

# Researcher Profile: Danielle Lavalley, PharmD, PhD

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Dr. Lavalley working with INSPIRE TEAM, which is comprised of both patient partners and researchers, to review interview findings

Dr. Lavalley's work has highlighted for her the importance of ensuring that outcomes important to patients are captured not only in research, but in healthcare as well. PROs, taken together with other data sources such as clinical measurements, provide support for shared decision-making to meet the needs of each patient to optimize outcomes. In 2017, Dr. Lavalley was named UW Medicine Medical Director for Patient-Reported Outcomes and Patient-Generated Health Data, and in this role she will bring her experience implementing this health IT-enabled practice model to the larger UW Medicine system in order to facilitate PRO data collection and reporting for surgical care and quality improvement efforts system-wide. Through this work, Dr. Lavalley and her team will help to design a sustainable model for capturing the patient's voice to facilitate more collaborative healthcare decision-making and achieve improved patient outcomes.

## #GettingToKnowDOS—Dr. Martin Montenovo



Dr. Martin Montenovo

In this issue, *Surgery Synopsis* staff interviewed Dr. **Martin Montenovo**, Assistant Professor, Surgical Director Living Donor Liver Transplant Program, Division of Transplant Surgery.

**SS:** What was the last book you read?

**MM:** The last book I read is called "Make Your Bed: Little Things That Can Change Your Life...And Maybe the World" by William H. McRaven. McRaven is a retired United States Navy admiral and he extrapolated

both big and small lessons he learned in the navy that he believes can make real, significant changes in your life as well as in the world. He has a great YouTube video clip where he says "If you want to change the world, start off by making your bed." He says if you make your bed every morning, then you've accomplished the first task of the day. That gives you a sense of pride and encourages you to do another task, another, and so on. **SS:** So what are you doing differently after having read the book? **MM:** [laughs] I make my bed! Even before reading the book I have always had a regimented routine which included making my bed every morning. But there are other little things I have picked up that I apply to my life. For instance, when things happen to you during the day and you believe they are a big deal but at the

end of the day you realize it wasn't really that big of a deal and it's something you can just let go. I really enjoy reading books and articles by people in the military because of their outlook on leadership, working within groups and resilience.

**SS:** What is your favorite movie? **MM:** I just love "Forrest Gump." His fighting against adversity is so inspiring. I think I've watched this movie about 20 times—I never get tired of it. Another movie I really like is "Brooklyn." It's about a young woman who emigrates from Ireland to the United States and it depicts her life in 1950s Brooklyn, New York.

**SS:** Do you have any favorite or least favorite genres? **MM:** I cannot stand anything science fiction. I will tell you a funny story. In 2001, I was in residency in Argentina and working many, many hours a week, and that was the year I started dating my wife. My wife was a student at the time so she was not as tired as I was from all of the long hours. One time she suggested we to go see the first "Lord of the Rings" film. I thought to myself, "This is perfect! This is a three hour movie and I will get a chance to catch up on my sleep because I had no intention of watching it!" It was ideal—my girlfriend was totally engrossed in the movie and I got three hours of uninterrupted sleep!

**SS:** Do you collect anything? **MM:** No, I do not. I'm very organized and collections can become clutter and clutter can easily lead to garbage. I drive my kids crazy because if I see toys they don't play with then they are donated to charity.

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Dr. Montenovo with his parents at medical school graduation ceremony in Rosario, Argentina

**SS:** What type of music do you enjoy?

**MM:** If you got ahold of my iTunes you would see everything there, except maybe country western [laughs]. I have music from Argentina, the U.S.—I enjoy music by U2, Coldplay...those are my favorites. I just went to a Coldplay concert and it was fantastic.

**SS:** What would you be if you weren't a surgeon? **MM:** Something related to economics, maybe an accountant or something along those lines. When I finished high school my degree was in accounting. I love numbers and the precision of it all. It's somewhat similar to surgery actually in that you need skilled precision. My father was a banker so I'm sure that played a large part in my interests of economics. But then my brother became a surgeon and he was the first physician in my family. That really changed my interest from accounting to medicine.

**SS:** What is an interesting fact about you that many people don't know? **MM:** I used to be a relatively good piano player. I started learning to play when I was about seven years old and played until I was about 18. I even played keyboard in a band in the town where I grew up in my early teens. We were good to enough to play at parties and make money. I'd like to start playing again but it always comes down to time.

**SS:** Do you have any upcoming travel plans you're excited about? **MM:** I love to travel but travelling with two kids can be challenging. I would really like to go to Europe next, but one of my children is four years old and going through museums and taking long walks is tough with children at that age, so right now I focus on destinations with swimming pools and a beach. Maui is a nice destination for that kind of thing. **SS:** What's been your favorite travel destination? **MM:** So far, my favorite travel experience has been Asia. I've been to Seoul and Hong Kong, both for work. I was in Seoul for two months and really came to love that city. I was in Hong Kong for one week and it was incredible—it is the definition of a big city. The mix of culture and the food! The flavors of the foods are unlike you can find anywhere in the world.

**SS:** Do you have a personal motto? **MM:** Be yourself all the time. Whether I'm with friends, my boss, or strangers, I am crystal clear—I have nothing to hide. Another guiding belief is pursue your dreams. Don't use excuses, go forward and follow your dreams.

**SS:** Would you share with us one of your guilty pleasures? **MM:** I like to eat—a lot! And because I'm from Argentina, I love to eat meat! [laughs] I go to a butcher who knows me very well and ask them to cut meat the way I'm used to having it in Argentina. They always know exactly what

I want. I also really love ice cream. Every Friday I take my family for ice cream at Ben and Jerry's. I'll eat just about any flavor except mint.

**SS:** What is your favorite childhood memory? **MM:** Being at my grandparents' farm when I was a child. I grew up in a very small town and my grandparents lived on a farm close by. I remember riding my bike to the farm, sometimes by myself, sometimes with friends. We'd milk cows and ride horses—such beautiful memories. I was lucky to have had a wonderful childhood. I always joke with my wife because she's from Buenos Aires and grew up in the big city and lived in busy downtown areas and doesn't know what it's like living in a rural area. Every time we visit Argentina we go to the small town where I grew up and she just loves to go there because it's so different for her.

**SS:** Any special memories from your time at UW? **MM:** Oh yes. The first time I came to the United States, it was to the University of Washington Medical Center. In 2004, I was a surgical resident



Two year old Montenovo with his father

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training in Argentina and I came here as a clinical observer in the Cardiothoracic Division. Georgia Barroso, who worked in CT administration at the time, did something so special for me that I will never, ever forget. I arrived on a Saturday morning, I could barely speak English, and without knowing or expecting it, there was Georgia at SeaTac airport with a little sign with my name! She came to pick me up, she took me to lunch, drove me around the university showing me the hospital and other nearby sights, then she dropped me off at the university dorm where I was staying. I remember we went around to the trunk, and when she opened it, it was filled with enough groceries for me to last me a month! I couldn't believe it, I was just so touched. She is just such an outstanding person and she will always have a special place in my heart.

**SS:** What is the best gift you've ever received? **MM:** It's nothing material—it's the laughter from my kids and my wife.

**SS:** What do you do in your spare time? **MM:** Well, I don't have a lot of spare time but when I do my wife and I really enjoy hosting friends at our house. I love to cook and try out new recipes I like. Even when I come home tired from surgery, I find it relaxing to make spaghetti, ravioli or something like that—but usually it's meat! Then to share that with friends makes it very special. **SS:** Do you have a dish you do particularly well or that you're known for? **MM:** I make a very good mascarpone cheesecake. Many people in the department have tried it and they really like it!



Dr. Montenovo at high school graduation with his mother

## Honors, Awards & Publications

### Faculty



Dr. **Benjamin Anderson**, Professor, Division of General Surgery, and chair of the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center **Breast Health Global Initiative (BHGI)**, will receive \$550,000 from **Susan G. Komen** to evaluate the strengths and gaps in processes used by health care facilities in low-resource settings. The goal of this research is to assist health care facilities in evaluating and implementing breast health interventions to improve detection, diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer.

Strategies to build health care capacity in low and middle income countries can be applied in underserved communities in the U.S., Dr. Anderson said. "Today is a critical time where real and meaningful progress can be made by wisely using resources to save lives at home and abroad," he said.

Susan G. Komen is a co-founder of BHGI and has provided support continuously since 2002. Several ongoing Komen grants, awarded in previous years to local researchers including Mary-Claire King, Ph.D. and Nora Disis, M.D. bring Komen's total research investment in Washington state institutions to \$11,630,427 since 1982.

Under Dr. **David Byrd**'s leadership as Chair, the **American Joint Commission on Cancer (AJCC)** will publish the 8th Edition of the AJCC Staging Manual in January 2018, which includes a fundamental change in breast cancer staging. The development of prognostic staging tables, for the first time, will expand on the anatomic staging system into a biological framework. Dr. Byrd, Professor in the Division of General Surgery, has long advocated for this development for solid tumors, just as has already occurred for hematologic malignancies.



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