



UC San Diego

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

The Division of Geriatrics, Gerontology & Palliative Care Newsletter



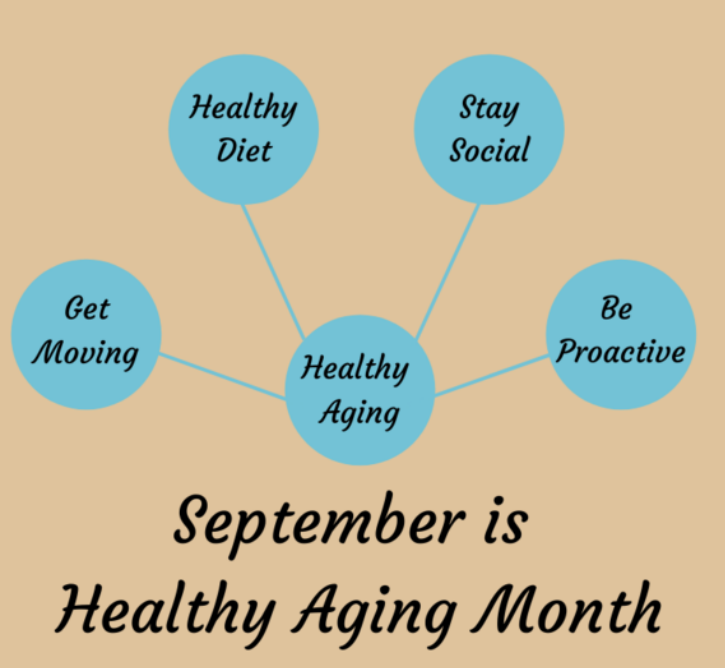
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Happy Healthy Aging Month!



Healthy Aging Month is observed during the month of September. This observance raises awareness on the physical and mental health of older adults and serves as a reminder that as we age, our minds and bodies change. It is important to maintain a healthy lifestyle to help deal with those changes and to help prevent some common age-related health problems.

Visit [National Institute on Aging](https://www.nia.nih.gov/) for more info!

Medical Student Training in Aging Research

The Medical Student Training in Aging Research (MSTAR) Program is funded by the National Institute on Aging and has been offered at UC San Diego since 2005. Each year, this popular program provides up to 18 medical students from across the nation an opportunity to conduct 8 to 12 weeks of summer research guided by the mentorship of a UC San Diego faculty member. Students receive full-time training conducting hands-on research in an

area of personal interest pertaining to aging or an age-related disorder. Additionally, students participate in a variety of didactics that help shape their knowledge related to aging and teach valuable skills needed to conduct research. Students are provided an opportunity to showcase their work locally and encouraged to travel to the Annual Meeting of the American Geriatrics Society to present their findings.

This year we had 15 students, a combo of in person and virtual, coming from locations ranging from Hawaii to New Orleans to Vermont. We held 10 successful seminars, including one panel of our very own faculty and physicians, and Dr. Lindsey Yourman (Chief Geriatric Officer, County Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) Medical Care Services department) to give them an opportunity to hear about all the possibilities within the field of Geriatrics and the unique journeys their mentors have taken to get where they are. They took a field trip to see the [Town Square at the George G. Glenner Alzheimer's Family Center](#) in Chula Vista. If you haven't been, it's a really amazing thing to see. Town Square is the first Reminiscence Therapy Day Center for individuals with dementia in the US. The center has been designed on the interior to facilitate immersive Reminiscence Therapy and bring its participants back to a time where their memories are the strongest.

The MSTAR students had their final presentations at the end of the summer at which they each presented for 10 minutes about their area of research and their findings. Some are still working with their mentors, even after the program officially ends. We also encourage them to submit their work to American Geriatrics Society (AGS) this year. It was a wonderful group of students and we hope we have persuaded all of them to pursue a career in geriatrics!



Our 2023 MSTAR students:

Noorhan Amani (Mentor: Tala Al-Rousan)

Pallavi Chandrasekhar (Mentor: Erin Sundermann)

Jessica Daly (Mentor: Samir Gupta)

Matinder Dhillon (Mentor: Melody Schiaffino)

Jacquelyn Ferguson (Mentor: Alison Potok)

Ha Mieu Ho (Mentor: Ellen Lee)

Dylan Lawton (Mentor: Ryan Moran)

Sidney Lin (Mentor: Benjamin Han)

Sydney Maraat (Mentors: Benjamin Han, Maile Karris)

Shay Nakahira (Raeanne Moore)

Pearse O'Malley (Mentor: Alison Moore)

Vy Pham (Mentor: Brian Jiang)

Emma Rice (Mentor: Sarah Banks)

Liz Timple (Mentor: Biren Kamdar)

Michelle Trinh (Mentor: Katie Bangen)

Abigail Zaratan (Mentor: Lisa Delano-Wood)







[More about MSTAR](#)

September is Fall Prevention Month

Falling is not a normal part of aging. You can prevent falls by doing the right exercises, making your home safer, getting regular health checkups, and more. Learn steps you can take to stay safe.

Take Control of Your Health: 6 Steps to Prevent a Fall

Every **11 seconds**, an older adult is seen in an emergency department for a fall-related injury. **Many falls are preventable.**
Stay safe with these tips!

 <p>1 Find a good balance and exercise program Look to build balance, strength, and flexibility. Contact your local Area Agency on Aging for referrals. Find a program you like and take a friend.</p>	 <p>2 Talk to your health care provider Ask for an assessment of your risk of falling. Share your history of recent falls.</p>
 <p>3 Regularly review your medications with your doctor or pharmacist Make sure side effects aren't increasing your risk of falling. Take medications only as prescribed.</p>	 <p>4 Get your vision and hearing checked annually and update your eyeglasses Your eyes and ears are key to keeping you on your feet.</p>
 <p>5 Keep your home safe Remove tripping hazards, increase lighting, make stairs safe, and install grab bars in key areas.</p>	 <p>6 Talk to your family members Enlist their support in taking simple steps to stay safe. Falls are not just a seniors' issue.</p>

To learn more, visit ncoa.org/FallsPrevention.

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ncoa
national council on aging.

Helpful Resources for Fall Prevention

San Diego Fall Prevention Task Force



San Diego is home to several free programs that can help you stay healthy, active, and independent as you age! One such program is Tai Chi. The County offers two styles of tai chi, Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention (sun style) and Tai Chi Moving for Better Balance (yang style). For more information about free, evidence-based fall prevention programs near you click the link below.

[Visit the website](#)

Stopping Elderly Accidents, Deaths & Injuries (STEADI) Fall Prevention



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention created the STEADI initiative, which has educational materials tailored to healthcare practitioners, patients, and caregivers.

[Visit the website](#)

Dr. Ian Neel on Dementia Care Aware on Air



Our wonderful Dr. Ian Neel on "Dementia Care On Air" podcast discussing the practical implementation of a brain health plan with patients and their care partners, highlighting the importance of evidence-based strategies.

[Listen here](#)

Welcome New Division Members!



Welcome Eddie Lam, MD, MPH

We are excited to welcome Dr. Eddie Lam, as he joins UC San Diego as an Associate Physician in our division. He will serve as a physician in our ambulatory geriatrics clinic in La Jolla as well as inpatient services in La Jolla and Hillcrest. Dr. Lam was born in Vietnam but grew up in Garden Grove, California. He pursued a Geriatrics fellowship in hopes of being a better provider for the growing older adult population. Outside of work, he loves to play and watch basketball (go Lakers!). He is returning to Southern California after four years of training in the Bay Area, and is

delighted to join this Division of outstanding faculty, staff, and trainees. Being new to San Diego, he welcomes any tips for things to do or eat!

Welcome Zaida Albarracin, MD

We are excited to welcome Dr. Zaida Albarracin (she/her), as she joins VA San Diego full-time, as a Palliative Medicine physician. Dr. Albarracin is originally from South America and practiced as a gastroenterologist with a subspecialty in endoscopy ultrasound. Due to life circumstances, she moved to the United States, and started her medical career all over again. She completed her Internal Medicine



residency at Oregon Health and Science University and her Palliative Medicine fellowship at the University of Miami/West Palm Beach campus. She comes to us after having been employed by The Permanente Medical Group, in Northern California. Her research focuses on gender disparities, and diversity in medicine, quality improvement, and social medicine. One of her passions is to travel around the world and explore different cultures, foods, and beautiful beaches.



Welcome Laura Jimenez

Laura Jimenez has joined our division as our new Education and Research Training Coordinator! We are delighted to have her as part of our team. In her position, she will be coordinating the geriatric medicine

fellowship program, along with schedules and activities for rotating residents and medical students, in addition to serving as the program manager for the NIA-funded MSTAR program!

Laura was born and raised in San Bernardino, California. She's an alumni from UC San Diego and holds a BA in Communication with a minor in Law & Society. During her time at UC San Diego, she studied abroad in London. She loved London so much that she returned to earn a MA in Public Communication and Public Relations from the University of Westminster. Laura has worked at UC San Diego for 16 years and has held various positions in HR, AP and Academic Affairs. She was previously at the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs (GEPA) for over 2 years. This is Laura's first position at the School Medicine and she is excited to join our division!

Please join us in welcoming Drs. Eddie Lam & Zaida Albarracin and Laura Jimenez

What's Happening/Events

Alzheimer's Awareness Night at Petco Park!

Alzheimer's Awareness Night was at Petco Park on September 18th. UC San Diego, the San Diego Padres, and our community partners all joined to raise awareness for Alzheimer's disease at Petco Park.



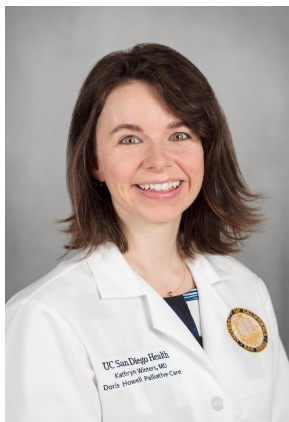
Division members pictured above: Dr. Benjamin Han with family and friends, & Sasha Weiss and her

Congratulations
are in order...

Dr. Kathryn Winters has been chosen to attend the 2023 Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Mid-Career Women Faculty Leadership Development Seminar in December 5-7, 2023, at the InterContinental Buckhead in Atlanta, GA.

Congratulations Dr. Winters!

[More about AAMC](#)



Dr. Alison Moore and Jennifer Reichstadt received good news that the San Diego Alzheimer's Disease Resource Center for Minority Aging Research (AD-RCMAR) was renewed with funding for another 5 years! This Center is a partnership between UC San Diego and San Diego State University and is working to enhance and increase the diversity of our nation's scientific workforce committed to careers in ADRD (Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias) research; and is focused on understanding and addressing risk factors and developing interventions to reduce ADRD disparities and enhance healthy cognitive aging in diverse populations. The SD AD-RCMAR's priority populations include Hispanic/Latino, Limited English Proficient (LEP) and Refugee Communities. These communities are at increased risk for ADRD and are of particular importance to the San Diego region.

Congratulations to all involved!

Visit SD AD-RCMAR site



Alison Moore received the 2023 David H. Solomon Memorial Lecture Award from UCLA and presented a lecture on cannabis use at the 39th Annual UCLA Intensive Course in Geriatric Medicine and Board Review on September 20. One of the longest-running courses of its kind, this is a four-day course and board review in geriatric medicine and Alison is very honored to receive this award.

More about the UCLA Intensive



- Congratulations to Drs. Kyle Edmonds & Rabia Atayee on their invited editorial published in the Journal of Pain and Palliative Care Pharmacotherapy "Checking Each Other's Math: Is It Possible Without a Single Standard for Opioid Dose Equivalence?" Read it [here](#).
- Dr. Benjamin Han was on CNN on August 6th in a CNN documentary with Dr. Sanjay Gupta "Weed 7: A Senior Moment". More info [here](#).

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 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.

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