

UC San Diego

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

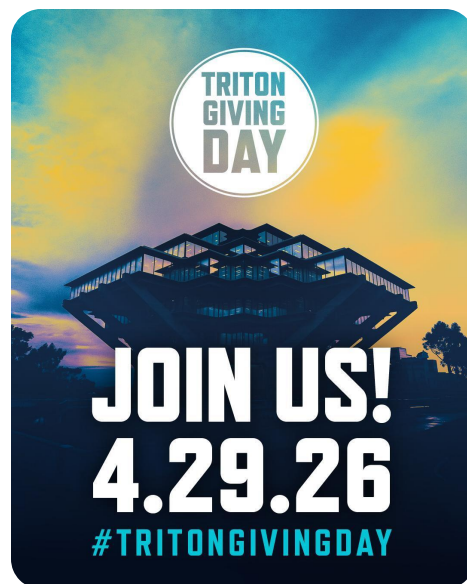
The Division of Geriatrics, Gerontology &
Palliative Care Newsletter



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TRITON GIVING DAY

At UC San Diego's Division of Geriatrics, Gerontology, and Palliative Care, we are proud to advance compassionate, person-centered care for older adults and those living with serious illness. On Triton Giving Day, gifts to Geriatrics, Palliative Care, or both directly support our work—fueling innovative research, training the next generation of clinicians, and enhancing programs that improve quality of life for patients and families. We are grateful for the community that makes this work possible and for the continued support that helps us move it forward.

Donor Spotlight: Dr. Rizkallah



As UC San Diego's Triton Giving Day approaches, we would like to take a moment to spotlight a donor to our division, Dr. Tawfik Rizkallah! Dr. Rizkallah, who has lived in San Diego for over 20 years, understands the value of philanthropy and the difference that it can make in support of academia and research. He, himself, had a longstanding career as an OB/GYN physician specializing in reproductive endocrinology, during which he conducted impactful research, valued intellectual honesty, found joy in teaching, and credits his mentors for helping to shape his path.

Dr. Rizkallah's inspiration to give to our division was a single person - our division chief, Dr. Alison Moore! His donations directly support her research and provide seed money that is often difficult to obtain through grant funds. Feeling gratitude for what he has in life, he posed the question, "Why not share with other people?" Having known Dr. Moore for several years as a patient of hers and forming a strong patient-physician relationship, he noted it was her personality and authenticity that inspired him to support her work. Thank you, Dr. Rizkallah!



Drs. Tawfik Rizkallah & Alison Moore

Our division is thankful for individuals like Dr. Rizkallah – not only for the important funding provided to help further our work, but also for the building of a relationship and a richness from which we benefit overall through the experience they provide, the knowledge they share, and joy they bring.

The relationships we form – whether with donors, patients, patients' families, research participants, colleagues... are a big part of what drives us and the work we do! We are inspired by the people we meet, the people to whom we provide care – whether it be to continue to improve and expand our work or address problems and unanswered questions we come across, through our clinical care, inspired teaching and integral research. We are genuine in our

efforts to want to improve the lives of older adults and those seriously ill and are thankful for those who help us to do so!

Give to Geriatrics Here

Give to Palliative Care Here

Spotlight: Harold Rosenblume



What is your current profession/role?

I am an Executive Director of Development in Health Sciences Advancement. I am a resource to people who want to provide philanthropic support to UC San Diego Health. I consider myself a "philanthropy concierge" whose goal is to make donating easy, impactful, and rewarding.

What initially inspired and motivated you to pursue a career in your field?

My father volunteered for a number of nonprofit organizations in the Seattle area where I grew up. He inspired me to start volunteering and organizing fundraising events as a teenager. That bug stayed with me as an adult and I eventually chose to start working for great organizations and causes that I believe in.

What parts of your work have been particularly inspiring or rewarding for you?

It is always a privilege when a donor lets me be a part of their philanthropic journey. I am motivated by their passion and enjoy showing them how their gifts make a difference. Equally rewarding is getting to work alongside the people who do the important work being funded, like our amazing care teams and physicians in Palliative Care and Geriatrics who work hard to make people's lives better.

What is your go-to stress relief activity during a busy workweek?

Completing a crossword puzzle or tinkering in my garden are relaxing distractions.

If you had to choose a different profession, what would it be?

My very first job was a candy taster when I was seven years old. A woman from a local product research company dropped off various candies each week and I had to rate them - it was a lot of fun! Many years later, my wife and I considered buying a small handmade chocolates company (picture Lucy and Ethel). We passed on that opportunity, but I still have a weakness for chocolate. Who knows, maybe someday we'll give it a go.

What's Happening

Dr. Tessa Antalán at American College of Physicians Annual Meeting



Tessa Antalán, MD, a geriatrician at our senior medicine clinic, represented UC San Diego at the American College of Physicians Annual Meeting last week, sharing in clinical updates, workshops, and collaboration with internal medicine professionals.

[Read more about Dr. Tessa Antalán](#)

Dr. Aladdin Shadyab presented at Solana Beach Community Connections

Aladdin Shadyab, PhD, recently presented at Solana Beach Community Connections, where he delivered his talk, *“Thrive for Life: Lessons from Decades of Research on Healthy Aging.”* Drawing on years of research, he shared practical, evidence-based strategies to help individuals optimize their health, maintain independence, and enjoy life at every age, while engaging with a community committed to living longer and better.



[More about Dr. Aladdin Shadyab](#)

Geriatrics Fellowship Faculty/Fellows Happy Hour!



Geriatrics fellows and some of our newer geriatricians here at UC San Diego recently enjoyed a happy hour event together, which provided an opportunity to share info about their careers and life as part of our UC San Diego Geriatric Medicine Fellowship program's planned wellness activities!

[More about our Fellowship Programs](#)

Congratulations
are in order...



Congratulations

Dr. Roopali Gupta

American Geriatrics Society (AGS) Fellow

We are delighted to extend our congratulations to Roopali Gupta, MD, Professor, Geriatrics Fellowship Program Director, and Education Chief, for being selected as a new American Geriatrics Society Fellow! Her invaluable contributions have enriched both the AGS community and the field of geriatrics as a whole.

[More here](#)



HEALTH SCIEN

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TALA AL-ROUSAN



ASSISTANT ADJUNCT PROFESSOR
HERBERT WERTHEIM SCHOOL OF
PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN LONGEVITY

Tala Al-Rousan, MD, MPH, was named a 2025 Inclusive Excellence Awards Honoree for Health Sciences at UC San Diego Health. This award recognizes her outstanding contributions to advancing inclusion and equity across our health system.

Watch video on Youtube

In the News...

Dr. Benjamin Han hosted a podcast and developed a toolkit for AMERSA focused on improving opioid use disorder care for older adults, highlighting the need for age-friendly approaches and applying the Geriatric 5Ms framework to promote safe, person-centered, and coordinated care. See it [here](#).

Drs. Alison Moore, Lindsey Yourman, and Khai Nguyen's [article](#), "Building an Age-Friendly Health System: UC San Diego's Commitment to Older Adult-Centered Care," in the Retirement Resource Center newsletter highlights UC San Diego's dedication to delivering compassionate, comprehensive care tailored to needs of older adults.

Lindsey Yourman, MD was a keynote speaker for the Meals On Wheels California Statewide Conference on March 24. She highlighted Age-Friendly Health Systems and introduced a "5th M" for malnutrition—a key component of healthy aging. Read more about the conference [here](#).

Dr. Aladdin Shadyab's Public Lecture for Stein Institute for Research on Aging, "Slowing the Clock: Longevity Science Meets Alzheimer's Prevention," with Q & A moderated by Danielle Glorioso, LCSW, available on UCTV. Watch it [here](#).

Dr. Ian Neel recently published an article highlighting the San Diego Alzheimer's Project and its efforts to enhance dementia detection in primary care through targeted training and EMR-integrated clinical guidelines. Read it [here](#).

Recent publications from PubMed:

[Effects of cocoa extract supplementation on physical performance measures: results from the randomized controlled COcoa Supplement and Multivitamin Outcomes study](#)

Poor physical performance is associated with a higher risk of falls, fractures, and premature death among older adults. We determined whether supplementation with cocoa extract vs placebo or multivitamin/multimineral (MVM) vs placebo for 2 yr benefited physical performance measures. The COcoa Supplement and Multivitamin Outcomes Study was a double-blinded, placebo-controlled randomized trial of supplemental cocoa extract and/or MVM vs placebo for the primary prevention of cardiovascular disease...

Mon, Apr 20, 2026

[Read more](#)

[Preparing Geriatrics-Trained Physicians to Discuss Medical Cannabis With Their Older Adult Patients](#)

No abstract

Thu, Apr 09, 2026

[Read more](#)

[Association of epigenetic age acceleration with MRI biomarkers of aging and Alzheimer's disease neurodegeneration](#)

Epigenetic clocks of biological aging have been associated with cognitive impairment and dementia. Less is known about whether they are associated with an older-appearing brain or with an atrophy pattern associated with dementia. We examined associations of five epigenetic clocks measured at baseline with the Spatial Pattern of Atrophy for Recognition of Brain Aging (SPARE-BA) and the Alzheimer's Disease Pattern Similarity Score (AD-PS) derived from structural MRIs obtained an average of 8 years...

Wed, Apr 08, 2026

[Read more](#)

[An FDA-Approved Tenofovir Alafenamide-Based Antiretroviral Therapy Reduces Biological Age in Healthy Adults: First Human Proof-of-Concept for Retrotransposon-Targeted Gerotherapeutics](#)

Nucleos(t)ide reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NRTIs) used for HIV treatment and pre-exposure prophylaxis have been proposed as gerotherapeutics based on their capacity to suppress age-associated retrotransposon activity. However, evidence in humans is currently lacking. Here we evaluated DNA methylation-based measures of biological aging in healthy people without HIV (aged 18-50) using samples from two separate randomized, directly observed dosing pharmacokinetic studies of FDA-approved NRTI...

Fri, Apr 03, 2026

[Read more](#)

[Mapping opioid exposure through prescription data and postmortem analysis of opioid drugs in multiple tissues](#)

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS: Prescription-based morphine exposure was strongly associated with morphine tissue concentrations across multiple organs, providing a quantitative framework for integrating pharmacologic data into EoL research.

Mon, Mar 30, 2026

[Read more](#)

We want your feedback!

Did you know that the division has a virtual suggestion box where you can provide anonymous feedback? [You can access that here.](#)

You can also access the virtual suggestion box on the division's [website](#) – scroll to the bottom of the homepage and click on the feedback link.

Not signed up yet? SIGN UP HERE

Please consider donating to our mission. While we continue to make great strides, we are limited on what we can accomplish with existing funds. We encourage you to become involved with the UC San Diego Division of Geriatrics, Gerontology, and Palliative Care. Join us to help older adults live their best lives longer and improve care for individuals with serious illness. By supporting our efforts, you can ensure that our research, education programs, and clinical care keep pace with the needs of our community and remain strong.

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