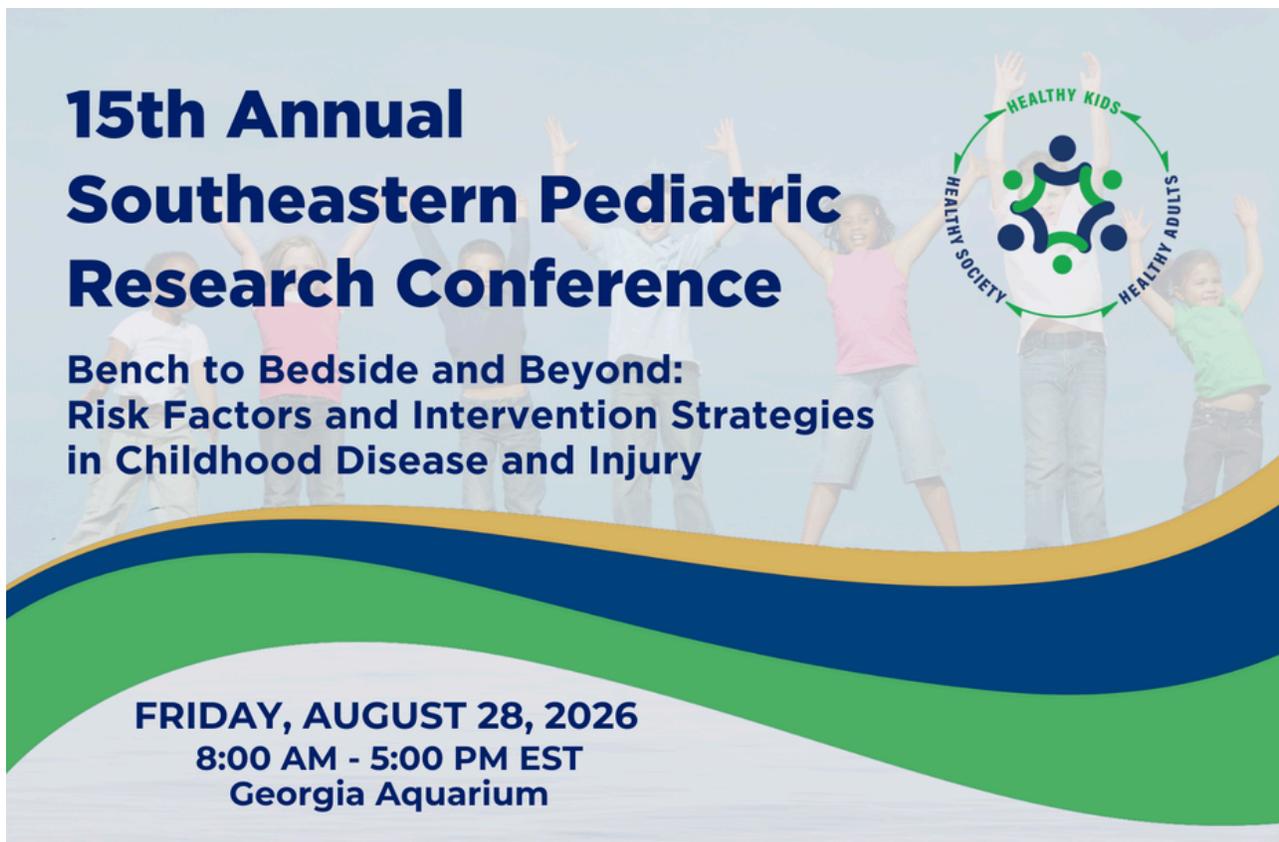
**Save the Date**  
**8<sup>th</sup> Annual Pediatric Early Career Researcher Conference**  
Friday, May 15, 2026  
Children's Healthcare of Atlanta  
Arthur M. Blank Hospital



Register today by scanning the QR code or visit our main conference page at [bit.ly/ECR-Conference](https://bit.ly/ECR-Conference) for more information.



[Register](#)



**15th Annual Southeastern Pediatric Research Conference**  
Bench to Bedside and Beyond:  
Risk Factors and Intervention Strategies  
in Childhood Disease and Injury

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 28, 2026**  
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM EST  
Georgia Aquarium

[Register](#)

[Submit Abstract](#)

# Pediatric Research Alliance Pilot Grants



**2026 Pediatric Research Alliance Pilots**

Children's and Emory offer pilot grants for faculty and centers in the Pediatric Research Alliance. These pilots are designed to stimulate new research projects, build new collaborations, and increase extramural funding for pediatric research.

**Junior Faculty Focused (JFF) Award - \$50,000 per award**

- Limited to "New Investigators"
- LOI will largely be used to help inform reviewer need; it is expected that most if not all will be invited to submit, but the LOI is still required
- Submit LOI by **4/9/26** as first step. Full applications, by invitation only, due **6/25/26**

**Center Award - \$50,000 per award**

- Start with LOI to center
- Each center picks best 1-2 to move forward in a central competition with one study section
- Submit LOI by **4/9/26** as first step. Full applications, by invitation only, due **6/25/26**

**TYPES & AMOUNTS:** Two types of awards are available:

- [Type I: Junior Faculty Focused \(JFF\) Award - \\$50,000 per award](#)
- [Type II: Center Award - \\$50,000 per award](#)

**PROJECT PERIOD:** October 1, 2026 - September 30, 2027

**How to Apply:** All applications must be submitted electronically through the online application portals.

JFF Portal [Here](#)  
Center Portal [Here](#)



# Resources

## GENI and Children's Publication Citation

Publications and research posters related to GENI and/or that benefitted from Pediatric Research Alliance resources should include "Children's Healthcare of Atlanta" in the Affiliations portion of the citation (appearing under the author line of the article or poster).

The proper affiliation citation is: **Center for Gastroenterology, Endocrinology, & Nutrition Innovation (GENI) of Children's Healthcare of Atlanta and Emory University Department of Pediatrics, Atlanta, GA USA**. Other examples of acceptable formats for citation are available [here](#).

This requirement is vital to ensure recognition of our work by both Emory and Children's and 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.

## Research Wows



Don't forget to share your latest research achievements through our very brief "[Research Wows](#)" [submission form](#). This information will be used for a) internal and external reporting on metrics and impact, and b) potential news and media coverage.

### "Research Wows" FAQ's:

- **What type of information should I share?**
  - Impactful publications that have been accepted or published
  - New, major grants that have been awarded
  - New, major professional/service awards, distinctions, or recognitions received
  - Other noteworthy research-related achievements (e.g., patents, IND, clinical trials)
- **Who will receive this information?**
  - Pediatric research center Program Managers and Center Directors
  - Pediatric research leadership
  - Marketing and communications teams
- **When should I share my "Research Wows"?**
  - As soon as possible! While we will accept your "Research Wows" at any time for purposes such as internal reporting, the following timing is important to keep in mind for news and media purposes:
    - Accepted for publication in a journal
    - About to receive a notice of award for funding
    - Research that has received funding and is about to start but no data has been collected yet

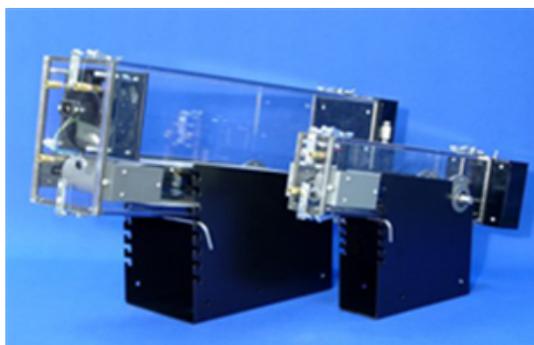
Click here to submit your "Research Wows": <https://forms.office.com/r/Md9FCaYbTc> or email Debra Hamilton, GENI Program Manager, at [drhamil@emory.edu](mailto:drhamil@emory.edu).

## Columbus Instruments CLAMS



### Features .....

- **Activity**  
X, Y & Z axis monitoring
- **Feeding**  
Mass monitoring
- **Drinking**  
Volume Monitoring
- **Body Mass**  
Resolves 0.1g
- **Running Wheel**  
Rotation Monitoring
- **Sleep Detection**  
Scores Events and Duration
- **Food Access Control**  
Mass & Event monitoring
- **Environmental Control**  
of Temperature and Lighting
- **Calorimetric Assessment**  
by Oxymax
- **Environmental Monitoring**  
of Temperature



These cages are now available to researchers for a subsidized rate (\$892/week/6-cage experiment).

# Pediatric Research Cores



Children's  
Healthcare of Atlanta



EMORY  
UNIVERSITY

## Pediatric Core Services

*Offering the equipment, tools, and skilled professionals to make your research faster and more impactful. From imaging and data analysis to clinical trial support, our pediatric cores provide key resources and expert support to help researchers at every step.*

### Animal Models

- Animal Physiology Core: offers services & equipment for complex technical & surgical procedures in animals. Provides access to Sysmex XN-1000V (a fully automated 5-part differential veterinary hematology analyzer) and metabolic cages for simultaneous measurement of key metabolic parameters in mice.
- CF Animal Models Core: provides murine models relevant to cystic fibrosis researchers.

### Biorepositories & Clinical Research

- Children's Clinical and Translational Discovery Core: supports investigators with specimen processing, storage, and other services important to conducting clinical trials.
- CF Discovery Core and CF Biospecimen Repository (CF-BR): utilizes the CF-BR, a storage bank of several thousand biofluids collected from patients with cystic fibrosis at varying disease states.
- Laboratory and Pathology Clinical Research Core: provides clinical laboratory testing, specimen processing, histology services, and de-identified tumor bank specimens to investigators.
- Ian's Friends Foundation Brain Tumor Biorepository: collects, cultures, and distributes pediatric brain tumor biospecimen for research studies with Children's IRB approval and patient consent.

### Biostatistics

- Pediatric Biostatistics Core: provides comprehensive expertise in statistical methodology and advanced data analysis to support the design, execution, and dissemination of studies, including grant proposals and manuscripts.

### Clinical & Data Registry

- Pediatric Heart Diseases Data Registry Core: offers access to rich registry data from surgical, catheter-based and electrophysiologic studies and interventions for multiple pediatric heart diseases.
- Children's Health Informatics Core (CHIC): provides informatics expertise to access and leverage electronic health record data for funded research, multicenter collaboration, and interventions.

### General Equipment

- General Equipment Core: offers access to select laboratory equipment to support pediatric research.

### Imaging

- Animal Physiology Core: provides advanced ultrasound as part of its services related to animal models.
- Cardiovascular Imaging Research Core (CIRC): offers non-invasive cardiovascular imaging support for investigators involved in clinical research.
- Integrated Cellular Imaging Core: provides access to cutting-edge cellular imaging technologies and technical expertise to support pediatric research.
- Medical Imaging Resources: cross-disciplinary scientific, administrative, and educational home for imaging science through Emory Center for Systems Imaging (CSI) and Children's Pediatric Imaging Research Core (PIRC).

### Research Grant Development

- Pediatric Research Development Core: offers three arms of support services to optimize researcher careers: General Resources and Services, Education and Training, and Proposal Development.

### Sample Interrogation

- Biomarkers Core: offers state of the art equipment and up-to-date technology to provide high quality analysis of biological samples to support pediatric research.
- Pediatric/Winship Flow Cytometry Core: provides cytometry services for the analysis and sorting of cells, and expert consultation for experimental design and planning.
- ADJUST Laboratory: CLIA-certified, CAP-accredited lab for validating, implementing, and helping to develop new diagnostic technologies to be used from clinical laboratory to home, with focus on accessible, reliable, and affordable diagnostics for members of all communities and economic backgrounds.

### Questions?

For more information about our cores and usage subsidies, please scan the QR code to visit our website at <https://pedsresearch.org/cores>, or contact Stacy Heilman, PhD, Vice Chair for Research Operations, at [stacy.heilman@emory.edu](mailto:stacy.heilman@emory.edu). Links to other cores also available to pediatric researchers can be found on our website.

