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Summer 2024!

Letter from the Chair

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to summer, my favorite season of the year! The Department of OBGYN & RS is making waves in the summertime, extending the depth of our community partnerships, and accelerating our global outreach. We are proud to be recognized by the new U.S. News & World Report ranking us #12 for OBGYN departments nationwide. Additionally, UC San Diego Health is #1 in San Diego, tied for #1 in California, and in the national top 20 honor roll for hospitals. We are very proud of our teams and their diligence in patient care, unconventional and forward-thinking education, and innovation in research.

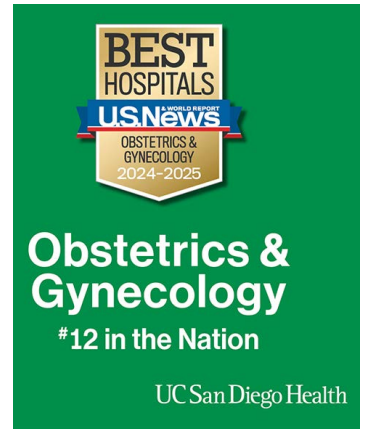
Volume 19 of the *Fimbria* spotlights the lab of clinician and Reproductive Scientist Development Program (RSDP) scholar Lindsey Burnett, MD, PhD, an assistant professor in the Division of Urogynecology and Reconstructive Pelvic Surgery. Our clinical spotlight for this edition is our Maternal Weight and Wellness program led by Yvette LaCoursiere, MD, MPH illuminating a program that has benefited patients in our community. Our Center for OB/GYN Research Innovation (CORI) has officially launched, consists of 5 thematic hubs, and will have the infrastructure necessary to facilitate the departments' groundbreaking research. The Culture & Justice Quorum hosted a webinar UC San Diego Health Birth Community Engagement & Symposia: "Opioid Use During Pregnancy and Lactation: Clinical Care at UCSD and Clinical Pathways" expanding upon vital community connections and educating on quality, equitable care. OB/GYN residents made a tremendous impact demonstrating the latest proven techniques to providers in low- and middle-income countries. In this edition, we congratulate our recent resident and fellow graduates and become acquainted with our interns who have joined the UCSD family.

Visit our [website](#) for more information on our divisions, clinical programs, novel research, and varied educational offerings. Please enjoy this issue, and email us with any feedback to Fimbria@ucsd.edu.



Thank you!

Cynthia Gyamfi-Bannerman, MD, MS | Samuel SC Yen Endowed Chair
*Department Chair, Obstetrics, Gynecology, & Reproductive Sciences and
 Professor, Maternal-Fetal Medicine, Obstetrics and Gynecology*



[Department CV](#) | [Website](#)
[CJQ Values Statement](#)
[Donate to OBGYNRS](#)

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 Department Curriculum Vitae
 Department of OBGYN & RS

FUNDING NEWS

Congrats to recent awardees on funding for impactful research and scientific discovery



Marianna Alperin, MD, MS (PI)

Sponsor
CIRM

Grant
Harnessing the rejuvenating capacity of pregnancy-associated factors to restore aged stem cell function

Award
7/01/2024-6/30/2027
\$1,539,520



Marianna Alperin, MD, MS (PI)

Sponsor
Academic Senate/UCSD

Grant
Strategies to Mitigate Radiation Induced Vaginal Morbidities

Award
2/01/2024-2/28/2025
\$15k

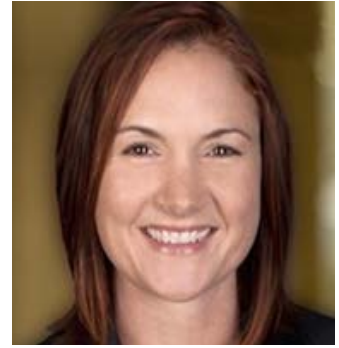


Lindsey Burnett, MD, PhD

Sponsor
ACTRI/UCSD

Grant
Understanding the Connection Between Urinary Metabolites and Lower Urinary Tract Symptoms

Award
6/1/2024-4/30/2025
\$30k



Heidi Cook-Andersen, MD, PhD

Sponsor
American Society for Reproductive Medicine

Grant
ASRM

Award
7/01/2024-6/30/2026
\$50k



Tatyanna Henderson, MD (PI) (2nd yr. Urogyrn Fellow, project mentor: Alperin)

Sponsor
Stein Institute for Research on Aging & Center for Healthy Aging

Grant
Impact of Aging on Pelvic Skeletal Muscles: dissecting the molecular underpinnings utilizing a novel lifespan preclinical model of aged stem cell function

Award
7/01/2024-8/01/2025
\$22k



Mai Hoang, MD

Sponsor
Sanford Center for Empathy and Compassion

Grant
Walking in their Shoes: Fostering Empathy and Compassion through the Obstetric Refugee/ Asylum Seeker Care Navigator Program

Award
7/01/2024-6/30/2025
\$50k



Priya Pantham, PhD

Sponsor
UCSD Senate

Grant
Placental Extracellular Vesicles in a Stem-Cell Based In Vitro Model of Preeclampsia

Award
6/01/2024-5/31/2025
\$15k



Gladys 'Sandy' Ramos, MD

Sponsor
Dexcom

Grant
Evaluation of the Dexcom Continuous Glucose Monitoring System in Pregnancy

Award
5/17/2024-CT
\$188,664



Megan Routzong

Sponsor
NICHD

Grant
Multiscale Experimental and Computational Methods to Characterize Hormonal and Mechanical Contributions to Pregnancy-Induced Remodeling of Skeletal Muscle

Award
8/01/2024-8/01/2029
\$980k

Impact Score: 10

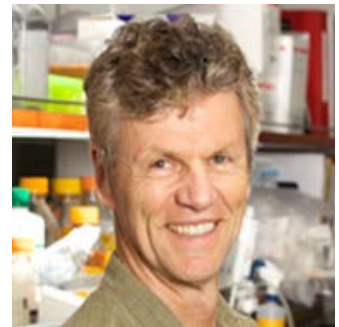


H. Irene Su, MD, MSCE

Sponsor
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society

Grant
Impact of state health insurance mandates on affordability and utilization of fertility preservation in adolescent and young adults with blood cancers

Award
7/01/2024-7/01/2027
\$750+ (final amount pending)



Miles Wilkinson, PhD

Sponsor
NIH

R01: MH137503 Grant
An Ancient Neural Enhancer that has Rapidly Evolved in the Human Lineage

Award
7/01/2024-6/30/2029
\$3,624,677

PUBLICATIONS

Recent Publications of Outstanding Work by Department of OBGYN & RS Members

Clara Gimenez, **Marianna Alperin**, Raffaella De Vita[The Effect of Menopause on Vaginal Tissue Mechanics: A Brief Review](#) | *Journal of Biomechanical Engineering* • JUNE 2024Nicole Rigler, **Sarah Averbach**, Selina Sandoval, Marisa Hildebrand, **Sheila K Mody**[Barriers and Facilitators of Extended Use of the Contraceptive Implant: A Cross-Sectional Survey of Clinicians](#) | *Women's Health Issues* • MAY 2024Nicole Rigler, Gennifer Kully, Marisa C Hildebrand, **Sarah Averbach**, **Sheila K Mody**[Offering extended use of the contraceptive implant via an implementation science framework: a qualitative study of clinicians' perceived barriers and facilitators](#) | *BMC Health Services Research* • JUNE 2024Sangeeta Chatterji, Nicole E Johns, Mohan Ghule, Shahina Begum, **Sarah Averbach**, Madhusudana Battala, Anita Raj[Assessing the impact of CHARM2, a family planning program on gender attitudes, intimate partner violence, reproductive coercion, and marital quality in India](#) | *PLOS Glob Public Health* • MAY 2024**Linda Brubaker**, Harry Horsley, Rajvinder Khasriya, Alan J. Wolfe[Microbiologist in the Clinic: Postmenopausal Woman with Chronic OAB and Positive Urine Culture](#) | *International Urogynecology Journal* • MAY 2024Matthew B Maxwell, Marianne S Hom-Tedla, Jawoon Yi, Shitian Li, Samuel A Rivera, Jingting Yu, Mannix J Burns, Helen M McRae, Braden T Stevenson, **Katherine E Coakley**, Josephine Ho, Kameneff Bojorquez Gastelum, Joshua C Bell, Alexander C Jones, **Ramez N Eskander**, Emily C Dykhuizen, Gerald S Shadel, Susan M Kaech, Diana C Hargreaves[ARID1A suppresses R-loop-mediated STING-type I interferon pathway activation of anti-tumor immunity](#) | *Cell* • JUNE 2024Amber Morey, Martin Ng, Michail Spanos, Piyan Zhang, Tuoye Xu, Willi Cheung, Emeli Chatterjee, Priyanka Gokulnath, Natacha Carnel-Amar, Ana Luisa Soares Chiaretti, Collin Nelson, Jubin George, Michelle Luo, Abhik Chakraborty, Luiza Perucci, Jennifer C Jones, **Peter De Hoff**, Jeffrey L Franklin, Robert L Raffai, Saumya Das, David A Routenberg, John P Nolan, Al Charest, **Louise C Laurent**, Roger P Alexander[The EV antibody database: An interactive database of curated antibodies for extracellular vesicle and nanoparticle research](#) | *Extraell Vesicle* • JUNE 2024Jocelyn Keehner, Shira R Abeles, Christopher A Longhurst, Lucy E Horton, Frank E Myers, Lindsay Riggs Rodriguez, Mohammed Ahmad, Sally Baxter, Aaron Boussina, Kalen Cantrell, Priscilla Cardenas, **Peter De Hoff**, Robert El-Kareh, Jennifer Holland, Daryn Ikeda, Kirk Kurashige, **Louise C Laurent**; SEARCH Alliance; Andrew Lucas 8, David Pride, Shashank Sathe, Allen R Tran, Tetyana I Vasylyeva, Gene Yeo, Rob Knight, Joel O Wertheim, Francesca J Torriani[Integrated Genomic and Social Network Analyses of SARS-CoV-2 Transmission in the Healthcare Setting](#) | *Clinical Infectious Diseases* • MAY 2024Fernando Hernandez, Hector Chavez, Sophie L Goemans, Yeva Kirakosyan, **Carolina Diaz Luevano**, **Dana Canfield**, **Louise C Laurent**, **Marni Jacobs**, **Doug Woelkers**, **Maryam Tarsa**, **Cynthia Gyamfi-Bannerman**, **Kathleen M Fisch**[Aspirin resistance in pregnancy is associated with reduced interleukin-2 \(IL-2\) concentrations in maternal serum: Implications for aspirin prophylaxis for preeclampsia](#) | *Pregnancy Hypertension* • JUNE 2024Britt K Erickson, Brian Slomovitz, Matthew Powell, **Ramez N Eskander**[Top advances of the year: Uterine cancer](#) | *Cancer* • JULY 2024Omonigho Aisagbonhi, Ida Ghlichloo, Duncan S Hong, Andres Roma, Oluwole Fadare, **Ramez Eskander**, **Cheryl Saenz**, **Kathleen M Fisch**, Wei Song[Comprehensive next-generation sequencing identifies novel putative pathogenic or likely pathogenic germline variants in patients with concurrent tubo-ovarian and endometrial serous and endometrioid carcinomas or precursors](#) | *Gynecologic Oncology* • JULY 2024Eulalia A Coutinho, **Lourdes A Esparza**, **Julian Rodriguez**, **Jason Yang**, Danielle Schafer, **Alexander S Kauffman**[Targeted inhibition of kisspeptin neurons reverses hyperandrogenemia and abnormal hyperactive LH secretion in a preclinical mouse model of polycystic ovary syndrome](#) | *Human Reproduction* • JULY 2024Olivia H Chang, **Cecile A Ferrando**, Marie Fidela R Paraiso, Katie Propst[Dynamic Changes of the Genital Hiatus at the Time of Prolapse Surgery: 1-Year Follow-Up Study](#) | *Urogynecology* • JULY 2024Rachel E Schafer, R'ay Fodor, Riley Marlar, Kate K Jensen, Abigail Meyers, Raymond Isakov, **Cecile Ferrando**, Antonio Rampazzo, Bahar Bassiri Gharb[Nonbinary and Transgender Male Patient Preferences for Gender-Affirming Top Surgery](#) | *Annals of Plastic Surgery* • JULY 2024

PUBLICATIONS

Recent Publications of Outstanding Work by Department of OBGYN & RS Members

Frances W Grimstad, Elizabeth R Boskey, Rachael S Clark, **Cecile A Ferrando**
[Management of breakthrough bleeding in transgender and gender diverse individuals on testosterone](#) | *AJOG* • JUNE 2024

Catherine A Matthews, Charles R Rardin, Andrew Sokol, Cheryl Iglesia, Sarah Collins, **Cecile Ferrando**, Harvey Winkler, Kimberly Kenton, Julia Geynisman-Tan, Robert E Gutman

[A randomized trial of retropubic vs single-incision sling among patients undergoing vaginal prolapse repair](#) | *AJOG* • MAY 2024

Lannah L Lua-Mailland, Elizabeth E Stanley, Meng Yao, Marie Fidela R Paraiso, Shannon L Wallace, **Cecile A Ferrando**

[Healthcare Resource Utilization Following Minimally Invasive Sacrocolpopexy: Impact of Concomitant Rectopexy](#) | *International Urogynecology Journal* • MAY 2024

Viviana Casas-Puig, Marie Fidela R Paraiso, Amy J Park, **Cecile A Ferrando**
[Same-day Discharge Following Vaginal Hysterectomy and Native-tissue Apical Repair for Uterovaginal Prolapse: A Prospective Cohort Study](#) | *International Urogynecology Journal* • MAY 2024

Ann M Bruno, Grecio J Sandoval, Brenna L Hughes, William A Grobman, George R Saade, Tracy A Manuck, Monica Longo, Torri D Metz, Hyagriv N Simhan, Dwight J Rouse, Hector Mendez-Figueroa, **Cynthia Gyamfi-Bannerman**, Jennifer L Bailit, Maged M Costantine, Harish M Sehdev, Alan T N Tita;

[Postpartum pharmacologic thromboprophylaxis and complications in a US cohort](#) | *AJOG* • JULY 2024

Cynthia Gyamfi-Bannerman

[From Mentee to Leader-Thoughts From an Immigrant](#) | *Clinical Obstetrics and Gynecology* • JUNE 2024

Cynthia Gyamfi-Bannerman

[Antenatal Late Preterm Steroids: The Evolution of the ALPS Trial](#) | *Clinical Obstetrics and Gynecology* • JUNE 2024

Mark A Clapp, Jessica L Cohen, **Cynthia Gyamfi-Bannerman**, Anjali J Kaimal, Scott A Lorch, Jason D Wright, Alexander Melamed

[Sociodemographic Factors Associated with Antenatal Steroid Use among Late Preterm Births](#) | *AJOG MFM* • JUNE 2024

Mahmoud Abdelwahab, Jessica A de Voest, Torri D Metz, Brenna L Hughes, William A Grobman, George R Saade, Tracy A Manuck, Monica Longo, Hyagriv N Simhan, Dwight J Rouse, Hector Mendez-Figueroa, **Cynthia Gyamfi-Bannerman**, Jennifer L Bailit, Maged M Costantine, Harish M Sehdev, Alan T N Tita;

[Gestational Weight Gain and Neonatal Biometry during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Multicenter Observational Cohort](#) | *American Journal of Perinatology* • JUNE 2024

Cynthia Gyamfi-Bannerman, Rebecca G Clifton, Alan T N Tita, Sean C Blackwell, Monica Longo, Jessica A de Voest, T Michael O'Shea, Sabine Z Bousleiman, Felecia Ortiz, Dwight J Rouse, Torri D Metz, George R Saade, Kara M Rood, Kent D Heyborne, John M Thorp Jr, Geeta K Swamy, William A Grobman, Kelly S Gibson, Yasser Y El-Sayed, George A Macones;

[Neurodevelopmental Outcomes After Late Preterm Antenatal Corticosteroids: The ALPS Follow-Up Study](#) | *JAMA* • MAY 2024

Ann M Bruno, Jerome J Federspiel, Paula McGee, Luis D Pacheco, George R Saade, Samuel Parry, Monica Longo, Alan T N Tita, **Cynthia Gyamfi-Bannerman**, Suneet P Chauhan, Brett D Einerson, Kara Rood, Dwight J Rouse, Jennifer Bailit, William A Grobman, Hyagriv N Simhan;

[Validation of Three Models for Prediction of Blood Transfusion during Cesarean Delivery Admission](#) | *American Journal of Perinatology* • MAY 2024

Erin M Cleary, Douglas A Kniss, Lida M Fette, Brenna L Hughes, George R Saade, Mara J Dinsmoor, Uma M Reddy, **Cynthia Gyamfi-Bannerman**, Michael W Varner, William H Goodnight, Alan T N Tita, Geeta K Swamy, Kent D Heyborne, Edward K Chien, Suneet P Chauhan, Yasser Y El-Sayed, Brian M Casey, Samuel Parry, Hyagriv N Simhan, Peter G Napolitano;

[The Association between Prenatal Nicotine Exposure and Offspring's Hearing Impairment](#) | *American Journal of Perinatology* • MAY 2024

Erin M Louwagie, Serena R Russell, Jacqueline C Hairston, Claire Nottman, Chia-Ling Nhan-Chang, Karin Fuchs, **Cynthia Gyamfi-Bannerman**, Whitney Booker, Maria Andrikopoulou, Alexander Friedman, Noelia Zork, Ronald Wapner, Joy Vink, Mirella Mourad, Helen M Feltovich, Michael D House, Kristin M Myers

[Uterus and cervix anatomical changes and cervix stiffness evolution throughout pregnancy](#) | *BioRxiv* • MAY 2024

Grecio J Sandoval, Torri D Metz, William A Grobman, Tracy A Manuck, Brenna L Hughes, George R Saade, Monica Longo, Hyagriv N Simhan, Dwight J Rouse, Hector Mendez-Figueroa, **Cynthia Gyamfi-Bannerman**, Angela C Ranzini, Maged M Costantine, Harish M Sehdev, Alan T N Tita;

[Prediction of COVID-19 Severity at Delivery after Asymptomatic or Mild COVID-19 during Pregnancy](#) | *American Journal of Perinatology* • MAY 2024

Tatyanna Henderson, Karen L Christman, Marianna Alperin

[Regenerative Medicine in Urogynecology: Where We Are and Where We Want to Be](#) | *Urogynecology* • MAY 2024

Nicole H Goldhaber, Marni B Jacobs, **Louise C Laurent**, Rob Knight, Wenhong Zhu, Dean Pham, Allen Tran, Sandip P Patel, Michael Hogarth, Christopher A Longhurst

[Integrating clinical research into electronic health record workflows to support a learning health system](#) | *JAMIA Open* • MAY 2024

Koenig, Jenny B. MD, PhD; Burnett, Lindsey A. PhD, MD

[Understanding the Role of Obesity and Metabolism in Pelvic Floor Disorders](#) | *Urogynecology* • MAY 2024

Scott J, Glavy J, Deafenbaugh B, Kent W, **LaCoursiere Y**, Schwartz A, Lutgendorf M, Wheatley B.

[Do all patients with history of pelvic ring injuries need a cesarean section? - A survey of orthopaedic and obstetric providers](#) | *Journal of Gynecology Obstetrics and Human Reproduction* • JUNE 2024

Emily S Lukacz, Cynthia S Fok, MacKenzie Bryant, Dulce P Rodriguez-Ponciano, Melanie R Meister, Margaret G Mueller, Cora E Lewis, Jerry L Lowder, Ariana L Smith, Ann Stapleton, Amy Ayala, Ratna Pakpahan, Sarah Hortsch, Daniel McDonald, Sara Putnam, Kyle Rudser, Se Jin Song, Rob Knight, **Linda Brubaker**; PLUS Research Consortium

[Feasibility of Home Collection for Urogenital Microbiome Samples](#) | *Urogynecology* • JULY 2024

PUBLICATIONS

Recent Publications of Outstanding Work by Department of OBGYN & RS Members

Siobhan Sutcliffe, Chloe Falke, Cynthia S Fok, James W Griffith, Bernard L Harlow, Kimberly A Kenton, Cora E Lewis, Lisa Kane Low, Jerry L Lowder, **Emily S Lukacz**, Alayne D Markland, Gerald McGwin, Melanie R Meister, Elizabeth R Mueller, Diane K Newman, Ratna Pakpahan, Leslie M Rickey, Todd Rockwood, Melissa A Simon, Abigail R Smith, Kyle D Rudser, Ariana L Smith

[Lower Urinary Tract Symptoms in US Women: Contemporary Prevalence Estimates from the RISE FOR HEALTH Study](#) | *The Journal of Urology* • JULY 2024

Bernard L Harlow, Gerald McGwin Jr, Siobhan Sutcliffe, Colleen M Fitzgerald, Jerry L Lowder, Diane K Newman, Melanie Meister, Deepa R Camenga, Ann Stapleton, Vanika Chary, **Emily S Lukacz**

[Genital Pain and the Spectrum of Bladder-Related Symptoms: Findings from the Prevention of Lower Urinary Tract Symptoms Research Consortium RISE FOR HEALTH Study, USA](#) | *International Urogynecology Journal* • JULY 2024

Michael T. McHale, MD

[New Insights in Endometriosis Subtypes and Ovarian Cancer Risk](#) | *JAMA* • JULY 2024

Suha J Patel, Samantha Truong, Samantha DeAndrade, Julianne Jacober, Matthew Medina, Khady Diouf, **Audra Meadows**, Nawal Nour, Julianna Schantz-Dunn

[Respectful Maternity Care in the United States-Characterizing Inequities Experienced by Birthing People](#) | *Maternal and Child Health Journal* • JULY 2024

Hafsatou Diop, Eugene R Declercq, Chia-Ling Liu, Xiaohui Cui, Ndidia-maka Amutah-Onukagha, **Audra R Meadows**, Howard J Cabral

[Leveraging a Longitudinally Linked Dataset to Assess Recurrence of Severe Maternal Morbidity](#) | *Women's Health Issues* • JULY 2024

David D Schlaepfer, Marjaana Ojalill, Dwayne G Stupack

[Focal adhesion kinase signaling – tumor vulnerabilities and clinical opportunities](#) | *Journal of Cell Science* • JULY 2024

Elijah N Holland, Marc A Fernández-Yagüe, Dennis W Zhou, Eric B O'Neill, Ayanna U Woodfolk, Ana Mora-Boza, Jianping Fu, **David D Schlaepfer**, Andrés J García

[FAK, vinculin, and talin control mechanosensitive YAP nuclear localization](#) | *Biomaterials* • JULY 2024

Kellie Schueler, Marni Jacobs, Sarah Averbach, Antoinette Marengo, Sheila K Mody

[Understanding medication abortion ineligibility due to gestational age among a cohort of patients in Southern California](#) | *Contraception* • MAY 2024

Marielle E Meurice, **Sheila K Mody**, Jesse Nodora, Antoinette Marengo, **Sarah Averbach**

[Social determinants of choosing telemedicine for contraceptive care: A retrospective cohort study](#) | *Contraception* • JUNE 2024

Caryn Dutton, **Sheila K Mody**, Siripanth Nippita, Laura E Dodge, Trudy Pang, Page B Pennell, Anne Davis

[Depot medroxyprogesterone acetate concentrations in patients with and without the use of antiseizure medications](#) | *Contraception* • JUNE 2024

Bella Ribeiro de Oliveira, Sarah Alsamman, Maya Pai, **Sheila K Mody**

["My IUD is expiring": A national U.S. mystery client study regarding use of the LNG 52-mg IUD for pregnancy prevention beyond 5 years after multiple FDA extensions](#) | *Contraception* • MAY 2024

Sally A D Romero, Lauren Au, Ricardo E Flores-Ortega, Teresa Helsten, Helen Palomino, Bonnie N Kaiser, Meagan Echevarria, Kara Lukas, Kendall Freeman, Jingjing Zou, Paula Aristizabal, Saro Armenian, **H Irene Su**

[Let's TOC Fertility: A stepped wedge cluster randomized controlled trial of the Telehealth Oncofertility Care \(TOC\) intervention in children, adolescent and young adult cancer survivors](#) | *Contemporary Clinical Trials* • JUNE 2024

Laura Sisk-Hackworth, Shayan R Akhavan, Dennis D Krutkin, Scott T Kelley, **Varykina G Thackray**

[Genetic hypogonadal \(Gnrh1 hpg\) mouse model uncovers influence of reproductive axis on maturation of the gut microbiome during puberty](#) | *BioRxiv* • JULY 2024

Beth Zhou, Brian Kwan, Milli J Desai, Vinit Nalawade, Joe Henk, Nina Viravalli, **James D Murphy**, Paul C Nathan, Kathryn J Ruddy, Ksenya Shliakhtsitsava, **H Irene Su, Brian W Whitcomb**

[Genetic hypogonadal \(Gnrh1 hpg\) mouse model uncovers influence of reproductive axis on maturation of the gut Association of platinum-based chemotherapy with live birth and infertility in female survivors of adolescent and young adult cancer](#) | *Fertility and Sterility* • JUNE 2024

NEWSBYTES

Recent News Featuring Department of OBGYN & RS



News featuring **Cynthia Gyamfi-Bannerman, MD, MS**

[What Do We Actually Know About Exercise And Pregnancy?](#) | *Romper* • JULY 2024

[SMFM Statement on Supreme Court Decision to Uphold Access to Medication Abortion](#) | *SMFM Press* • JUNE 2024

Podcast featuring **Audra Meadows, MD, MPH**

[Why Maternal Health Equity is Maternal Health Quality: A Tale of Priorities, Metrics, and Action](#) | *ACOG* • JUNE 2024

News featuring **H. Irene Su, MD, MSCE**

[Irene Su receives award for a novel study on fertility preservation for young cancer patients](#) | *UCSD Today* • JULY 2024

News featuring **Varykina Thackray, PhD**

[New data unraveling role of the gut microbiome in PCOS](#) | *Healio* • JUNE 2024

Media Relations Contact: [Jeanna Vazquez](#)

LABORATORY IN THE SPOTLIGHT *Featuring OBGYN & RS Groundbreaking Research Endeavors*

The showstopper lab of Lindsey Burnett, MD, PhD provides a lens into scientific discovery meets mechanistic understanding of integrated care for the pelvic floor, bladder health, and birth injury

Background Story of a Savant Scientist, Biologist, and Urogynecologist

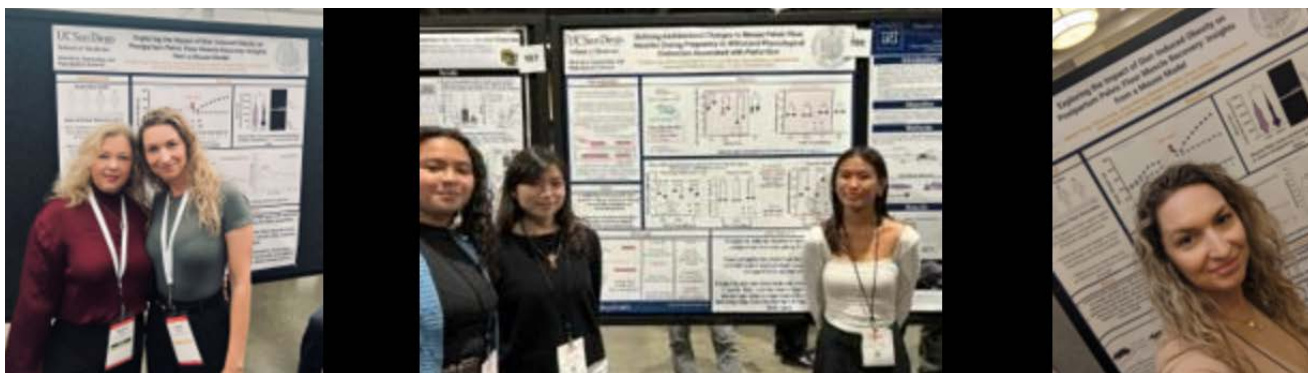
Translational research is in the DNA of molecular and cellular biologist Lindsey Burnett, MD, PhD. Described by colleagues as a "rising and shining star", Dr. Burnett is an all-around clinician, researcher, Assistant Professor of Ob/Gyn and Reproductive Sciences in the Division of Urogynecology and Reconstructive Pelvic Surgery, and Director of the Pelvic Health After Birth Clinic focused on postpartum pelvic health. Best in class mentors during residency and fellowship at UC San Diego/Kaiser fueled her curiosity and ingenuity for urogynecology. Her lab combines insight from her fellowship work exploring the urinary microbiome and recurrent UTI with Linda Brubaker, MD and pelvic floor muscle adaptations and response to biomaterials with Marianna Alperin, MD, MS.



In the lab: Lindsey Burnett, MD, PhD, Urogynecology and Reconstructive Pelvic Surgery

From Lab Discoveries to Clinical Phoenixes

An extraordinary accomplishment in discovering/characterizing the first vertebrate sperm chemoattractant ALLURIN in amphibians and implications for mammalian sperm physiology gave way to a new frontier postdoc fellowship in physiology and biophysics with Dr. Burnett's breakthrough find of a testicular-specific adenosine receptor – also expressed in humans. A grant-funded pirouette from "bench to bedside" in medical school and P.I. Dr. Burnett discovered regulation of EMMPRIN release from human uterine epithelial cells all while teaching Cell & Tissue Biology and Pathology to peers and co-directing a free well-woman clinic. Dr. Burnett is a Reproductive Scientist Development Program (RSDP) Scholar, and her life-improving lab work has been funded by IUGA, ACTRI Pilot, UCSD Senate, Center for Perinatal Discovery, Reproductive Sciences Seed, and Center for Empathy grants.



From left: Dr. Burnett and Dr. Alperin collaborating at the Society for Reproductive Investigation, Burnett Lab Members Ella Rust, Tiffany Aung, and Katelyn Fong at the American Physiological Society, and Dr. Burnett at the AAP/ASCI/APSA Joint Meeting

LABORATORY IN THE SPOTLIGHT *Featuring OBGYN & RS Groundbreaking Research Endeavors*

MEET THE BURNETT LAB TEAM MEMBERS



Lindsey Burnett, MD, PHD
Burnett Lab

Katelyn Fong
Graduate Student
Researcher

Tiffany Aung
Staff Research Associate

Ella Rust
Undergraduate Student
Researcher, Howell
Foundation Scholar

Maria Pawlowski
Undergraduate Student
Researcher

Devika Rao
Undergraduate Student
Researcher



Aava Saffarina
Undergraduate Student
Researcher

Fatima Ansari
Undergraduate Student
Researcher

Parnaz Borooun
Post Bac Student
Researcher

Kamilla Iskakova
Post Bac Student
Researcher

Emmanuel Elijah
Medical Student

Kelly Weldon
MD/PhD Student



Jennie Koenig, MD, PhD
OBGYN&RS Resident

Connor BeeBout, MD/PhD
Internal Medicine
Resident

Dana Canfield
MFM Fellow

Omar Mesina, MD
OBGYN & RS Generalist
Faculty

Rachel Pacyna
OBGYN&RS Resident

Burnett Lab Goals and Active Research

"The goal in my lab is to apply molecular and cellular biology approaches to questions in urogynecology and advance molecular insights into pelvic floor disorders through translational Research."

– L. Burnett, MD, PhD

A Fortitude to Advance Innovation → Collaboration → Translation

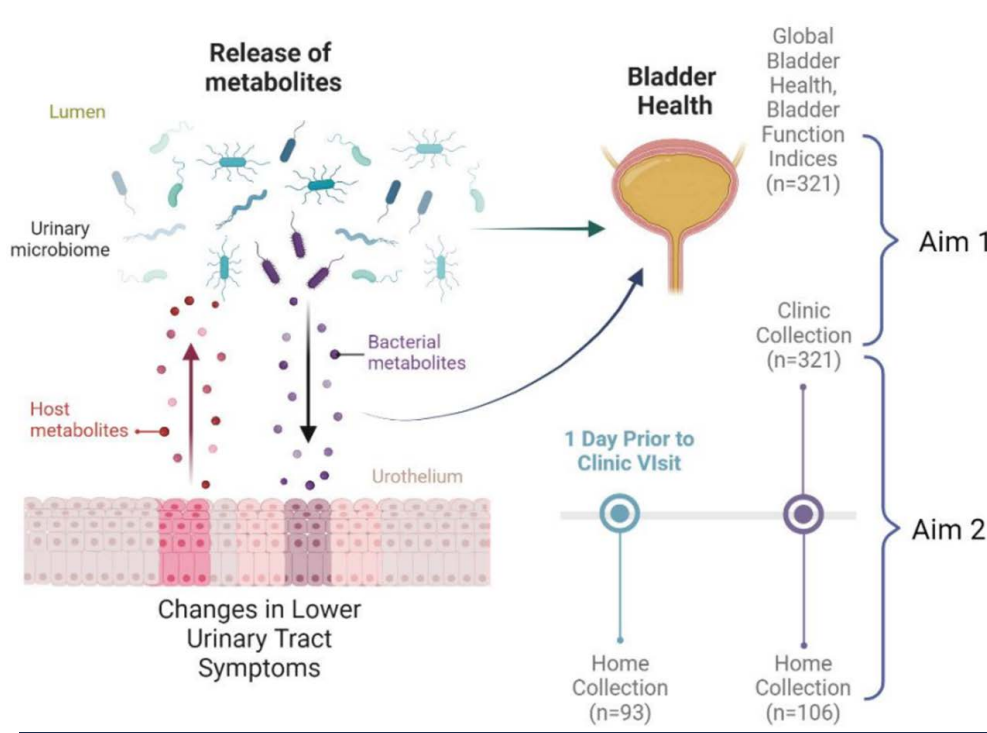
An Dr. Burnett's Lab is ablaze clinically advancing research towards their service-oriented goals to achieve higher quality of life within the urogynecology care spectrum. A strong pride in mentoring student scientists is paramount to the lab's lightning success. Significant leaps forward and discoveries unveiled:

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Understanding the Role of Host Microbe Interaction in Bladder Health and Disease</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examining the interplay between host and microbes using metabolomic and bioinformatic approaches • Understanding the role of host metabolism in UTI pathogenesis • Clinical trials for novel UTI therapies with an emphasis on phage therapeutics |
| <p>Understanding the Role of Metabolism in Pelvic Floor Muscle Physiology during Pregnancy and Postpartum</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the role of metabolism in susceptibility and recovery from birth injury • Determining the impact of pregnancy and diet on skeletal muscle glucose handling during pregnancy and postpartum |
| <p>Understanding the Role of Social Support Solo vs. Partnered in Recovery from Birth Injury</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional state impacts physiology with functional and mental outcomes improving with perceived social support when measured • Understanding the role of social support in physical and mental health of mothers and offspring |

LABORATORY IN THE SPOTLIGHT Featuring OBGYN & RS Groundbreaking Research Endeavors

“Pelvic Organ Prolapse, Urinary and Fecal Incontinence, and Recurrent Urinary Tract Infection conditions currently affect ~30% of women and clinical studies show Bowel and Bladder Incontinence are Perceived as worse than death”

– Lindsey Burnett, MD, PhD



Current Excursions

Current directive flow of detailed excursions into the scientific unknown is building upon the Burnett lab's collaborative research findings to further studies: "Use of statistical shape modeling to enhance the fluoroscopic evaluation of the bladder" and "One size does not fit all: variability in urinary symptoms and microbial communities." Deep dives are in-the-works to investigate the immune modulation of pelvic floor muscle recovery after birth injury, how diet-induced obesity alters immune environment in pregnancy, and the social transfer of pain.

Fig 1: Burnett Lab: Urinary Metabolome Reflected in Bladder Health

Combining insights across UCSD divisions, departments, and external partners is answering the call for new in-clinic biology-backed approaches to bladder health and pelvic floor disorders. Thank you, Dr. Burnett Lab for your progress towards scientific innovation which is improving lives, fulfilling need, and springing hope. To explore more visit: [Burnett Lab](#) and [Pelvic Health After Birth Program](#).

CLINICAL INNOVATIONS

OBGYN & RS State-of-the-Art Programs Advance Patient Care

Maternal Weight and Wellness Program

A healthy body weight is one prominent cornerstone for optimal health because it is an undeniable determinant for measuring overall well-being particularly during the crucial stages of pregnancy and beyond. Director of the Maternal Weight and Wellness Program at UC San Diego Health, Vice Chair of Clinical Affairs for the Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology, and Reproductive Sciences, and year-on-year 5-star clinician from the hospitalist division, [Yvette LaCoursiere, MD, MPH](#), provides specialized clinical care for pregnant patients and preconception planners with a higher than “healthy” body mass index (BMI) of 40+ dependent on preexisting conditions. Dr. LaCoursiere has been compassionately counseling and curating comprehensive treatments to lessen substantial risks to mother and baby associated with weight gain, prior weight loss operations affecting the digestive system (metabolic and bariatric surgery), and excess sugars in the blood (diabetes).



Yvette LaCoursiere, MD, MPH

Comprehensive Care for a Healthy Lifestyle

As the baby develops during pregnancy, excess weight challenges can be approached with a carefully managed plan coupled with electronic fetal imaging and monitoring for early diagnosis. For many, serious conditions are at stake of developing such as gestational diabetes, preeclampsia, high blood pressure/cardiovascular disease, depression or mood disorders, and infant complications. Given the commonality of high BMI values, Dr. LaCoursiere initiates screening and consultation to identify risks and introduce beneficial interventions from coordinated care with subspecialists to detailed nutritional support and postpartum active wellness planning. Catching concerns early can prevent unplanned cesarean deliveries, preterm birth, and subsequent postpartum difficulties, including breastfeeding problems and congenital defects. At its nucleus, the [Maternal Weight and Wellness Program](#) promotes a healthy lifestyle formula of diet and physical exercise which can have a coetaneous positive impact on curtailing clinical perinatal through to postpartum depression and anxiety.

Prenatal and Postpartum Perspective on Obesity

Dr. LaCoursiere notes, “over the last year, the Maternal Weight and Wellness Program at UC San Diego has treated on average 500+ visits per year.”

She explains how this metric reveals the commonality of patients with preconceptional BMI over 40 and also patients with BMI over 40 seeking consult while undergoing assisted reproductive technologies – this includes any BMI patients who have had bariatric procedures.



“Counseling patients on pregnancy and contraception while recently utilizing the novel class of injectable weight loss medications” is one of the more recent challenges identified by Dr. LaCoursiere. She offers additional clinical insight into approaching obesity obstacles:

“I recognize that anthropometric measures are only a part of the issue. Caring for women who are often marginalized by the medical community often requires a focus on mental health and wellness not weight. Additionally applying evidence-based strategies has helped decrease risk to our patients at UCSD. Our first cohort in the program had a marked improvement in Cesarean delivery rates. The balance between focusing on well being and evidence based practices is why we are successful. Everyone one deserves a healthy pregnancy. I also focus on challenging Cesareans given the complexities that an elevated BMI brings.” – Yvette LaCoursiere, MD, MPH

Discover more insights from Dr. LaCoursiere’s publications: [Behavioral Counseling Interventions for Healthy Weight During Pregnancy: An Ambitious Endeavor](#) and [Incidence of Abnormal Glucose Values After Delivery in Women With Gestational Diabetes Mellitus](#).

Nurturing patients through their pregnancy journey may help lower risk of childbirth complications and improve the overall physical and emotional pregnancy experience. Thank you, Dr. LaCoursiere, for your incredible work and preventative efforts to optimize the long-term health and wellness of mothers and babies by overseeing their [maternal weight and wellness programming](#).

IMPROVING WOMEN'S HEALTH VIA TEAM SCIENCE



Co-Directors of WHISDEM: Marianna Alperin, MD, MS (left) and Brian Aguado, PhD (right)

Women's Health Innovations through Scientific Development, Engineering, and Medicine

Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology & Reproductive Sciences Professor and Vice Chair of Translational Research, Marianna Alperin, MD, MS joined forces with Brian Aguado, PhD, Assistant Professor of the Shu Chien-Gene Lay Department of Bioengineering, to launch a new Institute of Engineering in Medicine Center for Women's Health Innovations through Scientific Development, Engineering, and Medicine (WHISDEM). Drs. Alperin and Aguado serve as Co-Directors of WHISDEM and are on a mission to "unite UC San Diego engineers, basic scientists, and health care providers to spark cross-university, multidisciplinary research opportunities centered around women's health."

In conjunction with educating faculty and trainees on gender and sex-based health and scientific disparities WHISDEM Center scouts diagnostic and therapeutic mechanisms through research to advance technology viable for the commercial market. To discover future scientific breakthroughs, outreach to collaborate across academia, industry, and community is a core pillar of WHISDEM's endeavor to improve women's health.

"The WHISDEM Center will serve as a coalition comprised of researchers and health care providers across various disciplines with a shared interest in women's health to advance equitable research platform that improves the health outcomes of women and ensures an adequate research workforce in these areas. This is an opportunity to correct the scientific and clinical deficits in conditions that are unique or occur predominantly in women, which have been historically understudied and underfunded." – Marianna Alperin, MD, MS

CULTURE & JUSTICE

OBGYN & RS Culture & Justice Quorum (CJQ) Spearheads Inclusive Excellence

Advancing Equity in Maternal Care with New Initiative

This summer, our Culture and Justice Quorum (CJQ) is advancing the California Maternal Quality Care Collaborative (CMQCC) Equity Action Plan and Supporting Vaginal Birth Patient Safety Bundle. This Learning Initiative and Toolkit to Support Vaginal Birth and Reduce Primary Cesareans incorporates evidence and a birth equity framework. The CMQCC's community-based birth care blueprint uses data from the maternal data center to highlight the vital role of midwifery care and doula support within hospital settings. The initiative also promotes a team-based care model that emphasizes patient-centered care and shared decision-making.

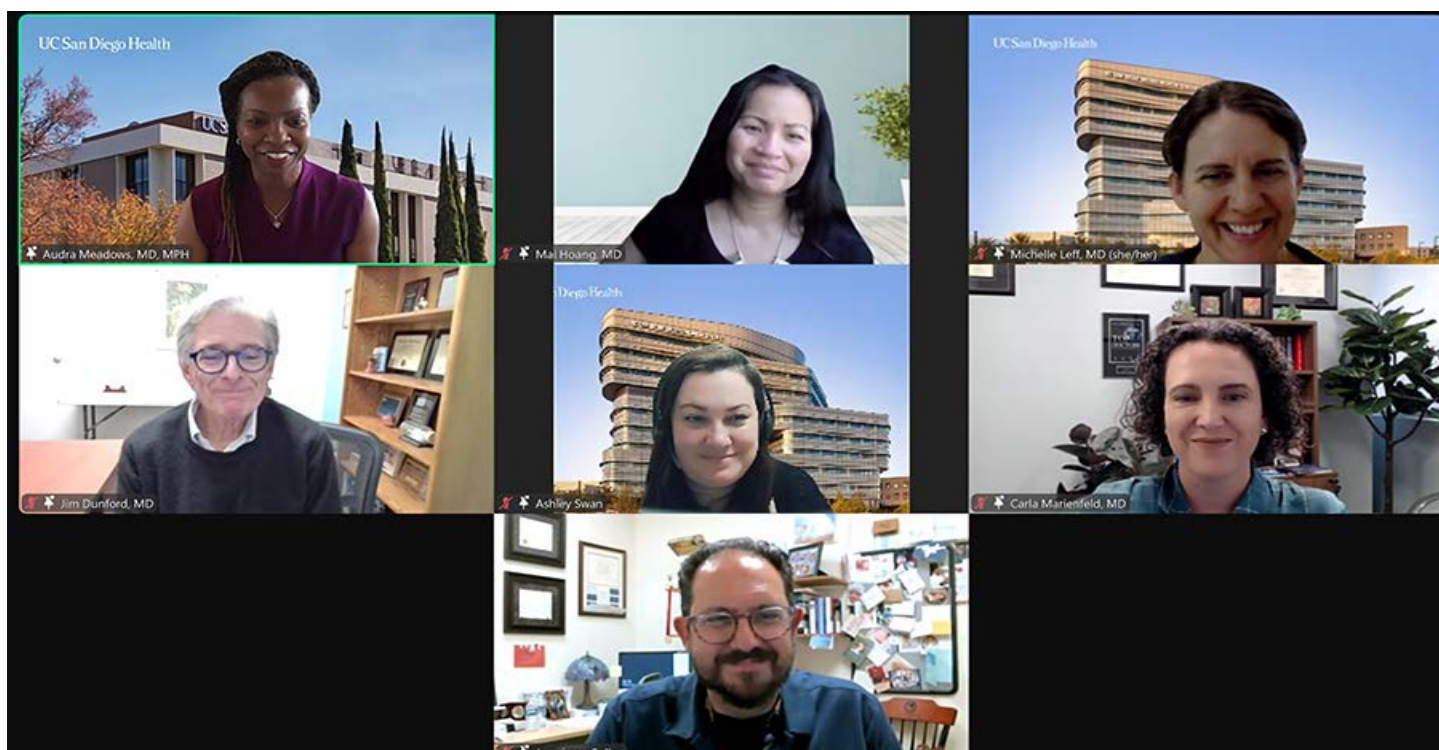
CULTURE & JUSTICE

OBGYN & RS Culture & Justice Quorum (CJQ) Spearheads Inclusive Excellence

Dr. Audra Meadows, MD, MPH, Vice Chair of Culture & Justice, leads this CMQCC Task Force, comprising department administrators, physicians, nurses, midwives, doulas, quality leads, and patient advocates. Guided by the CMQCC Equity Action Plan, this task force is dedicated to promoting maternal care through a systems approach that fosters a culture of equity. The Equity Action Plan serves as the guiding framework for implementing the Vaginal Birth Patient Safety Bundle, focusing on educating clinical providers on safe practices for reducing cesarean deliveries and managing abnormal labor progression in low-risk pregnancies. A key strategy is to support vaginal births for first-time deliveries without complicating fetal factors, aiming to reduce unnecessary cesareans. This comprehensive approach also emphasizes identifying racial and socioeconomic disparities and ensuring inclusive, excellent care.

UC San Diego Health Culture and Justice Quorum Community Engagement Symposium

The Department of OBGYN & RS Culture and Justice Quorum, led by Dr. Audra Meadows, MD, MPH, hosted an outstanding quarterly community event focused on fostering community partnerships and education. The event, "Opioid Use During Pregnancy and Lactation: Clinical Care at UCSD and Community Pathways," held on July 23, 2024, was a live webinar featuring expert insights on creating a supportive healthcare environment for those with opioid use during pregnancy and postpartum. The program included segments such as "Setting the Stage – Addiction, SUD, OUD" by Carla Marienfeld, clinical care pathways like "Outpatient Care in Pregnancy" with Dr. Jerry Ballas, "Inpatient Care & Management" with Dr. Mai Hoang, and "Neonatal Opioid Withdrawal" with Dr. Michelle Leff. The community care linkages segment featured the McAlister Institute's countywide services and programs, presented by Dr. James Dunford, Medical Director and Professor Emeritus of Emergency Medicine at UCSD, and the Healthy Brain and Child Development (HBCD) Study at UCSD, presented by Ashley Swan, Clinical Research Supervisor. The learning objectives provided a comprehensive roadmap to shared decision-making for opioid care at UCSD and community support resources. The key takeaway was to help mothers and babies achieve long-term health by reducing the impact of opioid use through equitable care management, emphasizing that substance use is a disease and should be treated without implicit bias.



Symposium speakers and panelists: top row from left: Audra Meadows, MD, MPH, Mai Hoang, MD, and Michelle Leff, MD; center from left: James Dunford, MD, Ashley Swan, and Carla Marienfeld, MD; bottom row: Jerry Ballas, MD

CULTURE & JUSTICE

OBGYN & RS Culture & Justice Quorum (CJQ) Spearheads Inclusive Excellence

OB Refugee & Asylee Case Navigation Program Update

UC San Diego Health's [OB Refugee and Asylee Case Navigation Program](#) connects community members in need with vital resources and support from perinatal services to lactation and postpartum care. New developments for the program are improved language translation services to provide the highest quality of care mindful of cultural sensitivities, beliefs, attitudes, values, and practices. In addition, visiting Grand Rounds speakers come to OBGYN & RS to educate our clinicians, fellows, and residents on delivering birthing care that is appropriately responsive, inclusive, and committed to the well-being of our diverse patients and especially those from the OB Refugee & Asylee Case program where many have suffered unimaginable trauma, poverty, family separation, health setbacks, and difficult transitions. OBGYN & RS is committed to understanding cultural differences and feelings amongst our patients and learning how to communicate effectively at a comfort level with goals to optimize health outcomes for mothers and infants. On that note, the [North American Refugee Health Conference](#) is quickly approaching in August and UCSD is looking forward to growing opportunities to connect with other providers and share resources. This ongoing stronghold effort from our OB Refugee & Asylee Case management team has been absolutely phenomenal with an approach tailored to recognizing and meeting the unique individual needs of patients during the fragile prenatal/postpartum period.

At Your Cervix



At Your Cervix 2024-2025 Resident leads:

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Lead: Rafa Ifthikhar, MD

Advocacy Lead: Jess Rivas, MD

Community Engagement and Service Lead: Milli Desai, MD and Allison Rajan, MD

This issue of Fimbria's At Your Cervix highlights residents' global reach

Interdisciplinary Global Health Pathway

The Interdisciplinary Global Health Pathway currently includes several residents from the Departments of Emergency Medicine, Internal Medicine, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Anesthesia, and Surgery. The program was founded by a group of interdisciplinary faculty including Dr. Averbach, who is our departmental faculty lead.

Residents who choose to participate in the pathway complete simulations in global health emergencies, journal clubs on issues pertaining to global health care delivery, an international elective with a scholarly activity, and a UN online travel medicine and ethics course. Residents who complete all the requirements receive a certificate of completion at graduation.

Prior simulations have included hands-on training for procedures such as lumbar punctures, chest tubes, and interosseous access. Discussions have been on infectious diseases such as cholera and management of hydration in low-resource settings. A topic of discussion at a previous journal club included the current migrant border health crisis.

Current residents in this pathway include Rafa Ifthikhar, Milli Desai, and recent graduate Omar Mesina.

CULTURE & JUSTICE

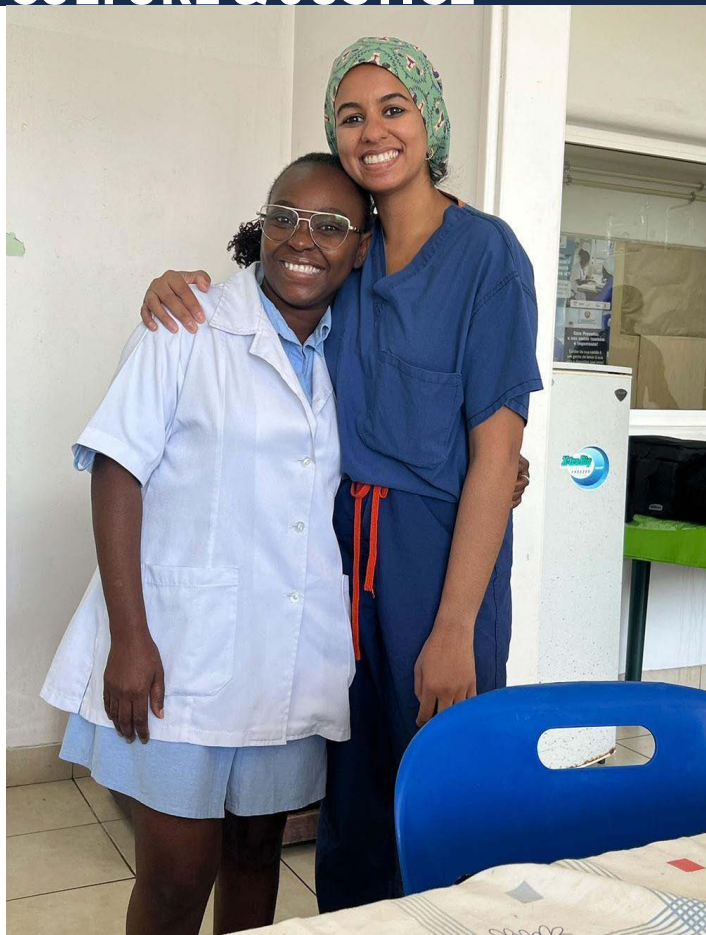
OBGYN & RS Culture & Justice Quorum (CJQ) Spearheads Inclusive Excellence



Rafa Iftikhhar, MD in her clinical rotation at Maputo General Hospital in Mozambique



Milli Desai, MD in Pune, India

CULTURE & JUSTICE*OBGYN & RS Culture & Justice Quorum (CJQ) Spearheads Inclusive Excellence**Rafa Ifthikhar, MD in Mozambique**Omar Mesina, MD in Tijuana, Mexico***Global Rotations**

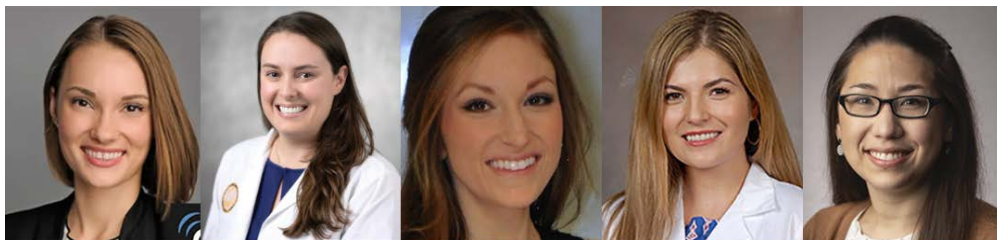
Dr. Ifthikhar traveled to Mozambique for a five week clinical rotation under the mentorship of Dr. Sierra Washington. She worked at Maputo General Hospital, a large public hospital in the capital city of Mozambique, providing direct patient care in the labor ward, gynecology emergency unit, and in the operating room. During her time abroad she saw and experienced low resource and high acuity obstetrics and gynecology care. For example, she cared for several patients with eclampsia, term intrauterine fetal demises, gained experience in breech deliveries, and assisted on open surgeries for ruptured ectopic pregnancies. Additionally, she supported the local residents through teaching interns how to do their first cesarean section, discussing management plans for gynecology patients, and being part of a resident research project on understanding patient outcomes associated with intended mode of delivery for patients with eclampsia.

Dr. Desai traveled to rural Pune, India to work on an NIH funded study led by Dr. Averbach, which aims to increase access to postpartum contraception by linking family planning and infant vaccination services. She visited multiple Primary Health Centres which are public health institutions and clinics in rural areas, conducting preventive care and performing deliveries. She conducted hands-on training for post-placental IUD placement for providers and worked on a secondary analysis of research data.

Dr. Mesina worked at the Prevencasa Clinic in Tijuana, Mexico with director Dr. Alex Gonzalez Montoya. He helped care for a variety of patients and conditions, including a refugee patient with newly diagnosis mo-di twins, a patient with abnormal uterine bleeding, diagnosing fibroids in clinic, sex workers seeking STI treatment, and teaching the Mexican intern physicians about contraception and cervical cancer screening. Please visit our [CJQ website](#) to discover more about our Culture and Justice Quorum.

CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATING FELLOWS

Congratulations and wishes for a bright future! See where our fellows are headed...



| | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| Danielle Vachon, MD Complex Family Planning UC San Diego Health | Kelsey Pinson, MD Maternal-Fetal Medicine Legacy Health in Portland, Oregon | Julie Suyama, MD, PhD Urogynecology & Reconstructive Pelvic Surgery Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, VA | Iona Bondre, MD, MPH Gynecologic Oncology University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston | Renee Rivas, MD, PhD Reproductive Endocrinology & Infertility Aspire Fertility, Dallas, TX |
|--|--|---|---|---|

CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATING RESIDENTS

Congratulations and cheers to much success ahead! See where our residents are going...



| | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|---|--|
| Hanna Burch Generalist, Kaiser Walnut Creek-Antioch | Ammar Joudeh Academic Generalist at UCSF | Omar Mesina Generalist at UC San Diego Health, planning a urogyn fellowship | Isabella Qendro Generalist at UC San Diego Health | Hayley Schultz Generalist of Kaiser Daly City | Renee Sullender MIGS Fellowship at University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill |
|---|--|---|---|---|--|

NEW RESIDENT BIOS

Welcome to UC San Diego Health!



Alexandria Gonzalez, MD

Hometown: Mission, Texas

Undergraduate School: The University of Texas at Austin

Medical School: University of Texas Rio Grande Valley School of Medicine

Career Interests: Medical education, minimally invasive gynecologic surgery, community outreach

"Originally from the Rio Grande Valley in South Texas, Alexandria developed a strong interest in addressing healthcare disparities and advocating for equitable access to care from an early age. While attending the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley School of Medicine, she actively participated in various councils and committees, including the University of Texas System Student Advisory Council, student government, and the independent student analysis committee. Throughout her medical education, Alexandria also discovered a passion for medical education and served as an academic tutor, ultimately receiving recognition with the Barondess Excellence in Clinical Skill Award. As the first member of her family to pursue a doctoral degree, she recognized the need for mentorship for first-generation students and has since taken on mentoring roles for local undergraduate pre-medical students. She looks forward to continuing this mentorship as she transitions to residency. Outside of her academic pursuits, Alexandria enjoys maintaining an active lifestyle through running and strength training, exploring new destinations through travel, and experimenting with cooking new recipes."

NEW RESIDENT BIOS

Welcome to UC San Diego Health!

**Leilani Gutierrez-Palominos, MD****Hometown:** Fresno, California**Undergraduate School:** UC Berkeley**Medical School:** UC Los Angeles David Geffen School of Medicine**Career Interests:** Broad-spectrum OB/GYN care; Underserved medicine; Immigrant health; Global Health

"Hello! My name is Leilani and I was born in Mexico and grew up in Fresno, California. I attended UC Berkeley for undergrad (go bears!). I will be graduating from the UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine (PRIME-LA) with an MD/MPH. I am excited to start OB/GYN residency at UCSD! My interests include broad-spectrum OB/GYN care, underserved medicine, immigrant health, and global health. Outside of medicine, I love all outdoor activities especially swimming, surfing, hiking, and biking. I also enjoy making travel plans and dancing with friends!"

**Isabel Katlaps, MD****Hometown:** Portland, Oregon**Undergraduate School:** Oregon State University**Medical School:** Oregon Health & Science University**Career Interests:** Pediatric and adolescent gynecology, Maternal Fetal Medicine

"Izzy Katlaps was born and raised in Portland, Oregon. She attended Oregon State University for undergrad followed by Oregon Health & Science University for medical school. Throughout her academic journey, Izzy demonstrated a keen interest in women's health and pursued diverse experiences to enrich her understanding of obstetrics and gynecology. Looking ahead, Izzy's career interests are particularly focused on two exciting paths within OB/GYN: pediatric and adolescent gynecology and maternal-fetal medicine. Her research passions are closely aligned with these fields, focusing on understanding the complex interactions within the pregnant person/infant relationship and addressing reproductive and sexual health disparities in adolescents. In her spare time, Izzy enjoys immersing herself in books, perfecting her sourdough baking skills, and hitting the pavement for a rejuvenating run at a very average pace."

**Madison Kent, MD****Hometown:** Midland, Michigan**Undergraduate School:** University of Michigan**Medical School:** UC Los Angeles David Geffen School of Medicine**Career Interests:** Maternal-Fetal Medicine, Surgical Critical Care, Obstetric Critical Care, Complex Obstetric Surgery

"My name is Madison Kent, but please call me Madi! I was born and raised in Midland, MI, and I attended the University of Michigan for undergrad where I studied Biochemistry and the Sociology of Health & Medicine. I then moved to Los Angeles, CA, where I attended the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. I am incredibly excited to start my next chapter as an OBGYN resident at UCSD! After residency, I hope to complete a combined fellowship in Maternal-Fetal Medicine and Surgical Critical Care. I am ultimately interested in pursuing a career in Obstetric Critical Care and Complex Obstetric Surgery. Outside of the hospital, I love to cook, read, and spend time outdoors. I also enjoy fostering kittens, and I have fostered 3 separate litters from local animal shelters thus far!"

NEW RESIDENT BIOS

Welcome to UC San Diego Health!



Grace Noonan, MD

Hometown: St. Louis, Missouri
Undergraduate School: University of Kansas
Medical School: University of Kansas
Career Interests: Maternal-Fetal Medicine, perinatal substance use disorders/addiction medicine, medical education.

"My name is Grace Noonan, and I was born and raised in St. Louis, Missouri. I attended the University of Kansas for both my undergraduate education and medical school. After understanding the importance of advocating for and empowering women-identifying individuals, I developed a strong interest in obstetrics and gynecology early in my medical school career. I hold a strong passion for addressing and reducing the disparities within perinatal substance use disorder treatment, as well as maternal-fetal medicine and medical education. My hobbies include hiking/being outdoors, cooking with friends, playing the violin, and reading. I am greatly looking forward to learning from the amazing faculty and residents in beautiful San Diego!"



Harriet Rothschild, MD

Hometown: Santa Cruz, California
Undergraduate School: Colby College, Waterville, Maine
Medical School: UC San Francisco
Career Interests: Gynecologic oncology, reproductive justice, health disparities

"Originally from Northern California, I attended undergrad at Colby College in Maine, spent a few years in an oncology/stem cell lab in Boston, and then returned to the Bay Area for medical school at UC San Francisco. Through my past experiences coordinating breast cancer clinical trials and completing a yearlong NIH-funded research fellowship during medical school, I have pursued my passion to care for women with cancer. I am excited and humbled by the opportunity to combine primary care, surgery, advocacy, and longitudinal patient relationships as an OB/GYN at UCSD. Outside of medicine, I enjoy spending time outside with friends (hiking, mountain biking, boogie boarding), making new recipes, going on evening walks with my partner, and snuggling with our two cuddly cats."

NEW RESEARCHERS and ADMINISTRATORS

Welcome to the Department of OBGYN & RS. We're delighted to have you join the team!

UC San Diego research labs stand out among the world's finest and we're grateful for our talented new Triton team members. A warm welcome to newly arriving lab and administration members:



Aaron Anton
 Research
 Ultrasound
 Sonographer

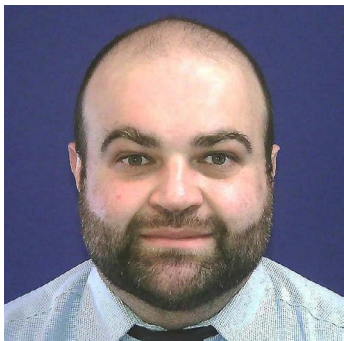
Tiffany Aung
 Staff Research
 Associate, Burnett
 Lab

Helen Bell
 Lab Assistant 2
 STE, Breen
 Church Lab

Jan Pferdekamper
 Staff Research
 Associate, Alperin
 Lab

Kerrin Twig
 Staff Research
 Associate, Thackray
 Lab

Lindsey Welch
 Lab Manager for
 Breen Church,
 Kauffman, Lawson,
 Mellon, Thackray

NEW FACULTY HIRES*Welcome to the Department of OBGYN & RS! We're delighted to have you join the team!***Dani Ashak, MD****Obstetrics and Gynecology (Hospitalist) Division**

Dani Ashak completed his Bachelor of Science degree at UCSD and went on to receive his Medical Degree from Drexel University College of Medicine. He completed his residency training at Kaiser Los Angeles Medical Center in 2020 and had been working as an Ob/Gyn Hospitalist at Geisinger Medical Center in Pennsylvania since 2020. He has joined the Hospitalist Division and will be primarily based in Hillcrest Medical Center.

**Cecile Ferrando, MD, MPH****Fellowship & Research Director, Division of Urogynecology and Reconstructive Pelvic Surgery, and Co-Director, Women's Pelvic Medicine Center**

Dr. Cecile Ferrando is a board-certified Urogynecologist. She completed her OBGYN residency at the combined Brigham & Women's Hospital/Massachusetts General Hospital and fellowship at Cleveland Clinic. In 2015, she received an academic appointment at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine and joined the faculty at Cleveland Clinic. One of her biggest passions is graduate medical and surgical education. In Cleveland, she served as the Program Director of two fellowships and was the Vice Chair of Education for the Department of OBGYN. She is also a scientific investigator and has published over 100 original research papers. Her research interests include clinical outcomes of pelvic reconstructive surgery as well as gender affirmation surgery. She founded the Cleveland Clinic's Transgender Surgery & Medicine Program in 2015 and has performed over 400 gender-affirmation surgeries. She is the editor of the textbook "Comprehensive Care of the Transgender Patient." She joined the UC San Diego team in Spring 2024. Her clinical expertise includes surgery for pelvic organ prolapse and urinary incontinence as well as vaginal and genital reconstruction for cis and transgender women.

**Sara McKinney, MD****Obstetrics and Gynecology (Generalist) Division**

Dr. Sara McKinney received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Scripps College and medical degree from the University Of California Davis School Of Medicine. She attended residency at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and graduated in June of 2019. During residency she developed a particular interest in vulvovaginal medicine and is an active member of the International Society for the Study of Vulvovaginal Disease (ISSVD) where she serves on the education committee. In addition to this, she is on the medical advisory board of Tight Lipped, a grassroots movement for people with chronic pelvic pain. She is originally from Chula Vista and joining our Generalist Division. When she is not working, she enjoys long distance running, taking Italian lessons, all reality TV, and exploring new restaurants.

**Chia-Ling Nhan-Chang, MD****Maternal-Fetal Medicine Specialist, Division of Maternal-Fetal Medicine
Director of Advanced Fetal Therapy and Complex Imaging**

Dr. Nhan-Chang provides invasive and non-invasive procedures for fetal diagnosis and therapy. She performs detailed 3-D/4-D ultrasound, fetal echocardiogram, fetal Doppler studies, amniocentesis, chorionic villus sampling, and fetal blood sampling in addition to in-utero transfusions and other invasive procedures for high-risk patients. Dr. Nhan-Chang brings to the team her expertise and extensive training in ultrasound for prenatal diagnosis and placenta imaging for Placental Accreta Spectrum disorders. She completed a residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology at Staten Island University Hospital and a fellowship in MFM at The Perinatology Research Branch of the National Institute of Child Health and Development/National Institutes of Health (NICHD/NIH) and Wayne State University in Detroit. Diagnosis and prevention of preterm birth and preterm premature rupture of membranes are Dr. Nhan-Chang's primary clinical and research interests. She is currently working collaboratively on investigating the role of biomechanics in normal and abnormal cervical and uterine remodeling during pregnancy. Dr. Nhan-Chang has been involved with pioneering research on Sleep Disordered Breathing and Sleep Apnea in pregnancy.

RECENT EVENTS

Department of OBGYN & RS Event Happenings, Member Gatherings, and Community Engagement



Princess Marina Hospital in Botswana

Charles Nager, MD and second year URPS fellow Ghansh Yadav, MD completed two incredible weeks teaching residents at Princess Marina Hospital in Botswana. During their stay, their team performed 27 life-transforming surgeries, including complex pelvic reconstructions, fistula repairs, and sphincter repairs due to birth trauma. The dedication and skill they shared had a profound impact on both the patients and the local medical team.



The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG)

From left: UCSD team Pratima Gupta, MD, MPH (ACOG Fellow-at-Large), Mai Hoang, MD (Past ACOG Fellow-at-Large), Cynthia Gyamfi-Bannerman, MD, MS (SMFM President), and Maureen Farrell, MD (CREOG Exam Committee Chair) attend the annual meeting in San Francisco, CA



Endocrine Society's ENDO 2024

Varykina Thackray, PhD presents at the Endocrine Society's Endo 2024 in Boston, MA

RECENT EVENTS

Department of OBGYN & RS Event Happenings, Member Gatherings, and Community Engagement



The Society for Academic Specialists in General Obstetrics and Gynecology (SASGOG)

Audra Meadows, MD, MPH with Dr. Rose Molina, OB/GYN Beth Israel Boston, Dr. Randi Goldman, REI at Northwell Health, and Dr. Omari Young, BWH/MGH OB/GYN Residency Program Director at the SASGOG annual meeting in San Francisco, CA



The White House Reproductive Freedoms Tour

Pratima Gupta, MD, MPH at The White House Reproductive Freedoms Tour with Vice President and presumptive democratic Presidential nominee, Kamala Harris, and First-Gentleman Doug Emhoff

MEDICAL EDUCATION

Summer Fundamental Critical Care Support Obstetrics with Scott Harvey, MD [Register Now!](#)

UC San Diego

Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology & Reproductive Sciences

FUNDAMENTAL CRITICAL CARE SUPPORT: OBSTETRICS



To Register: <https://cvent.me/ZNwvKo>

Conference Date: **July 26-27, 2024**

UCSD Simulation Training Center
UCSD Medical Education and Telemedicine Building

For more information contact
Scott Harvey, MD | sharvey@health.ucsd.edu

The Fundamental Critical Care Support (FCCS): Obstetrics course is designed for intensivists and non-intensivists who may provide maternal/fetal critical care and for clinicians in obstetrics seeking additional education in critical care.

The FCCS-OB course provides a combination of didactic lectures and hands-on skills stations with an emphasis on pregnant patients. The two-day, comprehensive curriculum offers an approach to initial management of the critically ill obstetrics patient for providers not formally trained in critical care.

Participants will learn useful information about the extended care of critically ill obstetrics patients, especially care related to mechanical ventilation, monitoring, organ hypoperfusion and neurological support. Providers will receive guidance for acute problems encountered in the ICU and for sudden obstetrics patient deterioration.



Society of
Critical Care Medicine
The Intensive Care Professionals

OPEN FACULTY POSITIONS

Department of OBGYN & RS is hiring new faculty committed to academic and clinical excellence

CLINICAL POSITIONS

UC San Diego
School of Medicine

Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology,
& Reproductive Sciences

Director, Nurse-Midwifery Service

The Director of the Nurse-Midwife Service in the Department of OB/GYN and Reproductive Sciences, provides leadership over the Certified Nurse Midwives (CNM) that work in the Comprehensive Women's Health Program, as well as performing direct patient care.

The Director will work with Department Faculty and Business Office as well as Health System leadership. The Director is expected to develop and foster improvements of Nurse Midwifery care throughout the Health System. This individual will be the leader of the Nurse-Midwifery service with the responsibility for quality of patient care, education and customer satisfaction. These duties include:

- Ongoing development, revision and implementation of CNM Best Practices. This includes review and revision of CNM practice guidelines as necessary.
- Staff recruitment, onboarding, orientation, training, professional development and performance evaluations.
- Ensuring staffing of the outpatient and inpatient services, managing absences / time off requests as well as managing human resource issues.
- Assuring appropriate CNM and ancillary staffing of community clinics that Health System has contracts for CNM services.
- Overseeing quality of care, including reviewing and improving quality metrics as identified by Health System and responding to patient complaints.
- Provide CNM full scope (inpatient and outpatient) patient care.
- Work collegially in a collaborative care model consulting physicians and specialists.
- Work within a family-centered and culturally sensitive mother-baby friendly philosophy of care.
- Participate in clinical education of medical students, residents, and other healthcare learners.
- Function as a liaison with Health System personnel including case management, financial counselors and social workers.
- Participate in community outreach activities and other duties as assigned.
- Promoting clinical investigation and supporting scholarly activities. A highly successful candidate will have an interest in research, quality initiatives and publishing research related to midwifery.

The Director will spend the majority of time (50% or more) achieving organizational objectives through the coordinated achievements of subordinate staff. Establishes departmental goals and objectives, functions with autonomy. Manages the accountability and stewardship of human, financial, and often physical resources in compliance with departmental and organizational goals and objectives. Ensures subordinate supervisors and professionals adhere to defined internal controls. Manages systems and procedures to protect departmental assets.

For questions, please reach out to Cynthia Gyamfi-Bannerman @ cgyamfibannerman@health.ucsd.edu.

UC San Diego
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology,
& Reproductive Sciences

Faculty Positions in Obstetrics & Gynecology

Assistant, Associate or Full Professor

The Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology, and Reproductive Sciences (<https://obgyn.ucsd.edu/index.html>) at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) is committed to academic excellence and diversity within the faculty, staff and student body and is seeking board certified physicians in Maternal-Fetal Medicine (MFM), Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility (REI), Gynecologic Oncology (GynOnc), Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery (FPMRS), Complex Family Planning (FP), Hospitalist, and General Obstetrics and Gynecology (OBGYN).

The successful candidates will be responsible for providing high quality training and teaching, clinical care of patients and/or research.

Candidates must have a MD or equivalent, PhD or MD/PhD in areas of OB-GYN & Reproductive Medicine or health related fields.

Candidates with a MD or equivalent must be Board eligible or Board certified in areas of OB-GYN & Reproductive Sciences. Candidates with a MD or equivalent must also be eligible for a California medical license or equivalent certification/permit as determined by the Medical Board of California.

Apply Link: <https://apol-recruit.ucsd.edu/JPF03836>

Appointment will be at the Assistant, Associate or Full Professor level and will be based on the candidate's background and experience.

A link to the full descriptions of each series is provided for your review:

HS Clinical Professor - see: http://www.ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/_files/apm/apm-278.pdf

Clinical X Professor - see: http://www.ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/_files/apm/apm-275.pdf

In-Residence Professor - see: http://www.ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/_files/apm/apm-270.pdf

Adjunct Professor - see: http://ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/_files/apm/apm-280.pdf

Appointments may require candidates to be self-funded.

As a member of the Health Sciences Compensation Plan, the appointee should be aware that there are limitations on outside professional activities, and clinical moonlighting is expressly prohibited. Additional information can be found here: https://www.ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/_files/apm/apm-671.pdf

The posted UC Salary scales set the minimum pay at the appointment as determined by appointment type and if applicable, rank and/or step. The base pay range for this position is \$112,500-\$411,500. Salary is negotiated annually. Additional compensation may be available if the position includes membership in the Health Sciences Compensation Plan. UC Salary information can be found here: <https://www.ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/compensation/2023-24-academic-salary-scales.html>.



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