



Association of Indian Pathologists in North America

A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization

www.aipna.net



July 2025

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear AIPNA family,

Hope you are having a wonderful summer! We would love to see your summer photos! Here is one from me! Phil and I are enjoying ice cream after a successful Falmouth Triathlon!

We all spend time outdoors in the summer. Beware: Emergency rooms report an increase in trauma during this time, be it from biking, hiking, or swimming. A week before the triathlon, my husband Phil was hit by an automobile while he was biking! Luckily, he escaped with very few injuries.

We have good news for you! Our CAP AIPNA companion meeting has been awarded CME credits! Do register for our course at CAP '25! You will not be disappointed. We welcome topics and speakers for the many AIPNA meetings at USCAP, CAP, ASC, International CMEs, and IAP. Send your resume, topic, and a brief synopsis to me at megha.g.joshi@lahey.org.

Akanksha is heading the IMG stories! We're looking forward to hearing from all of you. We are very much interested in all your journeys.

With much gratitude for this wonderful life,

Megha Joshi, MD
President, AIPNA

WE HEAR FROM OUR MEMBERS



Hello everyone,

Sharing some good news with the AIPNA family!

I passed my AP/CP boards. I'm currently doing a GI/Liver fellowship at Memorial Sloan Kettering and actively looking for jobs for July 2026. I'd prefer a GI/Liver sign-out position but can also add one more subspecialty. Please keep me in mind if you're aware of any openings. An academic setting is preferred, but I'm open to other settings as well.

I'm not restricted to any geographical area, and no visa is needed. Please contact me at Pmalik.ma@gmail.com if you have any opportunities for me.

Thank you 😊
Preeti Malik, MD

ASSOCIATION OF INDIAN PATHOLOGISTS IN NORTH AMERICA (AIPNA) AT CAP'25



Sunday, September 14th, 2025, 1:00-3:00 PM
Orlando World Center Marriott, Orlando Florida
Meeting Room: Magnolia 12
CME credits: 2

TIPS FOR THE GENERAL SURGICAL PATHOLOGIST: WHAT NOT TO MISS IN GI AND LIVER BIOPSIES

MODERATORS

Rajendra Singh, M.D., FCAP
Vikas Mehta, M.D., FCAP



SPEAKERS

Romil Saxena, MBBS, MD, FCAP: Diagnosing Fatty Liver disease
Pooja Navale, MBBS, MD, FCAP: What not to miss In GI biopsies
Rahul Jawale, MD, FCAP: Emerging Guidelines in the GI Tract
Ravindra Kolhe, MD, PhD, FCAP: AI to the rescue



CAP25

THE PATHOLOGISTS' MEETING

Where You Belong

September 13 – 16
Orlando, Florida



NEW AIPNA BEST ABSTRACTS AWARD AT CAP25

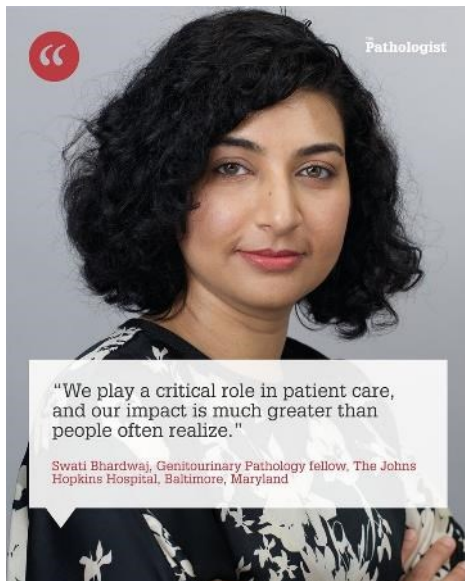
Send your accepted abstract to

DR. ANAND LAGOO, MD, PhD

Anand.Lagoo@Duke.Edu

by August 30th 2025

SWATI BHARDWAJ, AIPNA TRAINEE REPRESENTATIVE, INTERVIEWED BY THE PATHOLOGIST MAGAZINE!



Below is the excerpt of the interview published in the Pathologist magazine!

Tell us about your career path so far.

I’m an international medical graduate from India. After completing medical school in Delhi, I then did a three-year pathology residency there. It was similar to a combined anatomic and clinical pathology program in the US, but with a stronger focus on anatomic pathology.

Toward the end of my residency, I started reading international research papers and realized how much more could be done with better resources. That inspired me to pursue further training in the US. After completing my step exams, I started over and completed an anatomic and clinical pathology residency at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York.

Having prior residency experience gave me a head start and allowed me to get more involved with the pathology community. I served as chief resident, chaired the College of American Pathologists (CAP) Residents Forum, and am now the immediate past chair. I’m also active on a few CAP committees and had the opportunity to serve on the CAP Board.

I was always interested in surgical pathology, but during residency, I became especially passionate about genitourinary and gynecologic pathology. I’m currently a PGY-5 fellow in genitourinary pathology at Johns Hopkins and will be completing a gynecologic pathology fellowship next year. Although doing two fellowships is less common today, I genuinely love both fields. There’s overlap between genitourinary and gynecologic

pathology, and growing interest in molecular pathology in both, which gives me exciting opportunities to explore further.

What’s your favorite aspect of your work?

One of my favorite parts of being a pathologist is that it combines both science and medicine. It’s not just about diagnosing diseases – it also gives me the opportunity to contribute to patient care, conduct research, and teach.

Education is something I really enjoy. It's exciting to be able to teach the next generation, even while still learning during residency. As they say, knowledge is the only thing that grows when you share it.

What's the hardest part about what you do?

Recently, a friend of mine – also in medicine – joked that it was a rare change when a pathologist gave a benign diagnosis. That really stayed with me, because one of the hardest parts of my work is dealing with bad news. Even though we don't deliver diagnoses directly to patients, it's still difficult knowing that most of the

genitourinary and gynecologic specimens I handle involve cancer. It can be heartbreaking to see how widespread disease can be.

However, the positive side is that our work gives us opportunities to study these diseases more deeply, discover new biomarkers, and potentially identify new targets for treatment.

TO READ MORE, GO TO THE PATH MAG ARTICLE:
<https://thepathologist.com/issues/2025/articles/june/careers-uncovered-genitourinary-pathology/>

MARK YOUR CALENDERS: AIPNA AT AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CYTOPATHOLOGY

Thu, 11/6: 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM Companion Session
Conference: 73rd Annual Scientific Meeting of American Society of Cytopathology

MORPHOLOGY TO MOLECULAR



Renuka Melanie, MD
Cleveland Clinic

MODERATORS

RENUKA MALENIE, MD
NIRAG JHALA, MD



Nirag Jhala, MD
Rutgers University

SPEAKERS

Impact of Small Tissue Samples and Focal Liver Lesions - Dr. Nirag Jhala
Impact of Small Samples on Diagnosis of Salivary Gland Tumors – Dr. Varsha Manucha
Updates on The Paris System for Reporting Urine Cytology – Dr. Poonam Vohra



AIPNA MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

RITU NAYAR, MD SHINES AS CAP BOARD OF GOVERNORS AND AB PATH PAST PRESIDENT

Ritu Nayar, MD, Receives 2025 Gary A. Mecklenburg Distinguished Physician Award

July 9, 2025 | 2 min. read

During the Northwestern Memorial Hospital Medical Staff Quarterly Meeting, pathologist [Ritu Nayar, MD](#), was given the Gary A. Mecklenburg Distinguished Physician Award in recognition of her work and accomplishments in the medical profession. The award was presented to Dr. Nayar by Daniel Brat, MD.

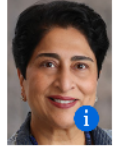


As one of the hospital's most prestigious awards, the Mecklenburg Award is presented each year to a physician, nominated by their peers, who embodies professionalism and humanism and demonstrates a strong commitment to enriching the lives of others through research, teaching, patient care or community outreach.

People

News of CAP member awards, appointments, elections

Ritu Nayar, MD, received on June 4 the 2025 Gary A. Mecklenburg Distinguished Physician Award during the annual meeting of the Northwestern Memorial Hospital medical staff. The award is presented to a physician, nominated by his or her peers, who embodies professionalism and humanism and who demonstrates a commitment to enriching lives through research, teaching, patient care, or community outreach. Dr. Nayar, a member of the CAP Board of Governors, is professor and executive vice chair of pathology and medical director of the cytopathology lab at Northwestern Memorial Hospital and Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago.



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Executive Board_2024



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MEET YOUR AIPNA OFFICE BEARERS

FEATURING RENUKA MELANIE, MD
Executive Director, AIPNA



1. Can you share a bit about your professional background and what ultimately led you to AIPNA?

Renuka: “After completing my MD in microbiology and working in a Medical School in India I moved to the USA. I received my AP/CP training from East Carolina University in North Carolina. After my fellowship in cytopathology at Geisinger Medical Center, Pennsylvania I joined Cleveland Clinic as a staff pathologist. During my residency one of my attendings (not of Indian origin) told me about AIPNA. I attended my first AIPNA meeting and was warmly welcomed and felt very much at home. Dr. Megha Joshi and Dr. Shivayogi Bhusnurmath encouraged me to join as a resident member and since then there has been no turning back.”

2. What was your understanding or impression of AIPNA before you became involved, and how has that perception evolved?

Renuka: “When I joined AIPNA, it was already doing a great work and has come a long way in its journey. The leadership was motivated, and they were seeking younger people with fresh ideas. I was impressed by dedicated members who have been supporting AIPNA since the time of its inception.

During my time here I have seen AIPNA grow and achieve much higher levels of excellence. I hope in future we will be able to reach out to every

pathologist of Indian origin and together as a team we can support and encourage our pathology community not only in India but globally. With all the young people with their fresh ideas and social media advancements I am sure the future of AIPNA is very bright.”

3. Your service in the Indian Army is a unique and impressive part of your background. How did your experiences in the military influence your approach to leadership and problem-solving?

Renuka: “With my previous experience as an officer in the Indian Army I was well-trained in administration, leadership and was disciplined to work in an organized way. The organization felt that I could be a good fit for their executive team, and I accepted the leadership roles that were offered to me.

AIPNA was facing challenges to involve more members into various leadership roles and to increase the activities here in the USA and Canada. As a new and junior member, I took up a few of these responsibilities and worked towards the goals together as a team. As an executive director I want to continue pursuing the mission and vision of AIPNA. “

4. You have been signing out cytopathology digitally. Can you tell us more about that?

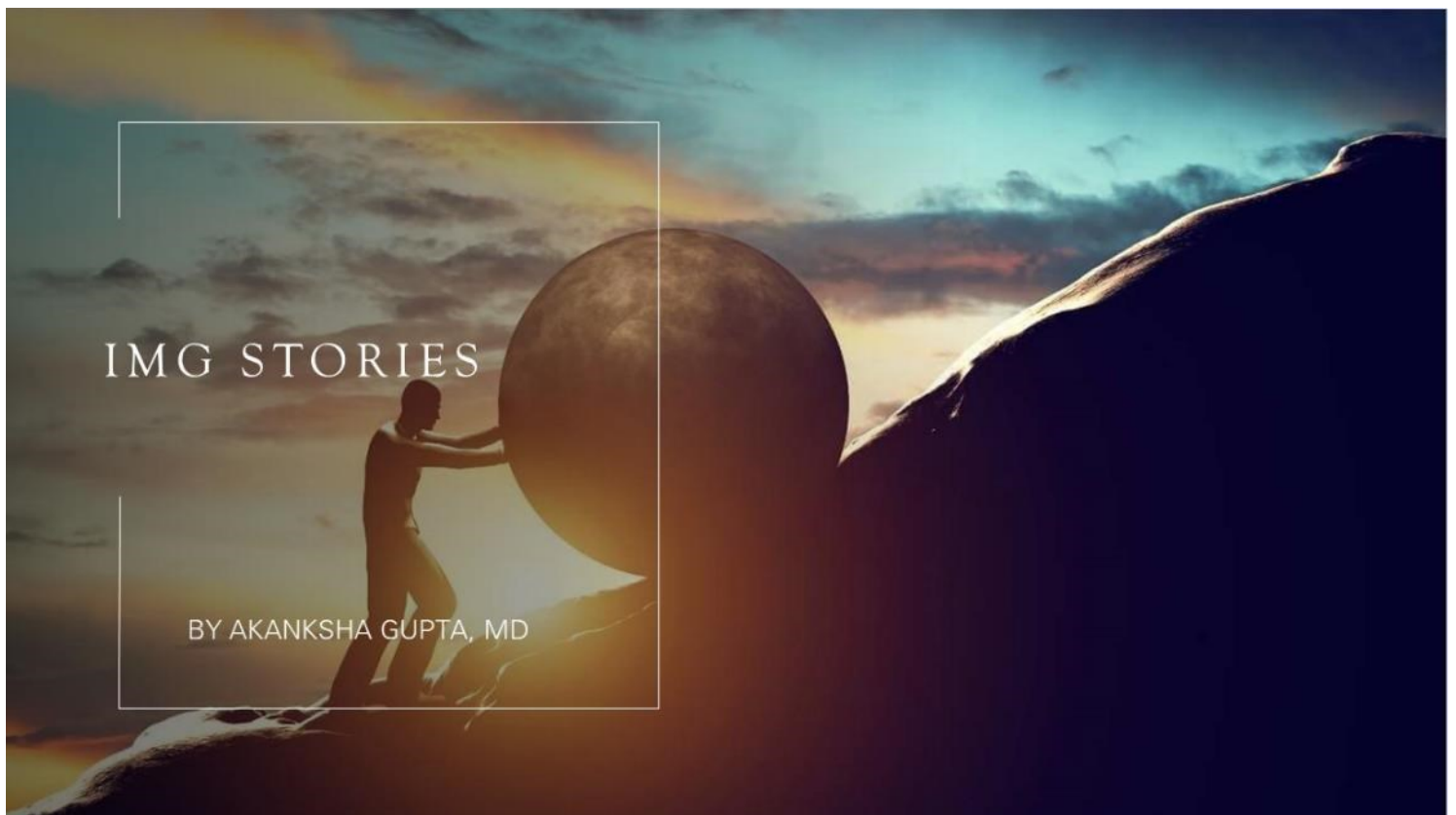
Renuka: “As a cytopathologist there is a recent advancement in my career where we have started signing out Pap smears digitally. Very soon I will share my experiences about this new world of digital cytopathology.”

5. When you're not busy with AIPNA, what do you enjoy doing in your free time?

Renuka: “I am a social person so talking to people and making new friends is one of my favorite pastimes. I love to cook and travel and as a result my weekends are busy hosting or traveling.”

“IMG STORIES”

We will be publishing IMG stories in our newsletter. The stories are being gathered and compiled by Akanksha Gupta, our lead newsletter editor. They will be focused on highlighting stories of successes, failures, struggles and persistence by the IMGs. Below is a story of persistence with very thoughtful lessons, by an anonymous contributor! Share it with the Pathology Match candidates, if you know some.



“I'm a 2000 graduate of a renowned National Medical College in Bangladesh. After practicing as a cardiology medical officer for three years in my home country, I immigrated to Canada as a physician. The first few years in a new country were challenging; with no immediate job prospects, a daughter, and a physician husband (who was also an orthopedic surgeon in Bangladesh), it was difficult to consider further studies.

Ultimately, we decided that I would study for the USMLE steps and LMCC exams, while my husband

would take on blue-collar jobs to support us. The following year, I had a newborn, and with a four-year-old starting school, my USMLE journey truly began. My only resources were UWorld and First Aid. It was incredibly hard to find dedicated time to study full-time, so it took me two years (2010-2011) to complete all the USMLE steps and three LMCC exams. I then applied for residency in 2012.

I had no resources to help with my application or obtain letters of recommendation (LORs). That's

when I faced my first major setback: I used all my savings to apply for Internal Medicine and Family Medicine programs across the U.S. and received zero interviews. No one had told me beforehand that being an old graduate with no clinical experience in Canada or the U.S. would severely limit my prospects.

Fortunately, a good friend introduced me to a senior from my medical school who was doing a pathology residency in New York at the time. She was the first person to encourage me to consider pathology. I had no idea about the well-structured AP/CP programs in the U.S. until she explained them to me!

To make a long story short, I began doing observerships in different U.S. hospitals with pathology residency programs. I would write at least ten letters every week to pathology programs, requesting observership opportunities. I also approached every person I met during my observerships to gain more exposure and secure LORs. Over the next two years, I managed to secure at least four observerships with excellent LORs, and finally, in 2015, I received a prematch offer from a community program in New Jersey.

My biggest hurdles in getting into residency were my graduation year and my lack of clinical experience in the USA. Additionally, my scores weren't particularly high, aside from a 92 on Step 2 CK. Many native doctors in the USA refused to help or even demotivated me, but my parents, husband, and family stood by me and offered unwavering support, which kept me going. Once I started residency, I never had to stop or look back. I forged my own path and network, eventually becoming a certified pathologist in the U.S.

Here are the lessons I learned from this journey:

1. Never lose hope, self-belief, or self-respect.
2. USMLE scores matter. Focus on scoring high (now that Step 1 is pass/fail, your Step 2 score holds significant weight).
3. U.S. clinical experience is mandatory for IMGs who want to practice medicine in the U.S. Knock on every doctor's door you know and ask for observership opportunities, if not direct clinical experience. Try to secure these opportunities in hospitals with residency programs. This gives you the chance to meet key people in the program whose LORs can be crucial for an interview and potentially a spot in their program.
4. Do not get disheartened by negative comments or advice.
5. Stay positive, calm, and persevere. Don't lose time between graduation and your USMLE journey.

As a Canadian citizen, I had to secure a J1 visa for my residency. I didn't wish to return to Canada, so receiving an offer from my mentor at RPCCC during my fellowship was truly a blessing. He's been an outstanding Breast Pathologist, teacher, mentor, and guide. I've learned an immense amount over the past five years and have authored multiple research papers with him and through collaborations with other academic hospitals. I'm now awaiting my Green Card, which my institution requested as an NIW Physician.

Hard work and sincerity never go in vain. If I could overcome all the obstacles in my life and make it this far, any other IMG graduate can too. Believe in yourself and persevere!"

ANONYMOUS



RESIDENT'S CORNER

NAVIGATING THE J-1 VISA JOURNEY: A ROADMAP FOR IMGs IN THE U.S.

For international medical graduates (IMGs) training in the United States on a J-1 visa, transitioning to post-residency employment can be challenging. J-1 visa holders are subject to a two-year home residency requirement unless granted a waiver. One of the most commonly pursued options is the Conrad 30 Waiver Program, which allows each U.S. state to recommend up to 30 physicians per year to serve in federally designated underserved areas. These waivers are competitive and require early

preparation, applicants should ideally begin exploring options in their fourth year of residency, especially if pursuing only one year of fellowship.

Beyond Conrad 30, other waiver options include federal programs such as the Veterans Affairs (VA) system, the Appalachian Regional Commission, the Delta Regional Authority, and the Southeast Crescent Regional Commission. These programs support waivers for service in specific geographic regions or federal institutions. Flex waivers under the Conrad program (usually 5 of the 30 slots) can be used for non-shortage areas if there is a documented public health need.

Each pathway has its own eligibility criteria and timelines, so early networking, legal consultation, and institutional support are key. Securing a waiver is not just a bureaucratic step but a pivotal moment in an IMG's career trajectory in the U.S. With strategic planning, many J-1 physicians have successfully transitioned to long-term careers serving underserved communities across the country—strengthening healthcare systems while fulfilling immigration requirements.

- **By Swati Bhardwaj, MD**

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS

1. ASC AIPNA meeting in NOV 2025.
2. IAPM: Jammu India, Dec 2, 3, 4, 5, 2025
3. AIPNA ICP INT CME, Amritsar, India, Feb 20-22, 2026
4. OCT 2026: IAP in Japan

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



I'm thrilled to present the newest edition of the AIPNA Newsletter, packed with vital updates and inspiring stories. We're always striving to enhance its value, and you can soon look forward to exciting new sections like "Residents' Corner," "Meet Your AIPNA Officer Bearers," "IMG Stories," and "Welcome New Members." Your suggestions for future content are always welcome and help us shape this into a truly valuable resource.

This edition kicks off with a timely summer safety reminder from our President, Dr. Megha Joshi, who also brings the exciting news that our CAP AIPNA companion meeting now offers CME credits! You won't want to miss registering for our CAP '25 course. We also feature a powerful "IMG Story"

from a fellow pathologist, detailing their successful journey to U.S. certification and highlighting the critical role of perseverance, USMLE scores, U.S. clinical experience, and a positive mindset.

In our "Know Your AIPNA Office Bearers" section, get to know Dr. Renuka Malenie, who shares insights into her professional journey and how her background as an Indian Army officer influences her leadership within AIPNA. Don't forget to submit your accepted abstracts to Dr. Anand Lagoo by August 30, 2025, for consideration for the prestigious AIPNA Best Abstracts Award at CAP '25! Mark your calendars for a full schedule of upcoming events, including the AIPNA meeting at the American Society of Cytopathology's 73rd Annual Scientific Meeting in November 2025, IAPM in Jammu, India, in December 2025, an International CME and AIPNA ICP meeting in Amritsar, India, in February 2026, and IAP in Japan in October 2026.

Finally, we proudly celebrate Dr. Ritu Nayar, who continues to excel as a CAP Board of Governors member and immediate Past President of the AB Path, and Dr. Swati Bhardwaj for featuring in the Pathologist magazine – don't miss her resident's corner!

Thank you for being an essential part of the AIPNA family. Your engagement and contributions are what make our community so vibrant and inspiring!

Warmly,

- **AKANKSHA GUPTA, MBBS, MD, FASCP, FCAP**
Founder & CEO, Ace My Path
Lead editor, AIPNA Newsletter
