

USSONAR Winter Newsletter



February 2025

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President's Message







Minna Kohler MD, RhMSUS

Dear Ultrasound Friends,



Happy 2025! I am so enthusiastic to share updates on how ultrasound in rheumatology continues to make an impact on rheumatologic education, clinical care, and research.

After our activities at the American College of Rheumatology Convergence 2024 in Washington D.C. (see ACR updates below), in Jan 2025, we kicked off the year with our free USSONAR Webinar series- ACR Ultrasound Abstract Reviews Part 1 and 2.

JAN 13 2025- ACR Ultrasound Abstracts Review- Part I

<p>ACR Inflammatory Arthritis Ultrasound Abstracts Review (RA, PsA) 30 min</p>  <p>Janeth Vinh MD RhMSUS</p>	<p>ACR Ultrasound Guidance for Inflammatory Arthritis (RA, PsA)- Review and Q&A- 30 min</p>  <p>Veena Ranganath MD, RhMSUS</p>  <p>Gurjit Kaeley, MBBS RhMSUS</p>  <p>Catherine Bakewell MD, RhMSUS</p>
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January 27, 2025
ACR Ultrasound Abstracts Review - Part 2

<p>Ultrasound for Lupus and Crystalline Arthritis</p>  <p>Ann Cameron Barr, MD, RhMSUS</p>	<p>Ultrasound for Vasculitis and Sjogren's Disease</p>  <p>Charlie Oshinsky, MD, FACR, RhMSUS</p>
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Our Fundamentals of MSKUS course led by program director Dr. Norm Madsen & assistant program director Michelene Hearth-Holmes steadily continues with ultrasound image submissions read by our USSONAR faculty mentors.

A shout out to our top super reader mentors:

1. **Lily Kao** - 510
2. **Prashant Kaushik** - 509
3. **Eugene Kissin** - 400
4. **Fawad Aslam** - 315
5. **Jon Arnason** - 289
6. **Arash Mollaeian** - 175
7. **Jen Medlin** - 132
8. **Michelene Hearth-Holmes** - 126
9. **Dan Malone** - 122
10. **Veronika Sharp** - 96



**Norm Madsen, M.D., MSC,
RhMSUS, FACR, FRCPC**



**Michelene Hearth-Holmes,
M.D., MED, RhMSUS**



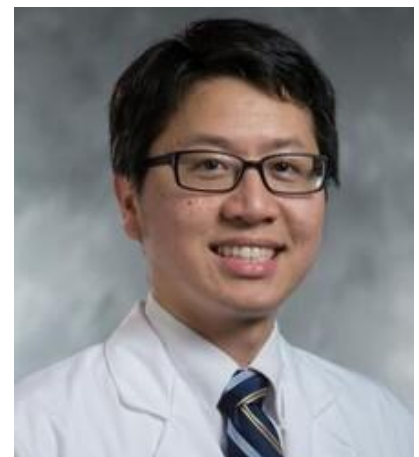
Jan 31-Feb 2, 2025 marked our biggest class yet of 75 fellows and attendings at the USSONAR 25 Fundamentals of Musculoskeletal Ultrasound Hands-On Course in Tampa, Florida. USSONAR is happy to make CAMLs (Center for Advanced Medical Learning and Simulation) our home for our flagship course. A big thank you to our course co-directors Dr. Jonathan Samuels (VP) and Jen Medlin (Faculty mentor, Ed. Committee), our patient model recruiter Dr. Natalie Faith (ByLaws Chair) and our administrative team at SRAHEC for organizing another amazing course packed with ultrasound clinical pearls, sonopathology and the grand return of Ultrasound-guided injections in the Cadaver Lab. We are so grateful to our industry sponsors for supporting us so that we can provide top notch education to our rheumatology fellows and colleagues at a lowered price.



There are a lot of great changes ahead for USSONAR as we continue to grow. We are now 732 members strong and will be transitioning our Fundamentals legacy website and image submission protocol to a new educational platform: Canvas, used at many medical schools and universities across the country. This will allow for a more streamlined approach to review, score, store, and organize images and facilitate feedback, discussions, and track metrics all within one website.

Who's spearheading these efforts? I'm happy to announce our newly selected USSONAR Fundamentals MSKUS Program Director for the 2025-2026 academic year Dr. Philip Chu (Duke

Fundamentals Program Director



University) and Associate Program Director Dr. Erin Chew (Vanderbilt University), as well as new Education committee members Dr. Jane Nishio (board member at large), and returning past-president Dr. Paul DeMarco.

Philip Chu, M.D., RhMSUS

**Associate
Fundamentals Program Director**

Our additional Canvas Implementation team includes Drs. Norm Madsen, Jen Medlin, Gene Kissin, Fawad Aslam, Janeth Yinh, Lily Kao. If you want to help as a beta-tester, please message us at ussonar@srahec.org



Erin Chew, M.D., RhMSUS

Canvas Implementation Team



**Jane Nishio, M.D.,
RhMSUS**



**Paul DeMarco, M.D.,
FACP, FACR,
RhMSUS**



**Gene Kissin, M.D.,
RhMSUS**



**Norm Madsen, M.D.,
MSC, RhMSUS,
FACR, FRCPC**



**Fawad Aslam, MBBS,
RhMSUS**



**Janeth Yinh, M.D.,
RhMSUS**



**Jen Medlin, M.D.,
RhMSUS**



**Lily Kao, M.D.,
RhMSUS**

And as always, if you'd like to see something that USSONAR is not doing, tell me- I am an email away.
Happy scanning,

**Minna Kohler MD, RhMSUS
USSONAR President 2024-2026**

USSONAR at ACR24 Convergence meeting (Washington D.C.) Highlights

- The successful return of the ACR Musculoskeletal Ultrasound Pre-Courses (Basic and Advanced) led by Dr. Janeth Vinh (Massachusetts General Hospital), and Dr. Fawad Aslam (Mayo Clinic, AZ).
With patient recruitment help from USSONAR membership committee member Dr. Charlie Oshinsky (Arthritis and Rheumatism, D.C.)

[See Article](#)



- All RhMSUS certified ACR Ultrasound faculty teaching at the course were active USSONAR members
- Drs. Myma Albayda (Johns Hopkins), Gene Kissin (BMC), and Minna Kohler (MGH) were featured in an article Updates in Ultrasound for Rheumatology 2024 - The Rheumatologist discussing how ultrasound is changing the field of rheumatology
- The ACR Use of Ultrasound in Inflammatory Arthritis Guidelines (RA and PsA) project was led by and presented by our USSONAR members Drs. Veena Ranganath (UCLA), Catherine Bakewell (Treasurer), and Gurjit Kaeley (Past-President). Ultimately this project will be created into a

manuscript and also endorsed by USSONAR to become ACR/USSONAR guidance papers.

- Multiple abstracts and presentations of ultrasound use in our various rheumatic diseases. were collated in an easy link for review created by Dr. Philip Chu.
- USSONAR Business Meeting at ACR

USSONAR at ACR Schedule 2024

USSONAR Abstracts at ACR 2024

Thank you to everyone who came out to the USSONAR Networking & Business meeting!



Big Thanks to our Sponsors!

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2024 - 2025 USSONAR Schedule of Events



Webinar Series

The Business of Ultrasound

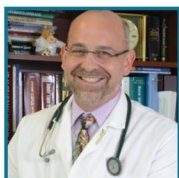
Part 2: Billing and Advocacy | Monday, February 24, 8:30 PM EST

USSONAR board
Member-at-large



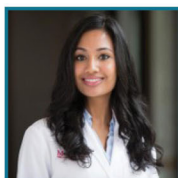
Jane Nishio
MD, RhMSUS

USSONAR
Past-President



Paul J DeMarco
MD, FACP, FACR, RhMSUS

USSONAR Advocacy
Committee Chair



Shereen Mahmood
MD, RhMSUS

USSONAR President



Minna Kohler
MD, RhMSUS

ACR RhMSUS Oversight
Committee Chair



Housam Aldeen Sarakbi
MD, FACR, RhMSUS

Billing basics and an update on USSONAR advocacy and ACR certification

February 24
8:30 PM EST

[Register here](#)

The Business of Ultrasound, Part 2

Business of Ultrasound – Billing and Advocacy!

****You do NOT need to re-register if you have participated in previous webinars***



Webinar Series

The Business of Ultrasound

Part 3: Experiences in Implementing Ultrasound Use in Rheumatology Practice

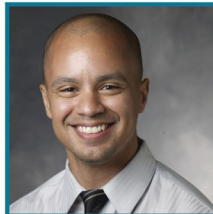
Monday, March 10, 8:30 PM EST

USSONAR board
Member-at-large



Jane Nishio
MD, RhMSUS

USSONAR Research
Committee Chair



Robert M. Fairchild
MD, PhD, RhMSUS

USSONAR By-laws
Committee Chair



Natalie Faith
MD, RhMSUS

March 10
8:30 PM EST

[Register here](#)

Join us for a discussion of a frequently asked question - "How do I structure my ultrasound practice in real life?"

Drs. Fairchild and Faith will describe their models and journeys to creating successful rheumatology ultrasound practices

****You do NOT need to re-register if you have participated in previous webinars***

March 24
8:30 PM EST

[Register here](#)

USSONAR Webinar Series - Ultrasound for Sjogrens Disease

Speaker: Dana DiRienzo, MD, MHS, RhMSUS

*****More information to come***

SAVE THE DATE

3RD Annual

Multi-Track Ultrasound in Rheumatology Conference

Irvine, California | August 1st - 3rd, 2025

TRACKS:

Vasculitis

Intermediate MSK

Cadaveric Injection Lab

Scan the QR code
To sign up for our
notification email list
Aug. 1 - 3, 2025



USSONAR
Ultrasound School of North America

3rd Annual Multi-Track Ultrasound in Rheumatology Conference

Irvine, California

- Intermediate Musculoskeletal Ultrasound Course
- Ultrasound in Vasculitis Course
- Cadaver Musculoskeletal Injection Lab, including US guided synovial biopsy station

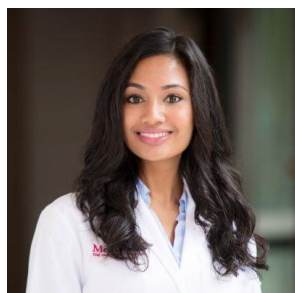
[Click here to sign up to be notified!](#)

Join Us in Shaping the Future of USSONAR!

Are you passionate about advancing USSONAR's mission? We invite you to become an active member of a committee! This is a fantastic opportunity to collaborate with like-minded professionals, share your expertise, and make a meaningful impact.

Committees

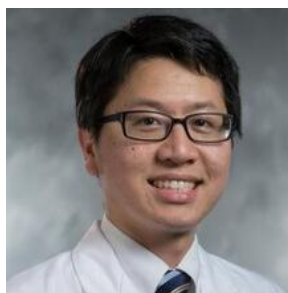
**Advocacy
Committee Chair**



**Membership
Committee Chair**



**Fundamentals Education
Committee Chair**



**Research
Committee Chair**



**Media & Communications
Shereen N. Mahmood,
Committee Chair
M.D., RhMSUS**



**By-Laws
Zineb Aouhab, M.D.
Committee Chair
RhMSUS**



**Pediatrics
Philip Chu, M.D.
Committee Chair
RhMSUS**



**1st comprehensive
Ultrasound in Vasculitis
Robert Fairchild, M.D.,
Course Chair
PhD, RhMSUS**



**Eva Rottmann, DO,
RhMSUS**

**Natalie Faith, M.D.,
RhMSUS, RMSK**

**Edward Oberle, M.D.
RhMSUS**

**Minna Kohler, M.D.,
RhMSUS**

**Multi-track Ultrasound
Conference Co-Chair**



**Multi-track Ultrasound
Conference Co-Chair**



Lily Kao, M.D., RhMSUS

**Zineb Aouhab, M.D.,
RhMSUS**

Special Interest Groups

**Lupus SIG
Co-Chair**



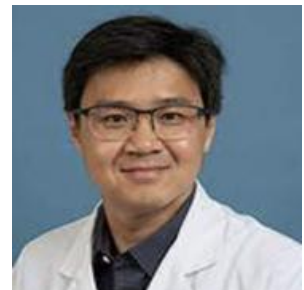
**Lupus SIG
Co-Chair**



**UGSBy SIG
Chair**



**Sjogrens/ Salivary Gland
SIG Chair**



Hulya Bukulmez, M.D.,

RhMSUS

Diane Mar, M.D.,

RhMSUS

Ami Ben-Artzi, M.D.,

RhMSUS

Howard Yang, M.D.,

RhMSUS

Ready to Get Involved?

Email: ussonar@srahec.org with the subject line being which committee you are interested in joining. We will direct your message to the correct Committee Chair.

Bylaws Committee.

Responsible for the review of the organizational bylaws including amendments, adoptions, and repeals

Membership Committee.

Maintaining membership database and recruitment of new members

Education Committee

Develop educational resources such as literature, image atlases, case studies, and discussion forums.
Consists of a Fundamentals Education and Multi-track Ultrasound Conference

Research Committee

Oversee the research activities of the organization. Help create opportunities for interested rheumatologists to collaborate on research projects in rheumatology ultrasound.

Media and Communications Committee

Engage community through organization's social media sites, organizational announcements, and our newsletter.

Pediatric Committee

Promote training and education programs specific to the practice of pediatric rheumatic ultrasound.
Committee members will be pediatric rheumatologists or USSONAR members with a specific interest in pediatric rheumatic ultrasound.

Are you interested in joining a special interest group?

Lupus US Special Interest Group- contact Hulya Bukulmez hxb38@case.com

Sjogrens/ Salivary Gland US Special Interest Group- Howard Yang HHYang@mednet.ucla.edu

Vasculitis US Special Interest Group- Minna Kohler mkohler@mgd.harvard.edu

We would also like to hear from you!

If you have any updates, honors, or publications that you'd like to share with the USSONAR community, please send your information to ussonar@srahec.org. We'd love to review your submissions for inclusion in our upcoming newsletters!

USSONAR VIDEO ARCHIVE



Did you miss the latest Webinar Series session, *The Business of Ultrasound: Acquiring an Ultrasound Machine?*

[Catch up with the recording here.](#)



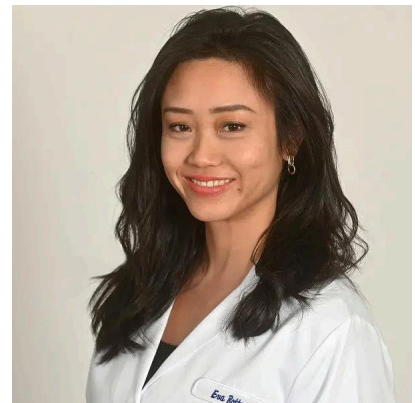
Membership Spotlight | By Dr. Zineb Aouhab

This newsletter we are putting the spotlight on the new Communication & Media Chair Dr. Eva Rottman.

Dr. Zineb Aouhab

How did the use of ultrasound impact your career as a rheumatologist?

Our diseases are often complex, challenging to diagnose and require time for pattern recognition. Ultrasound use has helped tremendously with differentiating very subtle differences between conditions. I have so many cases where I am surprised to find gouty tophi when suspecting RA flare, or noting paratenonitis/enthesitis over synovitis. I see it as an extension of my exam and learning sonoanatomy has really sharpened my physical exam skills. As an early career physician, it helps build trust with patients to be able to provide more exacting diagnostic information.



Dr. Eva Rottmann

It's helpful in this era of shared decision making and combating medical skepticism to be able to point out exactly what I am looking at. Since joining private practice in 2021, I use point-of care ultrasound a few times a day for a limited diagnostic and US-guided injections. We also employ sonographers to do more complete diagnostic studies including vascular and salivary gland US. I am part of the practice's ultrasound committee where we regularly meet to discuss barriers to practice, clinical cases, and literature review.

How did ultrasound training prepare you to practice rheumatology?

I started my training with USSONAR and the scavenger hunt was one of the highlights of my fellowship! We were fortunate to have portable hand-held ultrasound (Butterfly) devices where I

experienced first hand how clinically impactful it was to be able to scan bedside especially hospitalized patients that were limited in mobility. This initial ultrasound exposure is a huge reason for wanting to stay active in USSONAR and in medical education. Staying connected is especially important in private practice since we care for the largest percentage of rheumatic patients in the community. It is so valuable to keep advancing the knowledge and accessibility in the community so that it is not just an academic exercise. I am excited to serve as USSONAR Communications Committee chair where I can engage with the larger rheumatology community and encourage ongoing ultrasound education.

What are some of the challenges you may have faced implementing ultrasound in your practice? How did you overcome them?

Making sure US is financially sustainable is always a challenge. As a field we continue to prove the value of US and have integrated into practice but face declining reimbursements. There is no quick solution for this but I appreciate our USSONAR and ACR advocacy efforts. As a group, we are always working to keep the practice of US lean. We do diagnostic studies with specific protocols per disease - For example, our RA scan protocol includes scanning Bilateral MCP2-5, wrist, median nerve assessment, tibiotalar ankle, MTP2-5. They can be very time consuming to both perform and interpret. We are currently discussing solutions on how to shave the time it takes to create an ultrasound report without compromising its quality. Some of this includes stopping comparison to dated studies and standardizing all the language in the reports. We have to keep open communication with our sonographers because retaining good sonographers is difficult. They are constantly giving us feedback on what can be done better

How do you imagine the future of MSK US?

I imagine a lot of innovation with AI that will make US more readily available and easier to read. I'd like to see even better needle visualization, picture enhancements, smaller portable yet high quality ultrasounds. Since it's still technically challenging, I don't think robots are taking over us as sonographers just yet!



Contact Info:

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Rheumatologists
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ussonar@srahec.org
386-462-1551

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