



## Office of Faculty Development

### Pathology & Immunology

As one would know if they talked to her for more than 5 minutes, (or during the World Cup), **Dr. Nidia Messias** is originally from Brazil. She grew up in between the highlands and the beach, and loves the touch of sand and sounds of the sea as much as she loves the smell of rain when it touches hot and dry soil.

Daughter of a veterinarian and a pharmacist, since childhood she was familiar to the health care environment. Her maternal grandfather was the chief lab tech in a public facility, in a small town, and hanging out with him in the lab is part of her first memories. Also, as odd as it may sound, as a pharmacist in Brazil, her mother played a function not so far from a clinical pathologist, even owning her own small laboratory, where clinical tests were routinely run. Dr. Messias recalls to today the day she announced her decision to pursue pathology training and how proud her mother was on the choice.

But the choice to go into pathology was not so straightforward. Admitted at medical school in Brazil at the age of 16, Nidia tried a bit of this and that before committing to pathology. Interests varied from OBGyn to public health, and for a long time, nephrology was the top candidate. But at the end, on the very last year on med school, working closely to a very inspiring surgical pathologist, the deal was sealed - pathology won.

A career in pathology was not the only outcome of her medical school years. As it was on that medical campus that she first met her husband, Erick Messias. An aspiring psychiatrist, he was set in doing residency in the USA, and following his initial move, our Dr. Messias - the pathologist one- came to the USA after graduation from med school.

Dr. Messias' first home in America was in Baltimore, Maryland, and she is an alumni of University of Maryland, where she did residency, and Johns Hopkins University, where she did fellowship in renal pathology, - a compromise to the nephrologist she did not become. Being chief resident soon after becoming a new mother gave her quite a perspective in life-work balance and the challenges that women face in choosing career and family at the same time.

After training, Dr. Messias had a variety of experiences. She worked in Brazil for two years soon after graduating, as both surgical pathologist and clinical pathologist, directing the immunology area of one her home town largest labs. Upon returning to US, she joined the Medical College of Georgia, as surgical and renal pathologist, and director of the EM lab. From academia, she was recruited to private practice, and for about 12 years, she specialized in medical renal biopsies. Throughout this time, she was always involved with resident and medical students' education, either through rotations, or in well-defined roles. She was director of the renal pathology fellowship on her previous practice for 6 years and had also directed a visitor program dedicated to residents and pathologists from underdeveloped countries.

Nidia has been at P&I since September 2021, and loves the department, the chance to work with the residents, and her colleagues, both at AP and CP, as well as in other departments, specially nephrology. Back on academia, she feels she is being given the opportunity to work on her other areas of interest aside from clinical work and has tried to be involved as much as possible with our education and diversity initiatives. She is also working in research in collaboration with nephrology and in multi-institutional projects Involving renal pathology. While she wears a double hat as GU and renal pathologist, it is fair to say she has a favorite topic between those two.

On her free time, Nidia is an avid reader, partial to literature, but also dabbling in nonfiction. She enjoys cooking, almost as much as dining out, and she loves the vast range of options on the Saint Louis food scene. She enjoys traveling and is more of an indoor person overall. Her family is the most important part of her life - Erick, and the kids - Ivan and Erin. She helps on raising the animals -Muffin, the cat and Sparkle, the dog, and tries very hard to keep her plants alive and well.

