

Health Promotion Research Institute

California State University, Fullerton



Inside this issue:

Mini-Grant Recipients	2
Researchers Use Innovative Method to Evaluate Mothers' Feeding Decisions	2
Fibromyalgia Study Participants Receive Personal Health Assessment at Bi-Annual Event	3
Fibromyalgia Center to Host Free Community Event	3
Nearly \$7 Million Received to Reduce Health Disparities	4
Event to Improve Student Access to Sustainable Foods	5
HPRI Awards Two Scholarships to Master's Student	5
Make a Donation	5

Key Leadership Changes Announced

Three founding directors of the Health Promotion Research Institute (HPRI) at Cal State Fullerton were promoted prior to the start of the spring 2011 semester. Shari McMahan, PhD, director of the Center



for the Promotion of Healthy Lifestyles and Obesity Prevention, has been named acting dean for the College of Health and Human Development. McMahan, formerly the chair of the Department of Health Science, succeeds Roberta Rikli, PhD, who retired in December 2010. Jessie Jones, PhD, director of the Fibromyalgia Research & Education Center, has been promoted to acting chair, Health Science. Jones will continue to be involved with HPRI efforts; however, she has resigned from her position as co-director of the Institute. Sora Tanjasiri,

DrPH, who previously served with Jones as co-director of HPRI, has been named director of the Institute. Tanjasiri is also the principal investigator for the "Weaving an Islander Network for Cancer Awareness, Research, and Training" (WINCART) project.

Each of these individuals played an instrumental role in the formation and development of the Institute, which was established in 2009. Among a few of the Institute's highlights that occurred under their leadership: 50 HPRI faculty members from seven colleges within the university were recruited; more than \$7.5 million was funded for research proposals by HPRI faculty; a Community Advisory Board, consisting of 15 representatives from the public and private sector, was established; and two town hall forums and several community events were held.

Faculty Members to Develop Research Ideas

Four faculty members were recently awarded a mini-grant for spring 2011. Funded by the Associate Vice President of Graduate Programs and Research's Center and Institute Planning and Expansion Program, in partnership with the Health Promotion Research Institute, each faculty member will receive 3-units release time to develop their research

ideas into submittable grant proposals by the end of the semester.

To date, the Health Promotion Research Institute has provided 11 mini-grants to support the work of HPRI faculty.

See page 2 for a picture of the recipients and a brief description of their projects.

Spring 2011 Mini-Grant Recipients



Janna Kim (Child and Adolescent Studies) plans to examine the association between media use and alcohol consumption patterns and alcohol-related sexual risk-taking in ethnically diverse college students (ages 18-21 years).



Tu-Uyen Nguyen (Asian American Studies) plans to assess the feasibility and appropriateness of a church-based support and navigation program to increase breast health education and screening for the Samoan community.



Carter Rakovski (Sociology) will discover prevalent health concerns among nursing assistants, sources of risks to their health, and ways to reduce these health risks.



Michele Wood (Health Science) will develop and compare the effects of intervention messages incorporating disaster preparedness recommendations, compared to those that incorporate preparedness information modeled by others.

Researchers Use Innovative Method to Evaluate Mothers' Feeding Decisions

Many moms want their children to be more fit and healthy. They also realize the value of good nutrition. But do they put this desire and information to practice? The Center for Healthy Lifestyles and Obesity Prevention seeks to find the gap between knowledge and intention, and actual behavioral changes.



The project, *Beyond Knowledge and Intention: Mothers' Feeding Decisions*, is one of seven components in *An Interdisciplinary Approach to Address Obesity: From Infancy through Adulthood study*. Funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Mothers' Feeding Decisions project is led by Principal Investigator Jie Weiss, PhD, and Co-Principal Investigators Shari McMahan, PhD, and Emily Cheng, PhD. To test their assumption—that the intention for healthy feeding and the daily meal choices are more likely to be consistent in the intervention groups compared to the non-intervention group—the research team has incorporated an innovative method.

"Usually you give people a survey and they complete it," says Weiss. "For this study, we are using 'real-time' data collection technology, the Ecological Momentary Assessment with Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) to record mothers' perceived outcomes of their food choices for their children and the actual meals they cook for their children. We collect this information from mothers over a six-week period in order to assess the feeding pattern each mother has and also to examine the

gaps between mothers' intentions to help their children be fit and their actual behaviors on a daily basis."

The Center is working in partnership with Dr. Alberto Gedissman, a pediatrician at Santa Ana-based Wellness Center, one of the medical centers of AltaMed. Most of the study participants, 98 percent, are low-income Latino mothers. Each mother has at least one child, between the ages of 5-18, who has been clinically diagnosed with obesity. The mothers participate in an eight-week nutrition class offered at the Wellness Center; their children receive intervention as well.

Study participants are divided into three groups. Participants in group one receive handheld computers (PDAs) and training on how to use it as well as a camera to take pictures of dinners that mothers' prepare for their children with obesity every evening for five weeks. They also complete a food log each day, receive PDA messages three times a day and are called by a research assistant twice a week. Participants in group two receive the same tools, except for the camera; and individuals in group three, the control group, only maintain a food log.

"Through our intervention using the technology, we really want to promote behavior change and promote behavior maintenance," says Weiss. "Only behavior maintenance can really bring long-term health benefits."



Fibromyalgia Study Participants Receive Personal Health Assessment at Bi-Annual Event

More than 100 study participants recently turned out to receive their “personal health profile” as part of the Fibromyalgia Research & Education Center’s *Physical and Cognitive Status of People Aged 50+ With and Without Fibromyalgia: A Longitudinal Study*. The program, *Healthy Aging with/without Fibromyalgia*, was held February 26 at Cal State Fullerton.

In addition to a special session for study participants, the free event included a keynote address by Professor Jessie Jones, PhD, director of the Fibromyalgia Research & Education Center, on *Understanding Potential Causes of Fibromyalgia: The First Step to Treatment*. The presentation was open to the general public and also provided an opportunity for Certified Health Education Specialists to earn continuing education units. Held in collaboration with the Health Promotion Research Institute, the program also featured two activity workshops: one on Rosen Methods Movement and another specifically geared towards family members and friends of individuals with fibromyalgia.

According to Senior Research Coordinator, Jordan Aquino, the longitudinal study examines how aging affects cognitive and physical performance in individuals; how fibromyalgia and aging affect cognitive and physical performance; and differences between people who have fibromyalgia, compared to those who do not have the chronic pain disorder.

Research participants include many individuals who took part in the Center’s 2008 baseline study as well as newly recruited people with fibromyalgia. Using the same battery of tests, the research team plans to invite the 115 participants to complete their next round of as-

sessments in fall 2012. A third follow-up conference will take place in spring 2013.

While data analysis is currently underway for the 2010 component, researchers found substantial differences in all physical performance measures and in memory, concentration and

executive function in the 2008 study.

Dana Rutledge, PhD, director of Research for the Center, is the principal investigator of the study. Co-investigators include Professors Jessie Jones, Barbara Cherry, Laura Zettel-Watson, Debbie Rose and Public Health Master’s Student Jordan Aquino. All of these individuals as well as over 40 CSUF students from various departments (i.e., department of health science, kinesiology, nursing, psychology, gerontology, human services, and sociology) are volunteering their time and talents to this non-funded project.



Fibromyalgia Center to Host Free Community Event

The Fibromyalgia Research & Education Center, in partnership with the Health Promotion Research Institute and the North Orange County Fibromyalgia Support Group, will host a free event on May 7, 2011 from 1-6 p.m. in observance of National Fibromyalgia Awareness Day.

The program, presented at Cal State Fullerton (Building KHS-Room 199), will feature a variety of presentations and interactive workshops. Individuals, including family members and friends, who are affected by this chronic pain disorder are invited to attend.

For more information, visit the Center’s website at fibro.fullerton.edu or call 657-278-7031.

Nearly \$7 Million Received to Reduce Health Disparities

The Center for Cancer Disparities Research recently received two grants—totaling nearly \$7 million—to fund efforts to prevent obesity and cancer deaths in the Pacific Islander community. The grant proposals were submitted by Professor Sora Tanjasiri, DrPH, who is the principal investigator for both projects and founder of the WINCART (Weaving an Islander Network for Cancer Awareness, Research, and Training) network.



The awards will be used to expand research studies, evaluations, training and educational campaigns among this medically underserved population in Southern California. According to the 2000 Census, more than 110,000 Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders live in the area, which include the counties of Los Angeles, Riverside, Orange, San Bernardino and San Diego.

Many of these individuals face high socioeconomic and other barriers to health care as demonstrated by research data. The incidence rates for breast cancer, for example, decreased or remained the same for all ethnic groups between 1992-2002—with the exception of Asian Pacific Islanders (Edwards et al., 2005). Instead, this population experienced an increase in incidence rates during the same period. Obesity, which has been associated as a factor in the onset of cancer, is also high in all Pacific Islander populations.



“We aim to decrease cancer health disparities among Pacific Islanders by promoting healthy lifestyles, decreasing smoking, and training the next generation of community-based researchers and educators,” says Tanjasiri.

Of the \$7 million funding, more than \$4 million was awarded to the WINCART project. Funded by the National Institutes of Health/National Cancer Institute’s Center to Reduce Cancer Health Disparities, WINCART will receive \$820,000 each year through 2015. The grant will be used for community education, research and the training of junior research investigators.

The unique, collaborative, community participatory network involves six community-based agencies (Guam Communications Network, Orange County Asian Pacific Islander Community Alliance,

Pacific Islander Health Partnership, Samoan National Nurses Association, Tongan Community Service Center/Special Service for Groups, Inc. and the Union of Pan Asian Communities) along with researchers from three universities (California State University, Fullerton, Claremont Graduate University and the University of Southern California).

The second grant, which totals more than \$2.6 million, was awarded by the National Institutes of Health. As with the WINCART grant, a portion of the funds will be received each year through 2015. The purpose of this grant, says Tanjasiri, is to increase the number of Pacific Islander women who get Pap tests, a gynecological screenings that detects cervical cancer, infections and abnormalities.

Among the interventions, brochures will be created and a 10-minute DVD, dubbed in Chamorro, Tongan and Samoan, will be developed. Tailored to women and men, the DVD will feature Pacific Islander professionals and model social support discussions about Pap testing. Areas of topic include: what the test is; how it can prevent cancer; how often women should be tested; and how to get a Pap test.

“We hope that through these studies we can synergize new opportunities for collaborative, multilevel cancer health disparities research with Pacific Islander and other communities and academic institutions throughout Southern California,” says Tanjasiri.



Event to Improve Student Access to Sustainable Foods

The first-ever Farmer's Market to be held at Cal State Fullerton will be presented April 5 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Titan Walk. Alisa Spieckerman, a master's student in public health, is coordinating the event, which will assess attitudes and behaviors towards locally and organically available foods at the Farmer's Market.

According to Spieckerman's literature review, organic and local foods are increasingly being sought-after, especially in the younger, health-conscious generation. The project provides an avenue to create awareness and access to these foods and also promotes healthy eating behaviors on campus.

"The benefits of Alisa's project are multi-layered," says Archana McEligot, PhD, Spieckerman's Advisor and director of the Center for Cancer Disparities Research. "Research consistently shows a relationship be-



tween dietary intakes and risk of some cancers, as well as obesity."

The event, which provides a stepping stone to further improve access to sustainable foods on campus, is co-sponsored by the Health Science Department, the Student Health Center, the Center for Cancer Disparities Research and the Center for Healthy Lifestyles and Obesity Prevention. Several local vendors will take part in the event. Organic foods, such as strawberries, oranges, avocados, tangerines and vegetables, as well as jelly, nuts, olives, hummus and organic-baked breads, will be available for purchase.

HPRI Awards Two Scholarships to Master's Student

Jordan Aquino was among several students to be presented a scholarship from the Health Promotion Research Institute. Aquino, who is currently in his first year of the public health master's program, received the Kathryn T. McCarty Research Scholarship Award as well as one for Outstanding Undergraduate. The gifts were used to help fund his research poster presentation, *BMI Levels and Pain Indices in Hispanics with Chronic Pain*, at the American Academy

of Pain Management's annual clinical meeting, presented in Las Vegas in September.

The scholarships were made possible through a donation by Kathryn T. McCarty, a cancer survivor and wife of the late Perry McCarty, who was vice president of Beckman Instruments for three decades.



About HPRI

The Health Promotion Research Institute is a university-wide institute at California State University, Fullerton that promotes collaborative, interdisciplinary health-related research among faculty, students, and community leaders and organizations.

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CENTER FOR HEALTHY LIFESTYLES AND OBESITY PREVENTION
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FIBROMYALGIA RESEARCH & EDUCATION CENTER
<http://fibro.fullerton.edu>

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Departments of Afro-Ethnic Studies, Anthropology, Asian American Studies, Biology, Chicana & Chicano Studies, Child and Adolescent Studies, Civil & Environmental Engineering, Communications, Health Science, Human Communication Studies, Human Services, Information Systems & Decision Sciences, Kinesiology, Nursing, Psychology, Radio TV, Film, Social Work, Sociology, Special Education & CSUF chapter of Eta Sigma Gamma.

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