Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science

Annual Medical Student Research Colloquium

Wednesday, March 7, 2018

Participating Mentors

Medical Student Research Thesis Program
Shahrzad Bazargan-Hejazi, PhD
Chair
The required medical research thesis is a distinguishing component of the Charles R. Drew University and UCLA Medical Education Program (MSRTP). CDU is among the few universities in the nation that require research training in the medical education curriculum. MSRTP assists students in the third and fourth years in developing and completing an independent research project. While the overall theme is healthcare disparities, students have wide latitude to choose research projects that include biobehavioral/psychosocial, health services research, and public policy with application to underserved communities. Fourth-year students present their findings at the annual medical student research colloquium held each spring.

Dear Mentors,

Please accept my sincere thanks for your dedication and commitment to our 2018 medical students. Without your hard work, knowledge and perseverance, we would not have their novel and innovative research, which will help mitigate negative health disparities, and serve vulnerable and underserved communities and populations.

Shahrzad
Shahrzad Bazargan-Hejazi, PhD
Chair
CDU/UCLA Medical Student Research Thesis
Dr. Arciaga received her MD degree in 1984 from University of Santo Tomas, Philippines and completed her Anesthesiology residency at Charles Drew University of Medicine and Science in 2002. In addition, she has had a UCLA faculty appointment since 2005 and is currently HS Associate Clinical Professor, Step I in the Department of Anesthesiology at UCLA. She is Board certified in Anesthesiology and is member of numerous societies, which include Society for Education in Anesthesiology, American Society of Anesthesiologists, and Society for Simulation in Healthcare. In addition, she is actively involved in various student teaching committees. In addition, to her clinical duties, Dr. Arciaga spearheads the simulation program at CDU where she provides teaching to medical students, nursing and PA students.
Cesar Barba, MD
Family Medicine
CDU, UCLA

Dr. Barba attended Charles R. Drew/UCLA medical education program and completed his residency at the Harbor/UCLA Family Medicine Residency Program in 2011. As a medical student, he volunteered with UMMA Clinic and found their philosophy akin to his own – that healthcare is a right not a privilege, and everyone deserves to live a healthy life. He is now the current Chief Medical Officer at UMMA.

Early life experiences shaped his philosophy. Born of Mexican immigrants and raised with four siblings in southern California, his family was uninsured and had to cross the border into Tijuana for medical care. The inaccessibility of such a basic human need made him acutely aware of the obstacles that communities across the country face, and served as his impetus to pursue a medical degree and change the narrative.

Before returning to UMMA to practice Family Medicine in 2011, Dr. Barba received a fellowship through the GE-NMF Global Health Fellows Program to conduct research on childhood malaria in Ghana. This hands-on experience furthered his desire to better understand and address the needs of underserved communities.

Dr. Barba really enjoys teaching medical students and is clinical faculty at UCLA and Charles R. Drew. In 2014, he also became the Urban Underserved College Chair for the Charles R. Drew/UCLA Medical Education Program, which advises and mentors 4th year medical students entering the match.
Dr. Mohsen Bazargan is Professor, Faculty Trustee, and Director of Research in the Department of Family Medicine and Public Health at Charles R. Drew University of Medicine & Science (CDU). In addition, he is also Adjunct Professor at the UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine, Department of Family Medicine. He is a Medical Sociologist with extensive training in the fields of aging, research methodology, evaluation, and statistics. Dr. Bazargan served as the President of the CDU Academic Senate from 2011 to 2016.

He received his Ph.D in Medical Sociology from the State University of New York at Buffalo. He has been a member of the Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science (CDU) faculty since 1993, and was previously on the faculty of Xavier University. Dr. Bazargan’s entire research-related activities are concentrated around the health status of and health disparities experienced by racial/ethnic minorities and socio-economically disadvantaged populations. He has conducted several large population and community based surveys on access to and utilization of health services by underserved minority older adults.

Dr. Bazargan has authored more than 104 scientific research manuscripts many of which address access to care, barriers to medical care, use of health services, racial disparities, and health outcomes among older African Americans. During the last 25 years, he has been funded by several federal agencies including the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD), the Administration for Children and Family (AHF), and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to conduct research and interventional studies among minority populations.
Shahrzad Bazargan-Hejazi, PhD
Medical Sociologist & Psychiatry
CDU, UCLA

Shahrzad Bazargan-Hejazi PhD, Professor of Medical Sociology in the Department of Psychiatry, College of Medicine, Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science, and an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. Dr. Bazargan-Hejazi has been the lead NIH investigator and co-investigator in several projects related to the misuse of alcohol in patients who present in emergency departments.

She is a member of the Global Burden of Disease collaborator network participation in the production, analysis, and improvement of the Global Burden of Disease, and has also collaborated in other projects related to the social aspects of disease and illness, youth empowerment health advocacy, family and community violence prevention for teens and adolescents, health services utilization improvement for Head Start families, and for underserved minorities, particularly those affected by alcohol problems, depression, injury, and violence.

She is the Associate Editor for the Journal of Injury and Violence Research, and an editorial board member for BioMed Research International, Medicine, and Clinical Medicine Insights; Women's Health Journal, among others. In addition, Dr. Bazargan-Hejazi is a member of the SafetyLit (“Safety Literature") Science Advisory Committee, a member of the World Suicidology Network, and represents Asia in the International Society for Child and Adolescent Injury.
Dr. Ferrini holds an MS in Biochemistry and a PhD in Physiology from the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina. As a pre-doctoral and postdoctoral fellow, she worked on the interaction between estrogen and glucocorticoid receptors in the brain, as it relates to sexual dimorphism and its response to stress. During this time, she focused on the role of the glucocorticoid receptor in aging within the central nervous system and found that estradiol has a potent effect on the aged male brain in response to stress through the regulation of the glucocorticoid receptors. This was the first indication that the decreased levels of reproductive hormones modulated neuronal cytotoxicity and the impaired response to stress that occurs with aging.

In February 1999, Dr. Ferrini joined the Division of Urology at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center and LaBiomed as a visiting scholar to work on the role of inducible nitric oxide synthase (iNOS) in the central nervous system and the lower urinary tract in aging. She found that iNOS is a key factor in two opposing pathological processes, namely neurotoxicity in critical related regions of the hypothalamus during senescence, and as a defense mechanism against aging or injury-associated fibrosis in the lower urinary tract. Due to these findings, she directed her research on the role of iNOS on fibrosis and oxidative stress in the lower urinary tract in different conditions such as Peyronie’s disease, diabetes, and aging. By counteracting fibrosis and oxidative stress, the nitric oxide derived by iNOS would improve smooth muscle compliance thus enhancing erectile function.

With more than 75 papers in peer review journals in the field of neurobiology and urology, Dr. Monica Ferrini gives her expertise to the scientific community as she has been passionate about providing effective teaching, mentoring, and research training to a large number of undergraduate and graduate students.
Dr. Stanley Frencher graduated from the University of Michigan with a bachelor's degree in biology/sociology. He earned his medical degree from Albert Einstein College of Medicine. During medical school, he obtained a Master's degree in public health at Columbia University as a Macy's Scholar. Immediately prior to starting residency, Dr. Frencher briefly interned on Capitol Hill for Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY) working on health-related policy. He then became the first Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar sponsored by the American College of Surgeons. During that time he conducted surgical quality-of-care research at UCLA/RAND, interrupting his urology residency training at Yale. After completing his residency,

Dr. Frencher was recruited to the UCLA Department of Urology as an assistant professor-in-residence, medical director of surgical outcomes and quality at Martin Luther King Jr. Community Hospital, and the lead physician of urology at Martin Luther King, Jr. Outpatient Center.

Dr. Frencher has recently been named Top Doctor by Los Angeles County’s MLK Outpatient Center and one of the Top 40 Under 40 by the National Medical Association. His focus continues to be improvement of surgical quality, access to specialty care for vulnerable populations and minority men’s health.
Sonya Gabrielian, MD, MPH, is a psychiatrist and health services researcher at the VA Greater Los Angeles (VAGLA) and the UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine. She is an investigator at the Center for the Study of Healthcare Innovation, Implementation, & Policy (CSHIIP) and the Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center (MIRECC) at VAGLA and a VA HSR&D Career Development Awardee. She is also an Affiliated Researcher at the National Center on Homelessness Among Veterans and an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences at UCLA.

Dr. Gabrielian received her MD from the UCSD School of Medicine and her MPH from the UCLA School of Public Health. She completed her residency in psychiatry at UCLA and a health services research fellowship at the VAGLA MIRECC. Her research aims to improve housing retention and community functioning among homeless adults with serious mental illness. Dr. Gabrielian is also a practicing psychiatrist in VAGLA's Community Engagement and Reintegration Service.
Samantha Garbers, PhD
Population and Family Health
Columbia University

Samantha Garbers PhD, Assistant Professor of Population and Family Health at Columbia University Medical Center. She focuses on the translation of health interventions to promote the health of women, young men, sexual minorities, and other priority populations from research into practice. At Columbia, Dr. Garbers designs and conducts evaluations of internal and external public health programs. Using her training as an epidemiologist, Dr. Garbers emphasizes working with stakeholders to integrate rigorous methods for process and outcome evaluation into interventions. She currently serves as Co-Investigator and Lead Evaluator for a five-year Office of Adolescent Health-funded randomized controlled trial of a computer-assisted motivational interviewing intervention for teen pregnancy prevention among young men. She directed the development and testing of a low-literacy, computer-based contraceptive decision-making tool.
Melanie Gold, DO, MPH, Professor of Pediatrics and Population & Family Health and Medical Director of School Based Health Centers at Columbia University Medical Center. Dr Gold is also the Medical Director of School Based Health Centers at Columbia University Medical Center and NY Presbyterian Hospital. She has a secondary appointment at Mailman School of Public Health.

As a Motivational Interviewing (MI) Network Trainer since 2000, Dr. Gold has conducted numerous trainings in MI and behavior change counseling in the health care setting with physicians, medical students, residents, fellows, nurses, nurse practitioners, physician’s assistants, health educators, dental students, psychologists, sports physiologists, social workers, and nutritionists. Dr. Gold has expertise is several areas of alternative and complementary medicine. For nearly 20 years, she has been teaching patients and health care professionals medical hypnosis. In June 2013, she passed her board certification examination in Medical Acupuncture and has been a Reiki Master since 2008. She uses osteopathic manipulation to treat common adolescent musculoskeletal conditions.
Dr. Nina Harawa, is an Associate Professor-in-Residence with the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA and an Associate Professor with Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science, where she leads CDU’s HIV Cluster. She co-Directs the policy core of CHIPTS and the National Coordinating Center for the NIA-funded Resource Centers for Minority Aging Research (RCMAR) at UCLA.

Trained in Epidemiology, Dr. Harawa’s research involves understanding trends in HIV and other sexually transmitted infections and developing effective, culturally relevant interventions for prevention, care, and treatment. She has conducted innovative research with a variety of populations – including high-risk African American men, sexually active African American and Latina women, older adults, and incarcerated and post-incarcerated men. Much of this work has involved partnering with local governmental and community organizations in order to address health issues in populations that experience major health disparities. She currently co-leads a multi-site NIDA-funded study examining the impacts of incarceration and related interventions and policies on HIV in Black men who have sex with men. She also serves as one of the Principal Investigators on a new NIDA-funded study to promote linkage to and retention in HIV care for young MSM following release from jail.
Eric Houston, PhD
HIV
CDU, UCLA

Eric Houston, PhD is a clinical psychologist with research interests focusing on the role of cognitive processes and psychosocial distress as factors in health disparities related to HIV. Much of his recent work examines how technology can be used to strengthen our understanding of these factors and address their impact through interventions aimed at promoting engagement with HIV care and treatment adherence among patients who are lost to follow up or are vulnerable to dropping out of care.

Dr. Houston has served as principal investigator for a web-based pilot study designed to reach these patients and was principal evaluator for a community-based intervention aimed at promoting the health status of young African-American MSM living with HIV. His research has been published in leading peer-reviewed scientific journals and presented at national conferences.
Dulcie Kermah, EdD, MPH

**Biostatistics**

CDU

Dulcie Kermah has been a Biostatistician at Charles R. Drew University (CDU) for over a decade. As a team member of the Research Design and Biostatistics Core at CDU, Dr. Kermah’s primary responsibility involves providing support to CDU faculty, students and staff and other collaborators. Her duties include designing databases for data cleaning, statistical consultation, data management, study design, performing statistical analyses and authoring statistical section in research protocol, manuscripts, abstract and presentations. Additionally, she mentors and provides support to students working on their research projects and thesis. She also helps them with their data collection, management, analyses and dissemination of results.

Dr. Kermah has a decade experience using and analyzing large databases. Dr. Kermah received her Master of Public Health degree with an emphasis in Biostatistics from the University of California, Los Angeles, and her Doctorate degree in Educational Leadership from University of Southern California.
Omid Khorram, MD, PhD

Ob/Gyn

CDU, UCLA

Dr. Khorram is Professor of Ob/Gyn at David Geffen School of Medicine and Chief of Division of Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center. He is board certified in OB/Gyn and Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility, and is an active clinician scientist. His basic science research interests are pathogenesis of fibroid tumors with particular focus on the role of noncoding RNAs, and the second area of focus is mechanisms underlying fetal programming of chronic adult diseases with special emphasis on vascular fibrosis. His research has been funded by NIH and American Heart Association.
Kristen Kipps, MD
UCLA

Kristen Kipps, MD is a hospitalist and former course chair of the Medical Spanish preclinical selective at UCLA.
Jane Lee, MD, PhD is a Clinical Instructor in the Division of Liver and Pancreas Transplant in the Department of Surgery at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. Dr. Lee received her MD from SUNY Stony Brook School of Medicine. She received her PhD from the Department of Neuroscience at SUNY Stony Brook. She studied stem cell biology as it pertains to neuronal regeneration. She completed her general surgery residency at the University of Nebraska in the Department of Surgery. She came to UCLA to further her surgical career in liver transplant as a fellow. Dr. Lee’s current research interests include quality improvement of critical care processes and the socio-economics of liver transplantation.
Dr. Steven Lee is a Clinical Professor of Surgery and Pediatrics at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. He is also the Division Chief of Pediatric Surgery at Harbor-UCLA and the Associate Program Director for Surgery Residency at Harbor-UCLA. Prior to his current position, Dr. Lee was Regional Chief of Pediatric Surgery for Southern California Kaiser Permanente. He graduated UCLA with a B.S. in Biochemistry and received his M.D. from the UC Davis School of Medicine. Dr. Lee completed his General Surgical Residency at UC Davis Health System and Pediatric Surgery at Seattle Children’s Hospital. He is an active investigator and has authored over 100 peer-reviewed publications. Finally, Dr. Lee is obtaining an Executive MBA at the Anderson School of Management at UCLA.
Margarita Loeza, MD

*Family Medicine*

UCLA

Margarita Loeza, MD is a graduate of the University of California School of Medicine at San Diego. She attended Occidental College where she completed a degree in Biology. Dr. Loeza trained at the San Bernardino County Hospital in the department of Family Medicine. During residency she was chosen to serve as the Associate Chief Resident. After residency, she returned to the Venice Family Clinic, a Federally Qualified Health Center, where she and her family were once patients in order to volunteer. In 2001, Dr. Loeza started as a staff physician at the Venice Family Clinic (VFC).

Dr. Loeza is currently the Chief Medical Information Officer at VFC. She is the physician consultant for Santa Monica Malibu Unified School District. Dr. Loeza has a school based teen clinic at Santa Monica High School. She is a strong proponent for reproductive justice for young women. Dr. Loeza has a passion for global health. She is the faculty advisor for UCLA Flying Samaritans who run a monthly clinic in Tijuana. Dr. Loeza helps deliver free health care along with other volunteers to a small community. Because she is a proponent of social justice, Dr. Loeza volunteers a Homeboy Industries on a monthly basis performing laser tattoo removal on former gang members. She is a mentor to medical and pre-health students. Dr. Loeza joined Alliance in Mentorship to inspire young Latino students to study medicine. Dr. Loeza is currently the faculty advisor for the Latino Medical Student Association for UCLA and Drew. Dr. Loeza is the daughter of Mexican Immigrants, first in her family to attend college.
Neil Patel currently serves as Chief of Emergency Medicine at the Greater Los Angeles VA Healthcare System and is an Associate Clinical Professor of Emergency Medicine at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. He has a passion for medical education and enjoys teaching medical student at DGSOM as well as interns and residents at the West Los Angeles VA Medical Center and at Harbor-UCLA.
Darlene Parker-Kelly, MSLS
General Studies, College of Science & Health
CDU

Darlene Parker Kelly, MSLS is the Director of Library/Learning Resource Centers at Charles Drew University of Medicine and Science. For the past 8 years, Darlene has been involved in transforming the University Library to a place where students and faculty collaborate using invaluable library resources. In addition, Darlene teaches the Information Literacy and Research Methods in the College of Sciences & Health, and in the School of Nursing. Darlene is passionate about information literacy, health and the well-being of mankind.

Ms. Parker-Kelly believes education and information are partners in empowering each of us to become healthier individuals and/or to becoming an advocate for others. She actively participates in scholarly publications, and she is the recipient of several Express Awards through the Pacific Southwest Regional Medical Library at the Louise M. Darling Biomedical Library at UCLA, and frequently participates in local and national conferences. Prior to the CDU appointment, Darlene was employed at Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta, Georgia for 21 years.
Colin Robinson, MD, MPH is a Med-Peds physician at UCLA and an Assistant Program Director for both the Med-Peds and Internal Medicine-Primary Care programs. Dr. Robinson completed his undergraduate education at Washington University in St. Louis, and received his MD/MPH degrees from Tufts University. He trained in Med-Peds at UCLA and served as Chief Resident in Medicine. He has a particular passion for patient advocacy as well as physician language training. To that end, he runs the health policy/advocacy curriculum for the UCLA Med-Peds and Internal Medicine-Primary Care programs, and has run the DGSOM Medical Spanish Selective for several years.
Dr. Taira is an emergency physician and the Director of Research for the Department of Emergency Medicine at Olive View-UCLA Medical Center. In 2016, she became director of the Section of International and Domestic Health Equity and Leadership (IDHEAL) for the UCLA Department of Emergency Medicine whose mission is to define and promote the role that academic emergency medicine can play in the promotion of health equity and elimination of health disparities locally, nationally and globally. (www.idheal.org)

Dr. Taira is also the U.S. Director of Project SEMILLA, a non-profit collaboration of U.S. and Nicaraguan health care professionals aimed at improving emergency health care capacity in Latin America. The group has developed and implemented multiple open-access, language and resource appropriate curricula for Central American health care providers and given free trainings to over 500 Nicaraguan health care professionals (www.projectsemilla.org).
Senait Teklehaimanot, MPH
Biostatistics
CDU

Senait Teklehaimanot is a Biostatistician and a faculty at Charles Drew University of Medicine and Science. She received her Master’s degree in Biostatistics from Loma Linda University school of Public Health. She has participated in a wide variety of NIH funded research studies in various capacities and provided statistical support to researchers, Community Faculty, Medical, MPH and Nursing students.

Her expertise includes designing survey studies, power and sample size calculation, data management, data analysis, authoring statistical section in research protocols, manuscripts, abstracts and presentations. She also have more than 20 years of experience using or analyzing large data sets sponsored by National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), US Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and National Cancer Institutes (NCI).

She enjoys collaborative research and has special interest in health disparity research. As a team member of the study Design Biostatistical and Data Management Core at CDU, Senait Teklehaimanot is an experienced Biostatistician primarily supports the core’s research methodology and study design services.
Dr. Mitchell Wong is a Professor of Medicine at UCLA in the Division of General Internal Medicine and Health Services Research and Vice Chair of Medicine for Research Training. He received his undergraduate degree from Williams College in 1989 and his medical degree from UC San Francisco in 1994. He obtained his clinical training in General Internal Medicine at The New York Hospital/Cornell Medical Center. After completing a PhD in Health Services Research from the UCLA School of Public Health, he joined the UCLA faculty in 2001. His research focuses on how education, school environments and social networks influence health.

He is currently funded by NIDA to examine the impact of successful school environments on adolescent health and health behaviors (tobacco, alcohol, drug use, sexual behavior and engagement in violence). He is also the director of the UCLA/CTSI Healthy Neighborhood Schools Initiative, which develops, tests, and disseminates school-based interventions to improve the health of low-income adolescents. He has published in the top journals of his field including The New England Journal of Medicine, American Journal of Public Health, and Pediatrics. He is highly successful researcher and has obtained almost $6M in NIH funding since 2010 to support his work on education and health.
Wes Yin is an associate professor in the Department of Public Policy and the Anderson School of Management at UCLA, and is a Faculty Research Fellow at the National Bureau of Economic Research. Prior to coming to UCLA, Yin served as Acting Assistant Secretary of Economic Policy at the Department of Treasury, and as a Senior Economist in the White House Council of Economic Advisers. He also taught at Boston University and the University of Chicago, and was a Robert Wood Johnson Scholar in Health Policy at Harvard University.

Yin’s research interests are in the areas of health, economic development, industrial organizations and public finance. His current research studies the relationship between economic growth and the formation of private markets; and how information, income, and competitive forces impact the delivery of health care in developed and developing countries.
Dr. Zeltzer is a Distinguished Professor of Pediatrics, Anesthesiology, Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA, Director of the UCLA Pediatric Pain and Palliative Care Program. She is a co-author on the Institute of Medicine report on Transforming Pain in America and is a member of the national steering committee assigned to provide directions for pain research at NIH. She has received, among other awards, a Mayday Pain and Policy Fellowship and the 2005 Jeffrey Lawson Award for Advocacy in Children’s Pain Relief from the American Pain Society (APS). Her UCLA integrative pediatric pain program received a 2009 Clinical Centers of Excellence in Pain Management Award from APS and a 2012 award from the Southern California Cancer Pain Initiative. She is also a member of the national Autism Think Tank.

Her research includes yoga, mindfulness, hypnotherapy, and other self-help interventions, including mobile technologies, to help children and adolescents who have chronic pain, as well as understanding pain mechanisms in irritable bowel syndrome, cancer, sickle cell disease, headaches, dysmenorrhea, and other conditions. She has over 350 research publications on childhood pain and complementary therapies, has written more than 80 chapters, and published her first book for parents on chronic pain in childhood (HarperCollins, 2005).
CHARLES R. DREW UNIVERSITY
OF MEDICINE AND SCIENCE

50 YEARS
1966 / 2016