Director’s Corner
Call for Pilot Grant Applications

Jay Melnikow, MD, MPH
CHPR Associate Director

I am delighted that the Center for Healthcare Policy and Research and the Clinical and Translational Science Center, in cooperation with the Center for Reducing Health Disparities are sponsoring a pilot grant initiative. We invite applications for pilot grants up to $10,000 for one-year innovative, interdisciplinary, translational research projects that focus on problems of significant importance to human health such as obesity, cancer, and mental health, highlight innovative methods for the implementation and dissemination of research findings at the community and public health levels, emphasize interdisciplinary collaboration and generate preliminary data for future extramural proposals.

All Academic Senate and adjunct faculty are eligible to apply. The initiative highlights junior investigators seeking to establish a research focus and established investigators proposing new areas of collaboration in translational research.

Potential Areas of Study include exploring the potential of promising research findings from the community or public health arena, establishing new research collaborations with community-based or public health organizations to explore innovative approaches to implementation and/or dissemination of evidence-based interventions, and performing pilot studies to obtain preliminary data for future proposals involving clinical or community applications of translational research.

Applications are due Monday, May 19, 2008, and can be found at: www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/chpr/events/pilot_grant_application.doc

The grant review committee will evaluate the applications with regard to their significance to community-based health, innovation and scientific excellence, testable hypothesis, strengths of interdisciplinary team, and description of plans for future extramural funding.

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The CHPR Newsletter is designed, written and edited by Laura Bates Sterner, Communications Officer. The consulting editor is Debora A. Paterniti. All images are courtesy of Laura Bates Sterner, unless otherwise noted. For submissions or other information, please contact Laura Bates Sterner at (916) 734-7918 or Laura.BatesSterner@ucdmc.ucdavis.edu.

Pilot Grants Announced, Three Key Research Areas Explored at Joint Symposium

On March 25, 2008, the Center for Healthcare Policy and Research (CHPR), the Clinical and Translational Science Center (CTSC) and the Center for Reducing Health Disparities (CRHD) jointly hosted a research symposium entitled “Bridging the Causeway: A Center for Healthcare Policy and Research Symposium.” The event was held at the UC Davis Memorial Union on the campus in Davis.

A pilot grant program for collaborative, interdisciplinary proposals was announced, and three key research areas—obesity, cancer and mental health—were explored in breakout groups led by researchers with interests in each field.

Introductory remarks were offered by Vice Chancellor for Research Barry M. Klein, Ph.D. and CHPR Director Klea D. Bertakis, M.D., M.P.H. Brief introductions to the work of the three hosting centers were then given by CRHD Director Sergio Aguilar-Gaxiola, M.D., Ph.D., CTSC Director Lars Berglund, M.D., Ph.D. and Dr. Bertakis.

John M. Westfall, M.D., associate dean for

(See Bridging the Causeway, pg 4)
News

Patrick Romano Leads Clinical Team in Federally Funded Effort to Identify Emergency Preparedness Benchmarks

The US Department of Health and Human Services Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) and the Office of the Assistant Secretary recently awarded a $674,000 contract to a team of physicians and researchers for the development of emergency preparedness indicators for healthcare facilities. These indicators will be used to determine facility readiness to care for patients in the event of a disaster or pandemic, and to help policy makers understand current deficiencies in disaster readiness.

The team, led by CHPR Core Faculty and Executive Committee member Patrick Romano, will also involve CHPR Administrative Nurse Researcher Patricia Zrelak, as well as several other members of the CHPR research and administrative staff. Other UC Davis researchers and experts on the team are CHPR members Daniel J. Tancerdi and Aaron Bair, Christian Sandrock, Steve Tharratt, Timothy Albertson, Garth Utter and Glynis Foulk.

In addition to the UC Davis team, the research will also involve colleagues from Stanford University and the Battelle Memorial Institute.

This grant complements a $5 million award received by UC Davis and several other institutions last fall in the area of disaster planning.

Donald M. Hilty and Anthony F. Jerant Join CHPR Executive Committee

The Executive Committee of the Center for Healthcare Policy and Research has appointed two new Committee members.

Donald M. Hilty, MD, is an Associate Professor of Clinical Psychiatry at the UC Davis School of Medicine. His research involves public health and psychiatric and medical facilities in urban and rural settings. His studies include pharmacologic, psychosocial and service interventions for patients with mood disorders.

Anthony F. Jerant, MD, is an Associate Professor in the UC Davis Department of Family and Community Medicine. Dr. Jerant’s research interests include developing and evaluating effective and resource-efficient methods of enhancing patient self-efficacy for health-related tasks, evaluating the influence of patient personality characteristics in health care and clinical research and understanding and mitigating health disparities.

The Center welcomes these two members to the Committee. We look forward to working closely with Dr. Hilty and Dr. Jerant in the coming months.

Lorena Garcia Nominated to Minority Health Center

CHPR member Lorena Garcia was nominated in January 2008 for membership in the National Center for Minority Health Center of Excellence in Nutritional Genomics ("The Center").

The Center is the result of a multi-disciplinary research collaboration between the Section of Molecular and Cellular Biology at the University of California, Davis, USDA Western Human Nutrition Research Center, Children’s Hospital of Oakland, Children’s Hospital Oakland Research Institute (CHORI), and the Ethnic Health Institute.

Fancher Receives Award, Mentors Winning Presenters

Tonya Fancher, CHPR member and graduate of the Center’s Primary Care Outcomes Research (PCOR) Fellowship program, was awarded the Outstanding Community Service award at the California/Hawaii Society for General Internal Medicine (SGIM) regional meeting, which took place on March 1, 2008 at Genentech Hall, Mission Bay Campus University of California, San Francisco.

Dr. Fancher is also a mentor to two first place winners at this meeting. Caitlyn Melvedt, B.S., the first place winner in Oral Research Presentations by Students, presented “Discussing Suicide in Primary Care”, and Tim Stocker, M.D. was the first place winner for Resident Research Posters. Congratulations to all of the winners, and a special thanks to Dr. Fancher for her superb effort in providing mentorship.

Introduction to Public Health: Distance Learning Opportunity

Recent attention to West Nile virus, childhood obesity, lack of activity among people of all age groups, cancer prevention, food safety and other public health concerns has heightened awareness of the importance of a strong public health infrastructure with a well-trained workforce. Recognizing this need, UC Davis Extension has partnered with the UC Davis Department of Public Health Sciences to provide public health workers with the knowledge to identify public health problems and provide an introduction to the five core areas of public health: Health services management and policy; epidemiology; social and behavioral health; environmental health; biostatistics.

Who will benefit?

State and local public health department personnel; community and migrant health center employees; social workers, social service employees and mental health services workers; hospital and HMO employees; graduate students interested in exploring public health as a profession; legislative staff members with responsibilities for healthcare and/or public health; environmental policy analysts; and technical or scientific personnel interested in public health laboratory management.

Instructor John Troidl, Ph.D. in Health Services and Policy Analysis, M.B.A. in finance, is on the faculty of the UC Davis School of Medicine and is directly involved with the strategic planning for UC Davis’ new School of Public Health. Troidl has focused his consultative and academic work on community-based organizations, primarily those having a joint health services/public health mission. He teaches one of the three core classes of the UC Davis master’s degree in Public Health.

Enroll now until May 12. You will receive your password on April 28 or within two days of enrolling. You must complete the course by July 14. You will need a multimedia capable computer, a current e-mail account and access to the Web using an internet browser. Find more information or to enroll online at www.extension.ucdavis.edu/unit/health_sciences.
Recent Publications


Applicants are encouraged to take advantage of CTSC resources as part of their pilot project, such as the CTSC Clinical Research Center, the Bioinformatics core, and Biostatistical core.

If you have any questions about the pilot program or applications, you may contact any of the following individuals:

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Lars Berglund, M.D., Ph.D., Director of the Clinical and Translational Science Center (CTSC), addresses an audience of researchers at Bridging the Causeway: A Center for Healthcare Policy and Research Symposium.
rural health at the University of Colorado, Denver, School of Medicine, delivered the plenary address, entitled “Mystery of the Blue Highway: Engaging Community in Research.” Dr. Westfall’s interesting presentation highlighted the community outreach work of the High Plains Research Network (HPRN), a network of twelve rural hospitals and clinics in Northeast Colorado. Dr. Westfall serves as director of HPRN.

Thematic overviews of the three breakout topics were presented by the moderators of each breakout session. Professor of Pediatrics, Physiology and Genetics, Craig Warden, Ph.D., moderated the obesity group and spoke on the topic “Obesity: basic questions about diet have not been answered.” Cancer moderator Joy Melnikow, M.D., M.P.H., a professor in the Department of Family and Community Medicine and CHPR associate director, presented “Cancer Prevention Research: Bench to Bedside—not enough?” The overview on the topic of mental health was offered by Nolan Zane, Ph.D., a professor in the Department of Psychology and Director of the Asian American Center on Disparities Research. Dr. Zane’s presentation was entitled “Examining Cultural Factors within the Context of Evidence-Based Practices.”

Following a short break, Dr. Melnikow announced that up to seven pilot grants of up to $10,000 each, jointly sponsored by the CTSC, the CHPR, and the Office of Research, will be awarded for collaborative research projects. (For more information on the pilot grant program, also see Director’s Corner on page 1).

The group then broke into three smaller groups to explore the featured topic areas in greater depth. Each breakout group featured brief presentations from three panelists, followed by group discussion. The panelists for the three breakout sessions were:

**Obesity**: Sean H. Adams, Ph.D., Research Physiologist, USDA-Agricultural Research Service, Western Human Nutrition Research Center, Adjunct Assistant Professor, UC Davis Department of Nutrition; Ulfat Shaikh, M.D., M.P.H., Assistant Professor, UC Davis Health System, Department of Pediatrics; Karen Jetter, Ph.D., Assistant Research Economist, Agricultural Issues Center, University of California.

**Cancer**: Colleen Sweeney, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Biological Sciences and Co-director, Breast Cancer Research Program, UC Davis Cancer Center; Anthony F. Jerant, M.D., Associate Professor, Department of Family and Community Medicine, UC Davis School of Medicine; Neal Kohatsu, M.D., M.P.H., Chief, Cancer Control Branch, State of California, Department of Public Health.

**Mental health**: Cameron Carter, M.D., Director, UC Davis Imaging Research Center, Professor of Psychiatry and Psychology, UC Davis Health System; Ladson Hinton, M.D., Associate Professor, UC Davis Health System Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences; Natalia Deeb-Sossa, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, UC Davis Department of Sociology.

Detailed information about the pilot grant program as well as copies of all presentations are available at: www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/chpr/events/.
Welcomes  
New Center Member
The Center for Healthcare Policy and Research welcomed the following new member during the first quarter of 2008:

Joshua Breslau, Ph.D., Sc.D.  
Assistant Professor In-Residence  
Department of Internal Medicine, School of Medicine
Dr. Breslau received his Sc.D. and his Ph.D. from Harvard University. He holds an A.B. from the University of Chicago. He is interested in disparities in mental health care. His current research interests are in the areas of epidemiology of psychiatric disorders in ethnic minority communities, social consequences of psychiatric disorders and development of mental health service models for school based health clinics.

New Faces
The Center also welcomes two new Graduate Student Researchers this quarter:

Naomi Saito
Naomi is a first year graduate student in the Graduate Group in Biostatistics at UC Davis. She has worked as a Clinical Nurse II in inpatient units at UC Davis Medical Center for seven years.

Naomi’s research interests are in chronic disease prevention and patient-care improvement. As a statistics student, she is also interested in machine learning and statistical computation. She will be working at the Center on Fridays.

David Chin
David is a first year graduate student in the Graduate Group in Epidemiology with research interests in quality of health care, iatrogenesis prevention, injury epidemiology in the hospital setting, and healthcare access by underrepresented populations. He will be working on Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) Quality Indicators and the Emergency Preparedness Management projects with Dr. Patrick Romano.

David holds undergraduate degrees in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology from UC Santa Cruz. His prior experience includes laboratory work at Stanford and the University of Pittsburgh.

Grants Awarded
CHPR Members reported the following Grant awards:


Symposium Evaluation
Special thanks are due to Julie Rainwater, PhD and Miyisha Slay who served as evaluators for the Bridging the Causeway symposium. Attendees included faculty (50%) and staff (38%) as well as others from the state of California and nearby college campuses. Forty-eight percent of the attendees were from the School of Medicine, 20% from the social sciences, 13% from basic sciences. Other participants included UCD university administration (13%), state health or community leaders (7%), and UC Davis humanities faculty (2%).

Participants attended the symposium primarily to network and to engage in informal discussion about translational research in possibilities in cancer, nutrition, and mental health. The reputation of the plenary speaker and faculty breakout session participants were some principal reasons for symposium attendance.

Participants’ reviews were highly favorable in terms of the plenary address, breakout session content, and hosting the symposium on the main campus. Remarks included, “the plenary speaker, John Westfall gave an entertaining and informative presentation”; “audience mix was impressive, with administration, research faculty and project staff”; and “with the breakout session…time was allowed for panel discussion and future projects.”

Suggestions for the future symposiums included extending the break out sessions and reconvening in a larger group more formally after the breakout sessions. Comments included: “have more time for discussion in the larger group”; “design breakouts to have a more ‘round table’ feel”; and “allow more time for the break out sessions.”

Overall, participants enjoyed the content, forum, organization, and size of the symposium. They ranked the overall quality of the symposium a 4.19 on a five-point scale, stating “hearing about all of the different projects and how translational research is ‘bridging the gap’ between research and application”; “breadth of coverage--everything seemed the right length and was not real excessive material”; “the size of the symposium allowed for informal discussion”; and “the conference will likely result in a couple of new collaborative connections.” Sixty-three percent of participants believed that the connections they made at the symposium will lead to future collaborative relationships (see chart below).

Thank you all for your participation and feedback!

Likelihood of New Working Relationship as Result of Participation in Symposium

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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Extremely</th>
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Source: “Bridging the Causeway” symposium participant evaluations
**Center for Healthcare Policy and Research**

**Event Calendar**

**Thursday Noon Seminar Series**

**May 8, 2008** Seminar Cancelled for “Thank Goodness for Staff” event

**May 15, 2008**
“A critique of the design and analysis used in a cluster-randomized study of an intervention in Philadelphia schools for preventing overweight and obesity”
Daniel J. Tancredi, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor in Residence, Department of Pediatrics

**May 22, 2008**
“Subgroup Reporting in the General Medical Literature: Do Investigators Misinterpret Their Own Findings?”
Erik Fernandez y Garcia, M.D., M.P.H.
Assistant Clinical Professor, Department of Pediatrics

**May 29, 2008** (two presentations)
“Positive Predictive Value of AHRQ Patient Safety Indicators in a National Sample of Hospitals”
Pat Zrelak, Ph.D., C.N.R.N., C.N.A.A., B.C.,
CHPR Administrative Nurse Researcher
and
“Impact of Public Reporting of Coronary Artery Bypass Graft Surgery Performance Data on Market Share, Mortality, and Patient Selection”
Patrick Romano, M.D., M.P.H.
Professor, Departments of Internal Medicine and Pediatrics

**June 5, 2008**
“Determinants of Early Stage Ovarian Cancer Diagnosis”
Mollie Teng, M.D., M.P.H. Candidate
UC Davis

Seminars are held at noon every Thursday, in conference room 1104 at LaBou Café, 2248 Stockton Blvd (across from the UC Davis Medical Center), unless otherwise noted.

If you would like more information or have a topic that you would like to present at our Seminar, please contact Laura Bates Sterner, lbsterner@ucdavis.edu, (916) 734-7918.

**CHPR Mission Statement**

The Mission of the Center is to facilitate research, promote education and inform policy about health and healthcare.

The Goals of this Mission are to improve the health of the public by contributing new knowledge about:
- access
- delivery
- cost
- outcomes

Current emphases include disparities, clinician-patient interaction, utilization, cost-effectiveness and quality.

The Center is an interdisciplinary collaborative research unit that will perform the following Functions:
- development and support of interdisciplinary collaboration on research projects related to the Center’s Mission.
- education and career development for scholars with interests in health services and health policy research.
- synthesis, interpretation and dissemination of research findings that assist healthcare policy formulation and improve health services delivery.

**Executive Committee:**

- **Director:** Klea D. Bertakis, M.D., M.P.H.
- **Associate Director:** Jay Melnikow, M.D., M.P.H.
- **Deputy Director:** Debora A. Paterniti, Ph.D.

- Rahman Azari, Ph.D.
- Adela de la Torre, Ph.D.
- Peter Franks, M.D., M.S.Ed.
- Donald M. Hilty, M.D.
- Anthony F. Jerant, M.D.
- Richard L. Kravitz, M.D., M.S.P.H.
- J. Paul Leigh, Ph.D.
- John A. Robbins, M.D., M.H.S.
- Patrick S. Romano, M.D., M.P.H.