



# THRIVING

the iTHRIV Newsletter

December 2022

## In this Issue

Special End of Year Address from iTHRIV Contact PI Karen Johnston, MD, MSc .....	1
Mindfulness in Medicine .....	3
iTHRIV Under the Microscope: Rochelle Brown .....	4
Meet an iTHRIV Scholar Mentor: James Nataro .....	5
Resource Highlight – Biomedical Data Science Innovation Lab .....	6

## End of Year Address from iTHRIV Contact PI Karen Johnston, MD, MSc

Dear iTHRIV Community,

It is my great pleasure to take time at the end of the year to thank you all for your commitment to iTHRIV and to update you on our accomplishments during 2022. Our successes are due to the valuable input and outstanding work contributed by so many of you. On behalf of the leadership of iTHRIV, we thank you all for your partnership.

iTHRIV has been identified on the national stage as leaders in the National COVID Cohort Collaborative ([N3C](#)) with members of our iTHRIV Informatics core, taking the lead to support research queries from across the CTSA network. Our iTHRIV Research Concierge Portal ([iTHRIV Portal](#)) is now being requested outside of iTHRIV demonstrating the value of this resource. The iTHRIV Research Data Commons continues to be enhanced with input from early users at UVA, and code for implementation of the Commons has been shared across all iTHRIV partner institutions. We are already hearing interest in this resource outside of iTHRIV and hope that this resource too will be broadly shared in coming years.

As we all anticipate the upcoming [NIH Data Management and Sharing Policy](#) (effective January 25, 2023) and the new White House Guidance to [Ensure Federally Funded Research Freely Available Without Delay](#) (deadline December 31, 2025), iTHRIV will continue to enhance the [iTHRIV Research Data Commons](#) to support us all in meeting these new requirements. We also worked with the Patient Privacy Office to establish a [guidance](#) for making patient-derived datasets fully public.

In 2022 we funded Clinical and Translational Research proposals which will provide insight into [potential treatment options for obesity, lung transplantation, several aspects of mental health, and innovative AI based approach to reducing surgical waste](#). These pilot projects include researchers from all of our partner sites. Our Community Partnership grants funded projects in [obesity in LatinX youth and educational approaches to combat Hepatitis C](#). We look forward to sharing the results of these research projects when they are complete.

We also received many excellent applications for [2023 Pilot award programs](#) and are excited to launch the awarded projects in February, 2023. We thank all of you who have submitted research proposals to our Pilot Translational and Clinical Studies Program as well as our Community Partnership Grant Program and we regret that we can't fund them all.

As an organization iTHRIV has committed itself to justice, diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility and belonging for all, and in 2022 we deepened our offerings to promote diversity. Our [inspiring Diverse Researchers in Virginia](#) (iDRIV) program welcomed its second cohort, while our summer programs [SOAR, CUBE, and the Data Justice Academy](#) supported diverse groups of high school and college students, paving the way for potential careers in health-related



research. One of the teams had the opportunity to [present their research](#) at the Annual CTSA Meeting. Our iTHRIV Scholars Program welcomed its [sixth cohort](#) of early career researchers. This cohort [contains two iDRIV alums](#) and serves as a strong example of our commitment to diverse team science. iTHRIV proudly [launched a new speaker series](#) designed to lift underrepresented voices in research across the iTHRIV partnership. The series was [recorded](#) and we encourage you to listen and learn from those who have broad backgrounds and perspectives. Additionally, throughout 2023 iTHRIV will continue to strengthen our collaboration with [Virginia State University](#), a Historically Black University (HBCU) in Richmond, VA. All of this work contributes to growing the next generation of diverse translational research teams.

Our training programs for research faculty, clinical research coordinators, other research professionals and trainees continue to reach a broader workforce. Our growing programs for career development of research/grant administrators now includes a [formal mentoring pilot program across Grounds at UVA](#). Our research mentoring training program continues to grow with > 160 mentors participating to date! This program is for early career to advanced career mentors as it offers ways for each of us to optimize research mentoring relationships. Check out all of our [training offerings](#) on the iTHRIV Portal.

iTHRIV continues to build trust and has been working with community partners to co-develop future research programs. Join us as we strive to make sure that research is inclusive and our clinical trials are representative of the communities we serve.

Finally, I will also share with you our excitement about the next steps for iTHRIV as we prepare our new NIH-NCATS proposal submission which includes the development of new programs and innovations to support the research workforce and our communities across Virginia. As we look to the next year and the next chapter of iTHRIV, we continue to welcome your voice and the voice of our broad community. Please reach out to us and let us know how we can support your research. On behalf of iTHRIV, we wish you a wonderful Winter Holiday Season and very happy and healthy New Year.

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Karen C. Johnston, MD, MSc**

## Mindfulness in Medicine

With the end of the year in our sights and the promise of 2023 rapidly approaching, December presents a perfect time to take a moment and reflect on the past year as well as focus on the current moment.

[According to the NIH, mindfulness is an awareness of "what's going on inside and around you—your thoughts, feelings, sensations, and environment" and observation "of these moments without judgement."](#)


The use of mindfulness is playing an ever increasing role in health research. Take a look at the videos below to learn about how some of our iTHRIV Scholars are incorporating mindfulness principles into their research.

**SHANNON  
ARMBRUSTER,  
MD MPH**  
**Carilion Clinic**  
*Group-based exercise intervention  
for endometrial cancer survivors:  
Exploration of physical activity and  
quality of life impact*  
iTHRIV



<https://youtu.be/LwucQHPHEXA>

**CHRISTINE  
IBILIBOR, MD, MSC**  
**UVA**  
*Pre-Habilitation and Mindfulness  
Program for Patients  
Undergoing Radical Cystectomy*  
iTHRIV



<https://youtu.be/FFwKz0Z3p-c>

**IRÈNE  
MATHIEU, MD**  
**UVA**  
*Community-based approaches to  
improving pediatric  
mental health*  
iTHRIV



[https://youtu.be/tLWMT\\_nUmx4](https://youtu.be/tLWMT_nUmx4)

**ROSE  
NEVILL, PHD**  
**UVA**  
*Advancing the Evidence-base for  
Mindfulness-Based Interventions  
for Treating Behavioral Health in  
Adults with Autism and Intellectual  
Disability*  
iTHRIV



<https://youtu.be/qjurNmPIUwY>



### **iTHRIV Under the Microscope: Rochelle Brown, MPH**

Rochelle Brown is the Clinical Research Manager for Carilion Clinic's Research and Development Department. Rochelle joined Carilion as a Clinical Research Coordinator (CRC) in 2013 where she worked on various projects across different therapeutic areas. In 2015 she transitioned to her primary CRC role in Psychiatry and was promoted to a managerial role in January 2020. Currently, Rochelle oversees the Clinical Research Coordinators in the Medicine, Psychiatry, Radiology, and Pediatrics departments where she manages the start-up activities and operational aspects of the trials in those therapeutic areas.

Rochelle works hard to create a positive and healthy working environment for her employees, and a culture of research innovation for her patients and future participants. She wants the research participants to have a positive and supportive experience when working with the research teams, regardless of the conditions her teams are studying.

In addition to her work as CRC, Rochelle works with her iTHRIV teammates to produce content for the Learning Shorts video series.

Rochelle credits a "compassion and a patient-centered focus" as well as her organizational skills as key elements of her success. Additionally, she prides herself on her ability to "think big picture without forgetting the details are crucial skills to the work that we do in research."

When not at work, Rochelle enjoys reading, watching movies, spending time with friends and loved-ones, as well as traveling as often as possible.



## Meet an iTHRIV Scholar Mentor

James P. Nataro

Professor and Chair of  
Pediatrics,

University of Virginia School of  
Medicine

"Dr. Nataro has been a close mentor since I joined the UVA faculty over 4 years ago, and he's also one of the lead researchers for the Compassionate Schools Project. He brings valuable expertise in grant writing and research team leadership to my work."

- Irène P. Mathieu, MD



## Resource Highlight – The Biomedical Data Science Innovation Lab

iTHRIV is excited to share the 2023 Biomedical Data Science Innovation Lab topic: *Data Science and the Public Health Consequences of the COVID-19 Pandemic*

The global COVID-19 pandemic over the past two years has upset our lives in ways unimaginable before we took to wearing masks, isolating at home, and avoiding contact with family, friends, and colleagues.

Can quantitative approaches and data science be useful in not only modeling the pandemic itself but also tracking these secondary effects of the burgeoning global health crises?

The goal of this BDSIL is to foster the formation of new interdisciplinary collaborations which will generate creative strategies for addressing the use of data science approaches for predicting the incidences of health effects secondary to the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Get all the information](#)

