

Research Activities Newsletter

The latest news and announcements



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In the News: Congratulations to the following awardees!!!



Cristian Cuadra, Assistant Professor of Rehabilitation Science (RS), is PI on a new award from the American Heart Association, Inc. for the project entitled, *Rewiring Coordination: Spinal and Vestibulospinal Reflex Modulation in Upper Limb of Stroke Survivors*. This study aims to characterize, for the first time, the role of disrupted heteronymous spinal and VSR interactions in upper limb movement dysfunction post-stroke. Specifically, we will use vestibular evoked myogenic potentials (VEMP) to investigate heteronymous reflex interactions between the deltoid, biceps brachii, and flexor carpi radialis, and the modulation of VSR within these muscles.



Hayden Hess, Assistant Professor of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences (ENS), is PI on a new award from the U.S. Navy Office of Naval Research for the project entitled, *Interrogating the Pathophysiology of Decompression Sickness Through the Skin*. The long-term goal of this proposal is to identify innovative strategies that lower DCS risk and permit longer, deeper dives. The overall objective of this proposal is to interrogate cutaneous microvascular dysfunction as an index of decompression stress in humans.



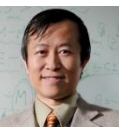
Gregory Homish, Professor and Chair of Community Health and Health Behavior (CHHB), is MPI on a new award from the University of Illinois/NIH for the project entitled, *A Longitudinal Examination of the Social and Environmental Influences on Substance Use among Non-Prescriber/Non-Executive Healthcare Workers in the United States*. This research proposes to examine: 1) the effects of moral injury on changes in substance use, substance use disorders, problematic mental health symptomatology, and suicidality; 2) the impact of other individual, social, and environmental factors on these outcomes over time; and 3) the unique impacts of workplace policies, programs, and practices on the risk and resilience of healthcare workers.



Christina Kasprzak, Postdoctoral Associate and Research Assistant Professor in the department of Community Health and Health Behavior (CHHB), is the PI on the continuation of her K99/R00 award from the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities/NIH for the research project entitled, *Design and Pilot Testing of a Culturally Tailored Breastfeeding Promotion for Non-Hispanic Black Women*. Dr. Kasprzak's research addresses significant racial disparities in breastfeeding rates through the development of an evidence-based and community-informed breastfeeding promotion program specifically tailored for non-Hispanic Black women. **Lucia Leone**, Associate Professor in CHHB, is Christina's mentor.



Lucia Leone, Associate Professor of Community Health and Health Behavior (CHHB), is PI on a new award from NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets for the project entitled, *Addressing Food Insecurity Among Underserved Postsecondary Students Through Partnerships with Western New York Farmers*. The goal of this project is to address high rates of food insecurity among college students at the University at Buffalo, particularly those from non-traditional and underserved backgrounds. **Leah Vermont**, Assistant Director of Community Outreach and Partnerships; Community Interventions Lab in CHHB was instrumental in the successful submission of the application.



Chang-Xing Ma, Associate Professor of Biostatistics is Co-I on a continuation award from the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke/NIH, (PI: Junghun Cho, Biomedical Engineering), for the research project entitled, *MRI-Based Quantitative Mapping of Oxygen Extraction Fraction in MS*. The project continues work to establish a clinically readily applicable MRI toolset for qmOEF, which is validated and available to every MRI scanner.



Marianthi Markatou, SUNY Distinguished Professor of Biostatistics, is PI on a new award from Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) for the project entitled *Developing Methods for Clustering Longitudinal Mixed Type Data for Comparative Effectiveness Research*. The project proposes to use Large Language Models (LLMs) to integrate text data with structural data for use in downstream analyses. This integration will consist of; 1) use of LLMs to convert textual into structural data (text2data), and 2) combine the structural data generated from the previous task with existing structural data for analysis. **Albert Vexler**, Professor of Biostatistics is Co-I on the project.





Jeffrey Miecznikowski, Professor of Biostatistics, is Co-I on a continuation award (PI: Remi Adelaiye-Ogala, Medicine), from the National Cancer Institute/NIH for the project entitled, *Posttranslational Modifications of Glucocorticoid Receptor Associated with Drug-resistance in Prostate Cancer*. The following aims continued to be pursued: (i) Characterize ligand-dependent driven GR vs. PTM-driven GR expression and activity in patient-derived xenograft models using multi-omic assays; (ii) Perform functional studies to determine the mechanism of PTM driven GR vs. ligand-dependent GR activity in lethal PCa; and (iii) Determine the therapeutic efficacy and benefit of targeting AKT-GR-AR as a novel therapeutic approach for lethal prostate cancers. The results from this study will significantly expand our knowledge of the mechanism of PTMs in advanced PCa and the role their unique signatures play in disease progression and resistance to AR-targeted therapy.



Ekaterina Noyes, Professor of Epidemiology and Environmental Health (EEH) and SPHHP Associate Dean for Translational and Team Science is Co-I on a continuation award from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, (PI: Sharon Hewner, Nursing), for the project entitled, *Implementing Personalized Cross-sector Transitional Care Management to Promote Care Continuity, Reduce Low Value Utilization, and Reduce the Burden of Treatment for High-need, High-cost Patients*. The project continues to study whether identifying HNHC patients at the point of transition between care settings, coupled with enhanced communication through an interoperable shared care plan, will facilitate referrals to care management, improve continuity, and reduce reliance on low-value care.



Heather Orom, Associate Professor of Community Health and Health Behavior (CHHB) is PI on a new award from the National Cancer Institute for the research project entitled, *Interventions to Decrease Cancer Information Avoidance*. Research on this project will test a video-based strategy for promoting colorectal cancer screening. The intervention is designed to reduce defensive colorectal cancer information avoidance and increase message reach by increasing engagement among those who would otherwise avoid the message. **Gregory Wilding**, Professor of Biostatistics is Co-I on the project.

Announcements

The SPHHP's **J. Warren Perry Poster Day** will be held on **Tuesday, April 29, 2025, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., in Harriman Hall, Room 105**. This annual event allows graduate students (and their faculty mentors) to showcase posters that depict research, integrative/cumulative projects, and service/community projects to a School-wide audience. **Departmental prizes will be awarded in various categories. Refreshments will be served.**

Notice of Intent to Publish

Cures Within Reach (CWR)

[AI Validation Trials](#)

In Spring 2025, CWR will launch an RFP to fund investigator-initiated, POC, Phase I or Phase IIA clinical trials to validate artificial intelligence (AI)-driven drug-disease matches, where the therapies identified are already approved. Through this RFP, CWR expects to fund at least 6 clinical repurposing trials validating AI drug-disease matches. CWR encourages all interested PIs to start working with AI models / collaborators to build or enhance the preclinical data needed for a successful submission. If you have an AI model, CWR encourages you to find clinical collaborators to validate any repurposed drug-disease matches identified by your model. **Brief Letter of Intent (LOI) submissions will be due in late Summer 2025.**

Foundation Funding

[Susan G. Komen](#)

Lobular Breast Cancer Alliance Metastatic Invasive Lobular Carcinoma Research Grant, In Honor of Julia K. Levine

This grant mechanism supports outstanding research with a specific primary focus on **metastatic lobular breast cancer**. Interest is in hypothesis-driven studies that will expand the understanding of the biology of mILC, and/or improve diagnosis, treatment and/or prevention of mILC. These studies may be considered basic, translational, clinical and/or population science in nature. Given that there has been so little study of lobular breast cancer, applicants are encouraged to build ground-breaking paradigms, test imaginative hypotheses and develop creative concepts that may advance the current prevailing theories or practices for other breast cancer types and/or explore novel areas of investigation. **LOI Submission Deadline:** May 23, 2025, 1:00 pm EST.



Craig H Neilsen Foundation – Spinal Cord Injury Research on the Translational Spectrum (SCIRTS)[Spinal Cord Injury Research on the Translational Spectrum](#)

The SCIRTS portfolio supports the development of new approaches to restore/enhance function and prevent or alleviate complications that arise after traumatic spinal cord injury (SCI). Research should be designed to demonstrate an improvement in function or clinical decision-making. The inclusion of individuals with SCI in the design of studies to aid the development of research that leads to an improved quality of life is encouraged. This portfolio emphasizes SCI (vs. diseases or disorders that affect the spinal cord). It is intended to support important new research ideas or demonstrate the efficacy of interventions while accepting the risk associated with this pursuit. Study designs may be based on existing datasets, preclinical models, or human participants. SCIRTS is not intended to support basic cellular research or largescale clinical trials. Instead, it seeks to generate initial data with clear translational significance that enable larger funding opportunities and future clinical trials. The Neilsen Foundation does not provide continuous funding to individual labs but does fund novel research with translational potential that may not be well positioned for federal funding at this time. **LOI Submission Deadline: May 23, 2025, 5:00 pm EST.**

American Pecan Promotion Board (APPB)**Health and Nutrition Research**[American Pecan Promotion Board - RFP 2025](#)

The APPB is interested in receiving proposals addressing the following research focus areas:

1) Cardiometabolic (CMB) Health

- A) Pecan consumption, cholesterol and lipids
 - HDL, LDL, vLDL size and density; lipid ratios; triglycerides, saturated fat metabolism/fat oxidation, body composition changes
- B) Pecan consumption, satiety and blood glucose control
 - Adding pecans to the diet and effects on overall calorie displacement, satiety, blood sugar and insulin,
 - Substituting pecans for snacks that are higher in saturated fat, added sugar and effects on satiety and blood sugar control.
- C) Pecan consumption, inflammation and effects on CMB disease risk factors
 - Blood flow and glucose control
- D) Pecan consumption among children and adolescents and CMB disease risk factors
 - Obesity, blood flow, lipids and triglycerides
- E) Pecan consumption among women of childbearing age and pregnant women and CMB disease risk factors
 - Gestational weight gain and post-partem residual effects and gestational diabetes and post-partem residual effects
- F) Pecan consumption and those taking GLP-1 antagonist drugs
 - Acceptability/palatability, nutrient intakes, muscle maintenance, body composition changes

2) Gut Microbiome

- A) Pecan consumption, gastrointestinal wellness and interconnections to other health outcomes
 - Gut-body axes of interest include; gut-brain axis (mood/cognition), gut-cardiac axis, gut-glycemia axis, and gut-skin axis.
 - Special attention for older Americans eating pecans and mild cognitive impairment and/or mood/depression and gut health.
 - Body composition changes

3) Antioxidant Capacity/Polyphenol Power

- A) Pecan consumption, antioxidant capacity and various health outcomes
 - Relationship with pecan polyphenols, bioactives, prebiotics and antioxidants on:
 - Microbiota changes and GI regularity, cognition and mood, lipid metabolism, chronic inflammation, blood glucose control, skin health

To be considered, all proposals must be received no later than **5:00pm ET on May 27, 2025.**



New York State Funding

[Health and Human Services for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, + Individuals, Families, and Communities](#)

*** Please note application due date: May 13, 2025, 4:00 pm EST**

The New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute (AI), Office of Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Queer Services announces the availability of \$2,205,000 annually in New York State funds to provide services to address key social determinants of health impacting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, Individuals, Families, and Communities as outlined below.

Component B: Direct Services to Transgender, Gender Non-Conforming, Non-Binary Individuals, Families, and Communities – an allocation of the Lorena Borjas Transgender and Non-Binary Wellness and Equity Fund

The purpose of Component B funding is to identify service providers, prioritizing Transgender, Gender Non-Conforming, Non-Binary led and staffed providers, to develop and/or enhance comprehensive health and human services for Transgender, Gender Non-Conforming, Non-Binary individuals, families, and communities through the implementation of proven strategies and/or innovative interventions. The component aims to address issues related to the key social determinants of health impacting Transgender, Gender Non-Conforming, Non-Binary communities: health and racial equity, economic stability, education, social and community factors, health and health care, and neighborhood/environmental factors. This component is an allocation of the Lorena Borjas Transgender and Non-Binary Wellness and Equity Fund.

Component F: Small Grants Program to Specifically Address the Needs of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, + Communities Description

The purpose of Component F funding is to support one (1) organization with a statewide reach to develop and administer a small grants program to specifically address the needs of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, + communities by supporting organizations that have capacity issues due to historic barriers faced by the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, + communities.

[Expanding Harm Reduction Services for Priority Populations Who Use Drugs](#)

*** Please note application due date: May 14, 2025, 4:00 pm EST**

The New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute, Office of Drug User Health announces the availability of New York State funds to provide harm reduction interventions in community settings in New York State. The purpose of this announcement is to expand the reach of comprehensive, culturally comprehensive medical, mental health, harm reduction, and social services for people who use drugs with a focus on Priority Populations who experience persistent inequities with respect to drug use, overdose, and other negative health outcomes. The Priority Populations of focus for this funding are 1) Adolescents ages 12 to 17 and Young Adults ages 18 to 24; and 2) Veterans (those who served in the military or National Guard and who were discharged or released under conditions honorable or dishonorable) that are especially vulnerable to overdose and who have been historically marginalized and stigmatized by systems of care.

Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI)

[Addressing Violence and Trauma](#)

This Topical PCORI Funding Announcement is exclusively dedicated to funding high-quality, patient-centered comparative clinical effectiveness research (CER) projects that address violence and trauma within the following 3 Special Areas of Emphasis **only**: 1) **Intentional Trauma**: Projects must focus on one or more of the following populations: Individuals affected by intimate partner violence; Children and youth who have experienced abuse; Older adults subjected to abuse or neglect. 2) **Unintentional Trauma**: Research must specifically target: Patients with traumatic brain injury (TBI); Care models for fall prevention and fall recovery among older adults; Impaired mobility and physical function resulting from unintentional trauma. 3) **Substance Use and Trauma**: Studies must compare existing strategies for pain management aimed at reducing susceptibility to substance use disorder (SUD) in the context of traumatic injury treatment.

Proposals must align with one or more of these three Special Areas of Emphasis. Applications that do not explicitly address these areas will be considered nonresponsive. Further details of each area are provided in the link above. **LOI Submission Deadline: May 13, 2025, 5:00 pm EST.**



Limited Submissions

Only one application per institution is allowed for the following FOAs and prior approval from the OVPR is required to be the sole applicant. If interested in applying, please provide the OVPRED with notification 60 days prior to the deadline to ovpr.limitedsubmission@research.buffalo.edu before proceeding with the application.

[Limited Submission Funding Opportunities](#)

Prior Research Opportunities can be found on the SPHHP RAS website and by clicking the link below:

[Research Opportunities from Past Newsletters](#)

Words to Live By

“Only as high as I reach can I grow. Only as far as I seek can I go. Only as deep as I look can I see. Only as much as I dream can I be.”

- Karen Ravn

For more information on RAS services, visit our website at sphhp.buffalo.edu/ras

