

IGS MD/PhD Student Matches to Prestigious R38 Research Track & OB/GYN Residency

Kieran Tebben, MD, PhD, loves parasites and OB/GYN. While that might seem like a disconnect, it has led the University of Maryland School of Medicine (UMSOM) graduate to capture the only spot available in the University of Washington's OB/GYN residency in the R38 Research Track, as she learned on Match Day 2026.

Dr. Tebben completed her MD at UMSOM and completed her PhD working in the lab of [David Serre, PhD](#), at the Institute of Genome Sciences (IGS) at UMSOM. The Serre lab focuses on the biology of *Plasmodium* parasites, the causing agent of malaria, and on host-parasite interactions using various genomic assays, including whole genome sequencing, RNA sequencing, scRNA-seq, and spatial transcriptomics.



Kieran Tebben, MD, PhD

“I fell in love with OB/GYN in med school because of continuity of care and the type of work they do and then thought about how to merge my love of parasitology from my work in the Serre lab at IGS with this specialty,” Dr. Tebben said. “I plan to study infectious diseases related to women’s health in the future like *Trichomonas* which is another parasite.”

Trichomoniasis is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) common among women of reproductive age. In 2020 there were 156 million new cases of *Trichomonas vaginalis* (*T. vaginalis*) among people ages 15 to 49. It is associated with vaginal discharge, increased risk of pelvic inflammatory disease, HIV acquisition, and poor birth outcomes.

“When I opened the envelope, I was so excited and proud since only one resident is selected each year for the research track with dedicated post-doc research time built into residency,” Dr. Tebben said. “It is exactly what I wanted to do since the research track is specifically focused on infectious diseases and immunology related to women’s health—especially during pregnancy—which is what my research interests are.”

“This is a impressive achievement, and I could not be happier for Kieran,” said her faculty mentor David Serre, PhD, a scientist at IGS and Professor of Microbiology and Immunology at UMSOM. “This match to the R38 Research Track rewards Kieran’s hard work and amazing productivity during her PhD and will help Kieran establish herself as a highly successful independent physician-scientist.”

Dr. Tebben added, “My favorite part of my time at IGS was how collaborative everyone is especially around technology building. It was so fun to work with the core to ask and answer questions that we literally had to build the methods to study.”

Learning bioinformatics, she said, was one of the best skills she could take away from her time at IGS. “I’m looking forward to building my skills as a clinician and also continuing to use my bioinformatics skills that I learned in IGS to keep learning about parasitology and immunology as a post-doc,” Dr. Tebben said. “Bioinformatics is a great tool to study parasite immunology long-term, so the skills I learned at IGS will be pivotal in helping me continue to build these skills, write grants, and start my own lab one day.” **IGS**