

## Scripps Mercy Family Medicine Residents – Class of 2026



**Gabrielle Armijo, MD**  
**UC San Diego**

Gabrielle “Gabbie” Armijo was born in San Diego, California. After high school, she attended UC San Diego where she received her Bachelor of Arts in Human Development. During her undergraduate years, she participated in various leadership opportunities within Revelle College and learned about basic science research while working in a research lab. After graduating from UC San Diego, she decided to change her research focus from basic science research to clinical research and started to work with the GRADE study, a clinical trial for Type 2 diabetics. Two years later, she was lucky enough to be accepted to UC San Diego School of Medicine. While in medical school, she found her passion for border health, for working in underserved communities and for increasing representation of Spanish-speaking providers in Spanish-speaking communities.

She completed a fourth year rotation at Scripps Chula Vista as part of her Family Medicine clerkships and the rest is history. Areas of interest include border health, rural medicine, women’s health and adolescent medicine. She hopes to one day practice full spectrum family medicine in a predominantly Spanish-speaking community.

Outside of work, she likes to read, bake, watch Vanderpump Rules and talk about Game of Thrones.



## Vanessa Bastidas, MD, MPH

### University of Arkansas

Vanessa grew up in Little Rock, Arkansas. She is the proud daughter of two Colombian immigrant parents and the first doctor in the family.

She graduated from Stanford University in Mechanical Engineering, Product Design and received the Stanford Award for Excellence as well as the Renato I Rosaldo, Jr. Award for her dedication to community service. Post-grad, she explored many avenues – from design thinking education, health communications, medical device engineering and water engineering. It was during her medical device work in India that she gained a new perspective on medicine and saw firsthand the impact a doctor can have even within a challenging healthcare system.

Shortly after, she completed the premedical post-baccalaureate program at Columbia University. Concurrently, she worked as a research assistant at CUMC and furthered her passion in behavioral and public health, especially within the Latine/x population, through adolescent psychiatry research in ADHD, anorexia nervosa and the Boricua Youth Study.

She returned to her hometown to pursue her MD/MPH at UAMS. While in medical school, Vanessa helped start the local LMSA chapter and was their first community service chair. She was also the vice president of SNMA and was determined to give back through meaningful mentorship for underrepresented students in medicine through programs such as HPREP and MAPS.

Because of her non-traditional path to medicine, Vanessa strives to use her interdisciplinary experiences to become a better advocate and ally for under-resourced and marginalized communities. She is thrilled to be at Chula with like-minded family medicine residents. In her free time, Vanessa enjoys salsa dancing, rock climbing, road biking, hiking, arts and all things outdoors.



**Natalie Bettez, MD MA**  
**Tufts University**

Natalie was raised in central Massachusetts and first became interested in medicine while working as an EMT in high school starting at age 15. She continued this work during her undergraduate studies at Tufts University in Boston, where she majored in Spanish and Biochemistry, and spent half a year in Spain at the University of Seville. She also volunteered with Timmy Global Health, helping run rotating health clinics in Guatemala. She remained at Tufts for medical school to become a double jumbo. During this time, she worked as a volunteer instructor teaching health topics to Spanish-speaking immigrants in the Boston area, and gained a passion for working with similar patients during her family medicine rotations at Greater Lawrence. Realizing her enthusiasm for primary care and working with underserved patient populations, she was drawn to the community work and dedicated staff at Scripps. Upon graduating from Tufts School of Medicine, she was awarded the Dr. Toby Wesselhoeft Family Medicine Award for Clinical Excellence, Compassion and Service.

Outside the hospital, Natalie is an older sister to three siblings and grew up camping and traveling to national parks. In addition to hiking, she is a running enthusiast, having run cross country and track for Tufts University and recently having qualified for and completed the Boston Marathon before graduating medical school. She hopes to complete an additional marathon or two while in San Diego! She is also excited to live in California for the first time and explore the natural wonders of the West Coast.



## Kathleen Douangchak, DO

### A.T. Still University

Kathleen was born and raised in Pleasanton, California. She received a Bachelor of Science in Cognitive Science and a minor in music at UC San Diego where she also competed on the NCAA Track and Field team as a sprinter.

Kathleen pursued a career in medicine after serving as a teacher in Burkina Faso in the Peace Corps in 2014 where she witnessed significant health disparities, particularly in access to care. When she returned to the US, she tutored elementary mathematics with McGraw-Hill Education while attending UC Berkeley Extension's Post-Baccalaureate Health Professions Program.

A graduate of A.T. Still University School of Osteopathic Medicine in Arizona (ATSU-SOMA), Kathleen was heavily involved in leadership and advocacy work and passionately served as class president and student body vice president. She is a proud member of Omega Beta Iota and the Gold Humanism Society and she was honored with the award for Student DO of the Year. Kathleen completed her clinical training in San Ysidro and Chula Vista and is thrilled to have the opportunity to continue to train in the communities that shaped her as a medical student. Some of her many interests within family medicine include maternal child health, global health and addressing the disparities in care in those areas.

Kathleen developed an interest in landscape photography with her husband, Donnie. They love to explore the world through their camera lenses, travel and go to Disneyland. Their family includes a joyful 1-year-old son and a 9-year-old husky dog.



## Caroline Duffy, MD MPH

**University of Texas**

Born and raised in Houston, Texas, Caroline is a proud University of Texas Longhorn, where she obtained a Bachelor of Science in Public Health and a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish. From a young age, she wanted to marry her love of science and passion for people, especially through serving the underserved. In college, she was president of GlobeMed, a student led organization that partnered with a local clinic in El Salvador to increase health equity in under resourced communities. She also fostered her love for the outdoors by becoming a Wilderness First Responder and an Adventure Trip guide.

Caroline is the first doctor in her family and an alumna of The University of Texas Medical Branch. She chose UTMB for its unique bilingual program and its incredible student-run free clinic. She created an interdisciplinary Spanish language learning organization and became a director of the pharmacy at the free clinic. She spent all four years mentoring students from elementary school through medical school, and countless hours investing in research and the community. Through this service, she was inducted into the Gold Humanism Honor Society. Knowing she wanted to go into primary care and effect systemic change for access and high-value outcomes, she took a year to obtain a Master of Public Health from George Washington University.

When Caroline isn't learning about her patients and how to help keep them well, she loves to explore new recipes, eateries, farmers markets (bonus points for coffee and chocolate), run and practice yoga in the perfect San Diego weather, hangout at festivities with friends (bonus points for dancing), and most of all, backpack with her husband. In residency, she hopes to learn to be a plant mom.



**Connor Lenihan, MD**  
**University of Tennessee**

Connor was raised off the coast of Texas on Galveston Island, where he learned about medical care in part from his mother who founded and ran a women's free health clinic throughout his childhood.

After being displaced to Tennessee due to Hurricane Ike, Connor returned to Texas for undergraduate studies in biochemistry and molecular biology at Trinity University in San Antonio. After graduation, Connor volunteered for two years with the Peace Corps Guatemala as a healthy schools volunteer working to coordinate resources addressing malnutrition in San Juan Cotzal, Quiché.

His work in public health in Guatemala reinvigorated his passion for primary care and he then entered medical school at the University of Tennessee in Memphis. As a student, he founded the Medical Spanish Forum to address a clearly identified need for students to practice medical Spanish, learn more about Latin American cultures and understand systems of privilege. He also volunteered at the student-run free clinic, Clínica Esperanza, where he eventually became president. He was a founding member of the student diversity coalition and sat on the diversity and inclusion advisory council.

Connor sought out Scripps Mercy Chula Vista Family Medicine Residency because of the shared mission of providing high-quality care to diverse patient populations with an emphasis on social and medical justice.

In his free time, Connor enjoys flipping with San Diego trickers, sewing his own clothing and accessories, exploring San Diego, cooking and practicing acroyoga with his partner Jade.



**Carlos Razo, MD**  
**Saint Louis University**

Carlos is a first-generation Mexican doctor who grew up in a single-parent home in Boyle Heights, California. From a young age, he was motivated to become a doctor and contribute to communities in need. He chose to pursue family medicine because the fundamental principles aligned with his primary passions of education, and he aims to empower his patients by educating them about their disease processes.

He completed his bachelor of arts degree at Occidental College in California, followed by his medical degree at Saint Louis University School of Medicine in Missouri. During the interim between degrees, he worked as a tutor for three years, providing instruction in the STEM fields to grade school students and preparing them for the SAT 1 and 2, as well as the ACT. Throughout medical school, he remained committed to his teaching endeavors, serving as an advisor to subsequent classes through LMSA. He also engaged in tutoring and mentoring youth in the judicial detention system through Take2Tutoring, while simultaneously supporting individuals with previous incarceration experience in transitioning into the workforce and reducing recidivism through the Transformative Workforce Academy.

In his leisure time, Carlos indulges in various physically demanding activities such as distance running and rock climbing, as well as regularly visiting the gym. Additionally, he finds relaxation in activities such as going to the beach, golfing and watching movies.



**Joseph Silva, MD**  
**Rush Medical College**

Joe grew up in San Diego and studied Public Health at the University of California, Berkeley. During his undergraduate years, he became involved in an organization called The Suitcase Clinic where he participated in advocacy, harm reduction and health initiatives for the Bay Area's unsheltered population. After graduating, he completed an EMT course and an AmeriCorps program working in health clinics based within various homeless shelters throughout New York City. He was inspired by the holistic biopsychosocial approach that the providers in the shelters implemented for their patients, and he realized that he wanted to become a physician for vulnerable and underserved populations.

Before applying to medical school, he worked as a research assistant doing Phase 1 clinical trials for experimental cancer therapies at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center and volunteered/ worked in many locations in Central America and Europe. He attended medical school at Rush Medical College in Chicago and took a particular interest in the intersection of primary care with sports medicine.

He is thrilled to begin reacquainting himself with his hometown of San Diego and could not be happier to be part of a program that truly values public health, global health and community involvement. In his free time, Joe enjoys beach days with his wife Caitlyn, surfing, eating California burritos, good dad jokes, listening to podcasts, being terrible at golf, learning how to rock climb and exploring the city with his awesome intern class.



## Stephanie Williams, MD

**University of California, San Diego School of Medicine**

Stephanie was born and raised in Lancaster, California. She decided to pursue medicine at a young age after watching the TV show Dr. G: Medical Examiner and realizing she loved biology. Her grandparents played a significant role in the development of her sense of dedication to her community, service to the underserved and mentorship, eventually leading her to pursue medicine as a family medicine physician.

Stephanie attended UC San Diego as an undergraduate where she majored in human biology. There she established a chapter of the minority association of pre-medical students, mentored minority middle and high school students and delivered healthcare to residents of Ensenada, Mexico with the Flying Samaritans. Continuing her education at UC San Diego School of Medicine, she was regularly involved in and acted as clinic manager to one of the student run free clinics compelling her to prioritize holistic, patient-centered care in her future practice. Her interests now include geriatrics and palliative care after aiding in end-of-life care for her grandparents during medical school.

In her free time, Stephanie enjoys indoor gardening, drawing, cooking/baking, and relaxing with her husband and two dogs. She can often be found exploring Balboa Park or trying new local restaurants.