



# UC San Diego

## SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

The Division of Geriatrics, Gerontology & Palliative Care Newsletter



**#11**  
**GERIATRICS**

UC San Diego Health

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## Spotlight on Dr. Kyle Edmonds



[Kyle P. Edmonds](#), MD, FAAHPM is an academic palliative medicine physician and national leader in palliative care health policy. He is the Chief of the Section of Palliative Care within the Division of Geriatrics, Gerontology, and Palliative Care and an Associate Professor of Palliative Medicine with appointments in the Department of Medicine, Department of Family Medicine, and Skaggs School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences. He has been the Director of the UC San Diego Health Palliative Care Program since 2021.

Kyle and his partner, Dr. Toluwalasé (Lasé) Ajayi, live and work together in San Diego along with their three children.

### **What motivated you to become a palliative medicine physician?**

I was raised in a very pro-hospice family. It was a frequent topic of conversation and a place we volunteered. I volunteered with hospice before it became *de rigueur* for med school applications and chose a month-long elective in hospice as a fourth year student. Despite all of that, however, it wasn't clear to me for a long time that this was a viable career path. I loved the hospice physicians I worked with but many of them were folks who had made a mid- or late-career change. It wasn't until I was an intern that my paths crossed with Dr. Jeanette Boohene, our inpatient palliative consultant, and I started exploring what a career in the field looked like.

I found, as an intern, that I enjoyed late night conversations with patients and families in the ICU when I could learn more about them as people and then find ways to translate that knowledge back into their plan of care. We had an especially skilled overnight intensivist who I had the great fortune to be on with most of my call nights who took compassionate extubations very seriously. She took me under her wing and by the end of my first month in the ICU she was letting me run most of those when they happened at night. In short: people's stories are what motivate me. I really like learning about patients in the larger context of their lives and helping tailor care to make a little more sense for them.

### **What do you like most about your career?**

The best part of my job is getting to work as part of a team. I love being surrounded by experienced experts of many disciplines and the fact that it gives me permission to let go of my (very doctor-ey) need to be seen as **THE** expert in all things. I'm also the sort of person who likes new clinical challenges and seeing lots of different types of patients. I very much like knowing a little bit about a lot of things (and learning more when I need to!), so getting to see people with lots of different backgrounds, lives, and diseases is probably my favorite part of my clinical work.

### **What is your vision and/or main goals for the Palliative Team in the years ahead?**

With the support of the Division, Department, and Health System leadership, we've got a great team doing important and highly skilled work. For me and for our team, **HOW** we do our work matters and is why we do what we do. It serves as our North Star. It's important to me that I'm always certain that the way we go about growing and meeting the needs of the health system is always guided by that why. After existing at UCSD since 2005, we have recently entered a new era of palliative care and our vision remains that we will build toward an environment at UCSD where every patient and family has access to team members who are experienced in using palliative care skills.

### **What do you like to do for fun?**

My wife is far more impressive and important than me. We have 3 kids (13, 5, and almost 2 years old), a Bernedoodle puppy, a geriatric house in Mission Hills, and no family in the area. All that's to say: free time for fun is a rather foreign concept for me. When I can, I'm an avid reader (primarily history and biography; I have a soft spot for US Presidential biographies) and I'm always working hard to keep up with my New Yorker Magazines as they pile up. I'm a pretty good amateur mixologist as well. Lasé often challenges me to create a custom cocktail when we host people. On a really good morning, I can be found reading and listening to the waves at Sunset Cliffs or the Cabrillo Tide Pools, but on most mornings I can be found cursing the world from atop my Peloton.



Kyle received his medical degree from the University of Arizona College of Medicine and trained in Family Medicine at St. Joseph's Hospital & Medical Center in Phoenix, AZ. Following residency, he trained in palliative medicine as a Dr. Seuss Foundation Fellow of Palliative Medicine at the Institute for Palliative Medicine at San Diego Hospice and Scripps Health before joining the clinical faculty at UC San Diego. There, he practiced inpatient consultative palliative medicine in addition to serving in multiple formal and informal leadership roles across the institution.

Kyle serves as the Young Physician on the AAHPM Delegation to the American Medical Association where he helps craft the development of AMA policy. He has been an active member of the AMA at the national level for 15 years, currently representing both AAHPM and the California Medical Association. Within the Academy, he is the Chair of the Health Policy & Advocacy Strategic Coordinating Committee, a past Co-chair and member of Public Policy Committee, and was a member of the Alternative Payment Model Task Force.

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## Highlight on Article by Drs. Benjamin Han & Alison Moore

**"Trends in emergency department visits associated with cannabis use among older adults in California, 2005-2019"**



Drs. [Benjamin H Han](#) and [Alison Moore](#), along with [Dr. Eddie Castillo](#) & [Jesse Brennan](#) in Emergency Medicine, and current UCSD MPH student Mirella Orozco, published a new paper in the [Journal of the American Geriatrics Society](#), which finds a sharp increase in cannabis-related ED visits among adults age 65+ in California.

"The use of cannabis by older adults has increased sharply over the past two decades in the United States with the legalization for medical and recreational purposes in many states. California legalized medical marijuana in 1996 and recreational cannabis in 2016. While there is limited evidence that cannabis may be helpful for specific conditions, older adults are increasingly using the plant-based drug to treat a wide range of symptoms and using it socially – while their perceived risk of regular use is decreasing.

The study highlights that cannabis use among older adults can lead to unintended consequences that require emergency care for a variety of reasons. Cannabis can slow reaction time and impair attention, which may lead to injuries and falls; increase the risk for psychosis, delirium and paranoia; exacerbate cardiovascular and pulmonary diseases and interact with other prescription medications."

- UC San Diego Press Release

[Read the article in AGS](#)



# Congratulations!

are in order...

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[Dr. Kathryn Winter](#)'s new baby son has arrived! Baby Laszlo was born in the early morning hours on January 5th, 2023. Congratulations to Dr. Winters and her growing family!

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[Dr. James Templeman](#) was admitted to the National Center of Leadership in Academic Medicine (NCLAM). Congratulations Dr. Templeman!

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[Dr. Roopali Gupta](#) has been elected to the Board of the Association of Directors of Geriatric Academic Programs (ADGAP). Congratulations Dr. Gupta!

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[Dr. Anjoulie Pujji](#) was selected to be part of the UC San Diego Health Leadership Academy. Congratulations Dr. Pujji!

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[Dr. Gary Buckholz](#) is now the Co-Director of UC San Diego Health: Sanford Compassionate Communication

Academy Fellowship (SCCAF). Congratulations Dr. Buckholz!

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The Vitality Arts Project grant with the [Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego](#) has been accepted & awarded! The Division of Geriatrics, Gerontology and Palliative Care & Stein Institute for Research on Aging are working close with MCASD to address ageism & improve the museum's outreach and engagement to its older adult patrons & visitors. Congratulations to all! [Read more here.](#)

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# Cygnnet Theatre presents "Caregiver's Day Out"

A MYSTICAL DRAMA BY THE  
ACADEMY AWARD-WINNING  
CO-WRITER & CO-DIRECTOR  
OF *ENCANTO*.



Memory, Music, & Magic

# EL HURACÁN

By Charise Castro Smith  
Directed by Daniel Jáquez

WEST COAST PREMIERE  
Jan. 25 - Feb. 19, 2023

## JOIN US FOR A CAREGIVER DAY OUT!

Mix and Mingle with other caregivers and enjoy the mystical drama  
El Huracán. Deeply discounted tickets available for only \$10.

**February 11th**

**2:00 PM** - Pre-show reception with hosted dessert bar.

Meet and greet representatives from our community partner organizations!

**3:00 PM** - Show begins

Get information from our community partners including:  
Alzheimer's San Diego, ElderHelp,  
George G. Glenner Alzheimer's Family Centers, Inc.



In partnership with

Southern Caregiver Resource Center  
Celebrating 35 Years of Service

**\$10**

Use Code **CARE10**

Valid ONLY for Feb. 11 Matinee  
Limit 4 tix per transaction.

Can't make the event but still want to  
see the show? Save 30% off tickets!  
Use code **CARE30** at checkout.  
Excludes Section C, Matinees  
& Opening Night.

Tickets: 619.337.1525



**CYGNETTHEATRE**

www.cygnetheatre.org



The West Coast premiere production of "El Huracán" has several characters that have Alzheimer's. The Cygnet Theater is partnering with service organizations as a way to provide patrons with resources, in addition to wanting to figure out a way for caregivers to connect with each other.

In partnership with Southern Caregiver Resource Center and Alzheimer's San Diego, they are offering deeply discounted tickets to caregivers to enjoy a day at the theatre! They will host a pre-show reception with light dessert and have some resource tables available for service organization to provide information to attendees.

Individuals can also choose to attend this production on other show dates. Save 30% off tickets! Use code CARE30 at checkout.

## Caregivers Day Out

Mix and Mingle with other caregivers and enjoy the mystical drama "El Huracán." Deeply discounted tickets available for only \$10

**February 11th**

**2pm** Pre-show reception with hosted dessert bar. Meet and greet representatives from our community partner organizations!

**3pm** Show begins

Call: (619) 337-1525 for tickets or [CLICK HERE](#) and use code: **CARE10**

(only valid on matinee performance on February 11th. Limit 4 tix per transaction)

[More about the show](#)

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## What's Happening/Events

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Public Lecture with Dr. Anthony Molina is Today at  
4pm!



Dr. Anthony Molina  
Interim Scientific Director

# PUBLIC LECTURE

## "WHAT CAN GEROSCIENCE TEACH US ABOUT HEALTHY LONGEVITY?"

Please join us for a talk with our interim Scientific Director, Dr. Anthony Molina.  
Q & A to follow.

🕒 4-5pm

📅 Thurs, Jan 26

📍 Zoom

It's not too late to REGISTER HERE

## Our Division Holiday Party in December



## Program 2023 are now open!!

If you know any first-year medical students interested, applications and application instructions are online and can be [accessed here](#) or via the QR code. The Home Institution Faculty Sponsor form, a required component of the application, can be accessed for [download here](#).



More about MSTAR

## Helpful Resources



Visit the website

### National Cancer Institute: Cancer Aging Comorbidities Webinar Series

Each session will allocate ~ 20 minutes for discussion of opportunities and future directions of the research area(s) and addressing questions from the audience. Meeting recordings will be posted on their page.



SAN DIEGO / IMPERIAL  
**GERIATRIC**  
EDUCATION CENTER

Visit the website

The San Diego/Imperial Geriatric Education Center is one of 48 academic Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Programs funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration.

Our Center is working to address the need for enhanced geriatric education on Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias and Age-Friendly Healthcare in both San Diego and Imperial Counties in southern California.

We train primary care providers, health profession trainees, patients, families, caregivers and direct care workers to provide value-based care and improve health outcomes for older adults.

## Our Division Members in the News:

- Op-ed by [Dr. Khai Nyugen](#) in the San Diego Union Tribune entitled "Here's what you need to know about the flu, COVID-19 and RSV 'triple-demic'" Check it out [here](#).
- [Dr. Ian Neel](#)'s textbook chapter on dementia has been published! Read about the book [here](#).
- Article by [Dr. Anthony Molina](#) in La Jolla Light, "New 'Living Lab' collaboration between UCSD and senior-living community will look into aging successfully." Read it [here](#).

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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 and join us in helping older adults live their best lives longer and improving 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.

SUPPORT US



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