



HEALTH SCIENCE DEPARTMENT



**College of Health and Human Services
2024-2025 Newsletter**

NEWSLETTER

HEALTH SCIENCE DEPARTMENT
CSULB, COLLEGE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

"I am pleased to join such a wonderful department which is always striving to provide the best for our students and community at large. I realized it is very crucial to have a newsletter which can give a glimpse into the great work our students, faculty, and staff have continued to do throughout the pandemic. We are proud to share our achievements and new initiatives and hope you will enjoy reading about our efforts."

Kamiar Alaei, MD, DrPH



HEALTH SCIENCE DEPARTMENT CELEBRATES

60 YEARS

ESTABLISHED IN 1965, THE HEALTH SCIENCE DEPARTMENT BOASTS 3 UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM OPTIONS, 1 MINOR IN PUBLIC HEALTH, 1 CERTIFICATE IN PUBLIC HEALTH INFORMATICS & TECHNOLOGY, 1 UNDERGRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE TRACK WITH BEACH EDGE, 2 GRADUATE PROGRAMS-THE MPH PROGRAM AND THE NEW DRPH PROGRAM LAUNCHING FALL 2025.

Mission

To aid and encourage students' development into knowledgeable professionals and life-long learners who will lead efforts to support health equity for all within the fields of health science, public and community health, health education and other related areas. The program fosters the development of person- and community-centered health professionals who are culturally sensitive and responsive to the complex social determinants of health.

Goals

- Contribute to the development of a competent student body and faculty
- Develop strong teaching and research or scholarship programs
- Maintain linkages with health care professionals, academic personnel, and the community at large.

Objectives

- Synthesize in-depth information from relevant sources representing various points of view/approaches for health information
- Written and oral communication skills in order to serve as an effective health resource person as well as facilitate the development and maintenance of collaborative relationships
- Critical thinking and problem-solving skills to enhance program development, implementation, and evaluation efforts related to priority public health issues
- Capacity to understand and interpret research methods and related qualitative and quantitative data to promote evidence-based practice
- Cultural competence necessary to work within diversity and account for contextual influences that impact health equity
- Management and leadership skills to integrate research and practice in the field of public health

INITIATIVES

B.S. in Applied Data Science: Health Analytics track starts Fall 2025

Doctor of Public Health program's 1st cohort starts Fall 2025

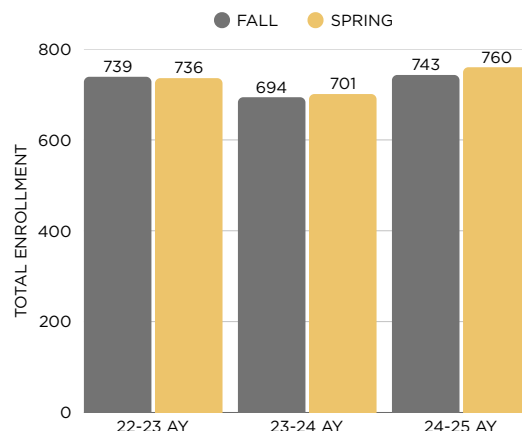
Undergraduate Public Health Informatics & Technology certificate

UC-HSI Doctoral Diversity Initiative partnership with UCLA

PROGRAM STATISTICS

DEPARTMENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Part-Time Lecturers	23
Full-Time Lecturers	7
Tenure Track	6
Tenured	10
Admin Staff	2
Student Assistants	2



HSC STUDENT STATISTICS

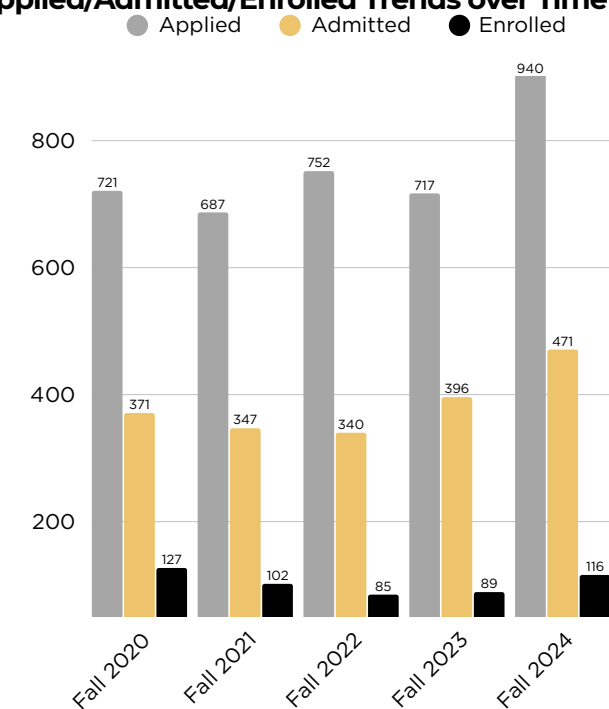
Degrees Awarded 2024 - 2025 AY	261
Student Enrollment SPRING 2025	760
Full-Time Students SPRING 2025	89.2%
Admission rate UNDERGRADUATES, FALL 24	50.1%
Average GPA SPRING 2023	3.53

HSC Degrees Awarded in 2024-2025

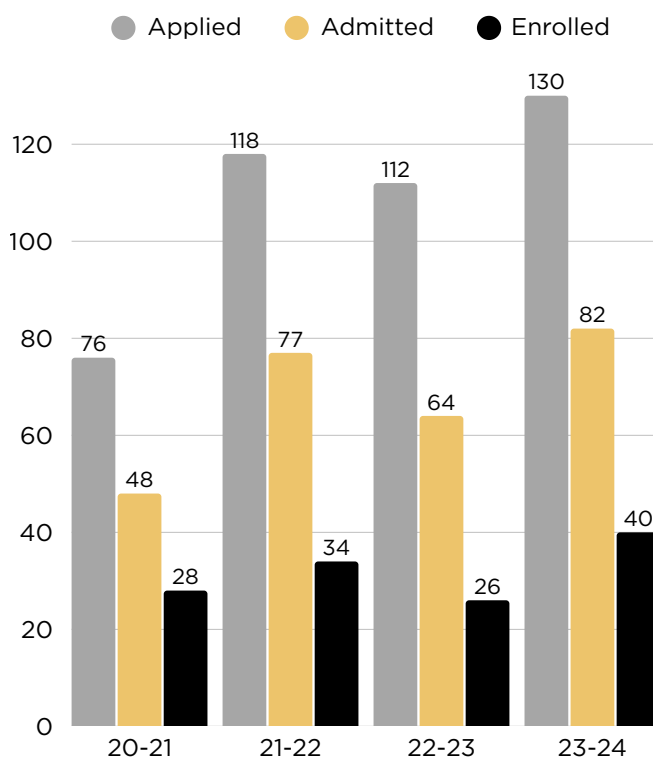
Degree Program	# of Degrees Awarded
MPH, Community Health Education	33
BS + MPH Beach EDGE Program	6
BS, Community Health Education	193
BS, School Health Education	29
Total	261

source: IR&A Degrees Awarded Dashboards

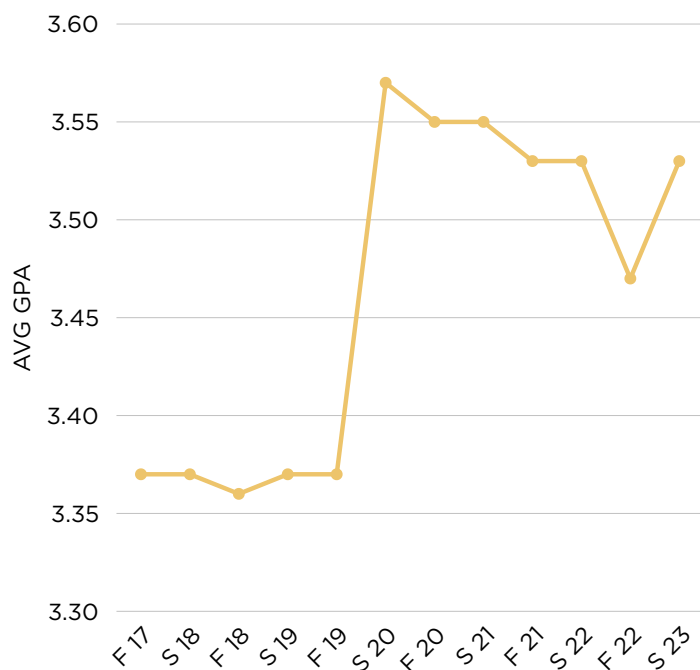
Undergraduate Applied/Admitted/Enrolled Trends over Time



source: IR&A Applied/Admitted/Enrolled Trends over Time

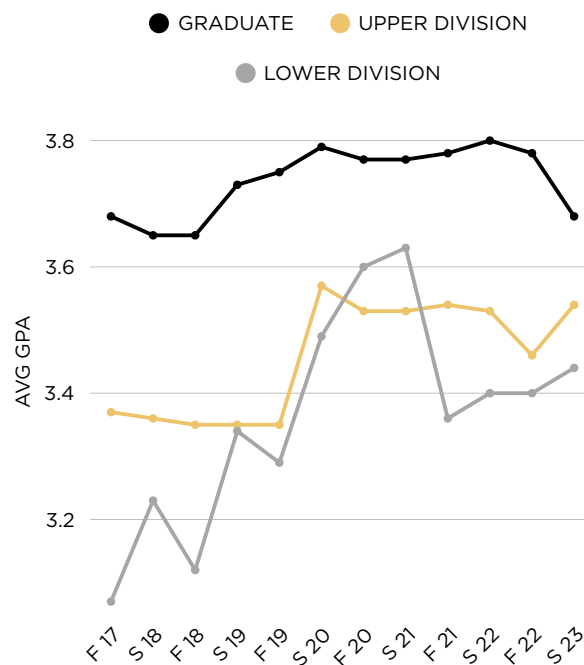


Average HSC Student GPA Trend



source: IR&A GPA Trends: At A Glance

Average HSC Student GPA Trends by Class Division



source: IR&A GPA Trends: At A Glance

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

B.S PUBLIC HEALTH & PUBLIC HEALTH MINOR

COMMUNITY HEALTH OPTION

Designed for individuals interested in the links among lifestyle, social and physical environments, and good health. The occupational objective of those selecting this option is to serve as a community health educator in public or private health care agencies, voluntary organizations, medical clinics or corporate settings. This option offers 3 tracks: Advocacy & Policy, Minority Health, and Mental Health.

SCHOOL HEALTH EDUCATION OPTION

Designed for individuals who desire to pursue a professional preparation program leading to qualification as a health education teacher in middle, junior, and high schools. Students seeking this option must also be admitted to the College of Education's Single Subject Credential Program leading to a California Single Subject Teacher Credential.

HEALTH ADVOCACY & POLICY OPTION

This initiative is in the final stages of becoming an undergraduate program option. This option would prepare students to become advocates for improving the health and well-being of individuals and communities. The purpose of this degree is to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary to navigate the complex landscape of public health, healthcare systems, policies, and regulations, and to effectively advocate for positive change.

CERTIFICATE IN PUBLIC HEALTH INFORMATICS & TECHNOLOGY (CCPHIT).

California State University, Long Beach (CSULB) and a statewide network of partners have built a consortium to effectively address the demand for diverse skilled workers in public health informatics and technology (PHIT) jobs throughout California with an emphasis on minority students. CSULB proposes an inclusive three-tier CCPHIT education model that includes the California community colleges, California State University campuses and the University of California. CCPHIT is developing culturally relevant, interdisciplinary public health informatics curricula through a health equity lens. The curricula includes multiple tracks that prepare students to meet the needs of local health care and public health agencies and other vital industry and non-profit public health-related employers. CCPHIT is developing a training program with paid on-the-job training and wraparound support to remove barriers and ensure student success. CCPHIT is a public-private partnership that brings together industry, academia, and government partners to focus on public health informatics and technology workforce development to benefit students, minority population and working professionals.

B.S APPLIED DATA SCIENCE, CONCENTRATION IN HEALTH ANALYTICS

In collaboration with CSULB's College of Engineering and the Department of Computer Engineering & Computer Science, the Bachelor's of Science in Applied Data Science degree will begin offering a concentration in Health Analytics. Students can elect to complete 6 required and 2 elective Health Science courses to fulfil concentration requirements. This program equips students with programming and data analysis skills for careers in data science. The curriculum covers foundational data science principles and applications in fields like public health and linguistics.

GRADUATE PROGRAMS

LATINO **HEALTH** **GRADUATE** **CERTIFICATE**



LONG BEACH STATE UNIVERSITY
**CENTER FOR LATINO
COMMUNITY HEALTH**
EVALUATION & LEADERSHIP TRAINING

In association with the Center for Latino Community Health, Evaluation, and Leadership Training, the department offers a Graduate Certificate in Latino Health and Nutrition Studies. This certificate focuses on enhancing the academic development and training of professionals to provide culturally and linguistically relevant care and education for the Latino population through their respective job placements. The certificate is comprised of 12 units. The certificate incorporates a thorough overview of Latino health from early childhood development to the multiple chronic diseases that continue to impact this population.

BEACH EDGE HEALTH SCIENCE COMMUNITY HEALTH EDUCATION B.S. + MPH PROGRAM

Beach EDGE (Expedited Degrees in Graduate Education) programs allow CSULB students to complete their bachelor's and master's by merging existing baccalaureate and master's degree programs in similar disciplines into a single pathway that allows the double-counting of units in both programs. Students enrolled in this program earn the following degrees:

- Health Science, Community Health Education Option, B.S.
- Public Health, Community Health Education Option, M.P.H.

MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH IN COMMUNITY HEALTH EDUCATION

The program strives to afford excellence in teaching, conduct research and provide service to local, regional, national, and international populations living within the surrounding communities while making a significant contribution towards increasing health equity for underserved populations. The MPH program offers concentrations in the following subjects:

- Community Health
- Global Health
- Latino Health

Doctor of Public Health (DrPH)

Concentrations:

- Public Health and Technology
- Global Health
- Health Policy and Management

After Senate Bill 684's passing and the approval of the CSU Board of Trustees, the Department of Health Sciences introduces the Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) degree starting Fall 2025. The post masters (MPH) Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) degree program is a 48 -semester units, two- calendar year (full time) or three years (part time) program that prepares graduates to be public health leaders, senior level administrators, applied researchers, policy makers and educators providing leadership to protect and improve the public's health, at the

community, state, national and global levels. DrPH graduates will achieve this purpose by enrolling in one of the following three areas of specializations called areas of concentration:

- (1) Public Health Informatics and Technology
- (2) Global Health
- (3) Health Policy & Management.

The DrPH degree program is a state-supported program. The program is designed for working professionals and includes both face-to-face and hybrid instructional modalities.

Staff Highlights

RETIREMENT

Since I began my journey in the Department of Health Science in August 1996, I've had the best job in the world. Prior to this, I taught at Auburn University and earned my PhD in Educational Media and Technology and Health Education from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, along with a BS in Nursing from St. Louis University, Philippines. In my early years here, I had the privilege of teaching and developing 14 new courses, all while being mentored by incredible faculty like Dr. Robert Friis, Dr. Mohammed Forouzesh, and Dr. Sarath Gunatilake. Their wisdom, humor, and encouragement inspired me to challenge the status quo and shape my work with a forward-thinking approach.



DR. VERONICA ACOSTA-DEPPREZ

My research interests evolved into community-based participatory research, global health, multicultural health education, and the intersection of public health and technology. I had the opportunity to present at several conferences and co-write grants that allowed me to collaborate with colleagues and public health organizations across California. The students I mentored were a crucial part of this work, contributing to research, presenting at conferences, and co-authoring publications. Many of them have gone on to pursue advanced degrees, including PA, PhD, and MD programs, and I am proud of all they have accomplished. Serving my community, university, and department has been deeply rewarding. The connections and friendships I've made through committee work and collaboration are some of the highlights of my career. Spending nearly 29 years here has allowed me to be part of a vibrant, creative, and dedicated community of individuals who continue to inspire me. Under the leadership of Dr. Kamiar Alaei, our department has achieved tremendous growth, and I'm excited to see the continued success and impact of our work. I am filled with BEACH PRIDE, and though I will miss this incredible community, I look forward to seeing all that we will accomplish in the future.

PROMOTIONS



Dr. Niloofar Bavarian
promotion to
Full Professor



Dr. Judy Jou
Promotion to
Associate Professor



Dr. Melawhy Garcia
promotion to
Associate Professor



Dr. Amber Johnson
promotion to
Director, Center for Health
Equity Research

NEW TENURE-TRACK FACULTY



Dr. Erika Rosen
Assistant Professor



Dr. Jessica Liu
Assistant Professor



Dr. Debbie Huang
Assistant Professor

Celebrating a Milestone: First-Year accomplishments of our newest Tenure-Track Faculty

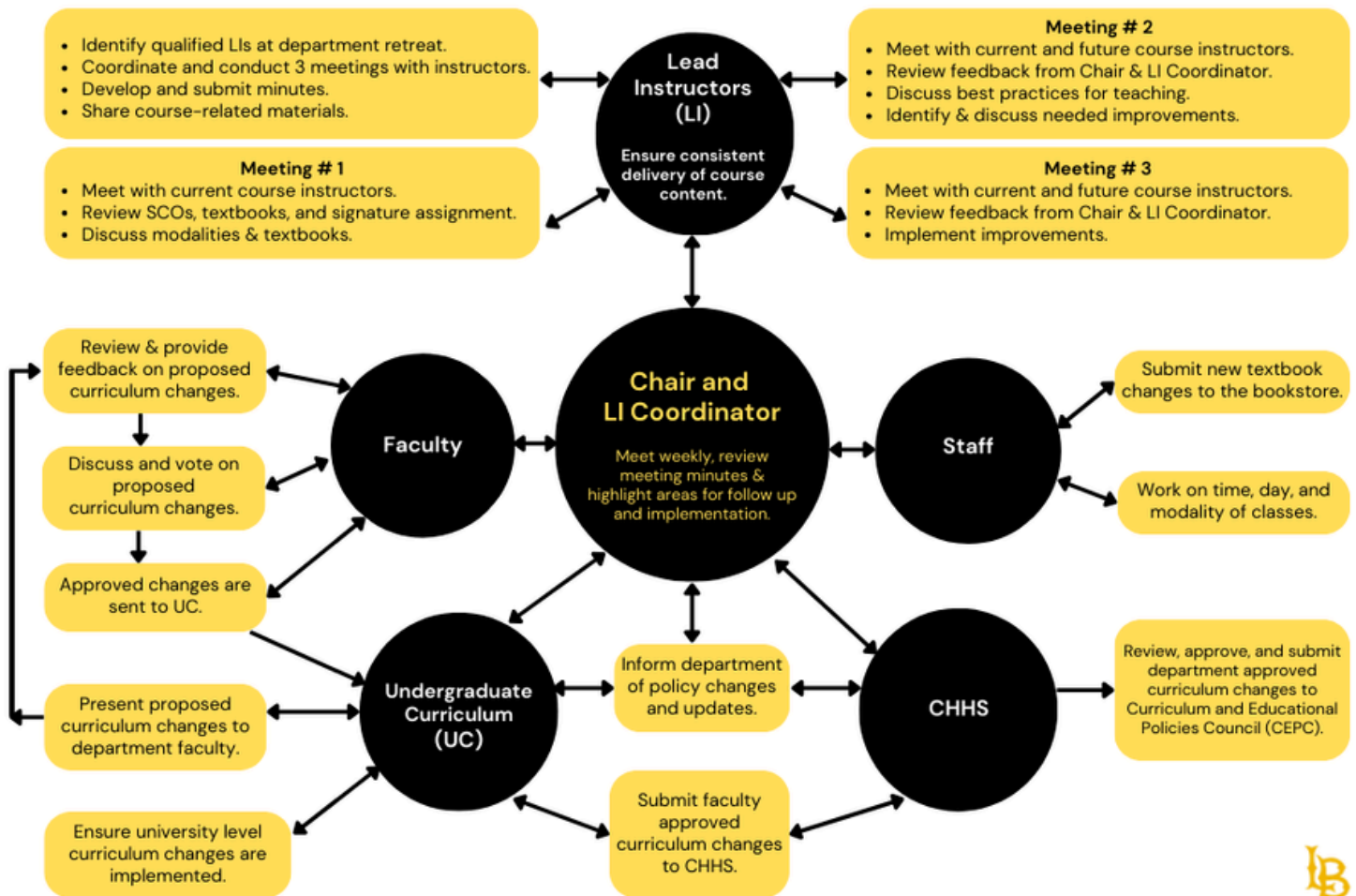
We are thrilled to celebrate the successful completion of the first year for two outstanding members of our academic community on the tenure track. Erika Rosen and Debbie Huang have brought remarkable energy, innovation, and dedication to their teaching, research, and service.

New Incoming Faculty

We are delighted to announce that Jessica Liu has officially joined our faculty as a tenure-track professor. After serving as a valued lecturer, Jessica begins this exciting new chapter, bringing a deep commitment to student success, academic excellence, and scholarly growth.

LEAD INSTRUCTOR SYSTEM

Department of Health Science Lead Instructor System



Under the Lead Instructor model, courses will have a designated Lead Instructor who will help coordinate syllabi, share best practices, support fellow instructors, and ensure a cohesive learning experience for students. These leads will serve as key points of contact for pedagogical guidance and curriculum alignment. We're grateful to the faculty members stepping into these roles and look forward to the positive impact this model will bring to our teaching community.

UC-Hispanic Serving Institutions Doctoral Diversity Initiative (UC-HSI-DDI).

Exciting Opportunity for HSC Faculty & MPH Students!

In collaboration with CSULB, UCLA is launching a UC-Hispanic Serving Institutions Doctoral Diversity Initiative program that includes a doctoral student-MPH student mentoring model and a senior faculty-junior faculty mentoring model.

PhD-MPH Mentoring Model

PhD-MPH Mentoring Model MPH students enrolled in UCLA-HSI Pathways to Doctoral Diversity will be matched with a PhD peer mentor. Peer mentors will introduce MPH trainees to PhD and provide social, emotional, and academic guidance for their mentees. Peer mentors will help mentees learn core competencies needed for success in doctoral study. Additionally, peer mentoring programs help the mentors, allowing them to gain confidence and problem-solving skills, which will be important as they enter the professoriate.

Senior Faculty-Junior Faculty Mentoring Model

Senior Faculty-Junior Faculty Mentoring Model Junior faculty across UCLA FSPH and all partner HSIs will be matched with a career mentor from FSPH at UCLA. This career mentoring model is based on best-practices and will involve the deployment of a targeted approach designed to increase interaction between faculty and faculty retention. UC-HSI-DDI is a unique year-long faculty development program designed to support the success and retention of junior faculty from Latinx and other underrepresented minority (URM) backgrounds in public health and related fields.

CSULB is leading the CSU schools in this partnership by overseeing training, trainees & mentors, curriculums, workshops, and more for the next 5 years through a grant from UCLA.

For more information, please reach out to Kamiar Alaei

CENTERS



Eat, Play, Go! Transdisciplinary Obesity Prevention for Latino Families

Funded by the United States Department of Agriculture NIFA Award #2021-69015-33433, aims to address the disproportionate rates of obesity among Latino youth ages 10 – 13 years by developing and implementing a youth-focused and family-based intervention in Long

Beach emphasizing physical activity, fruit and vegetable consumption, and strengthening communities with behaviors that encourage healthy lifestyles.



Harvesting Healthy Habits in Long Beach

Funded by United States Department of Agriculture NIFA (January 2023-2026) Award #2023-69015-39407, aims to provide undergraduate and graduate students with a comprehensive research training experience that includes hands-on experiential learning while developing and implementing an intervention that aims to improve eating patterns and healthy lifestyles to reduce the risk for chronic diseases among underserved children in grades 3 to 5 and their families.



ANDALE Latino Research Training Program,

Funded by the United States Department of Agriculture NIFA Award #2020-67037-30663, aims to train fifty (50) undergraduate students in Latino nutrition and chronic disease prevention, enhance their professional development, and engage them in research to better prepare them to enter graduate school or the workforce.



Leveraging Interdisciplinary Nutritional Knowledge

Funded by United States Department of Agriculture NIFA Award #2021-77040-34904, this was a collaboration between five Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) in Southern California. The LINK Program will promote the success of 26 underrepresented students in the food and human sciences professional and scientific workforce emphasizing Latino nutrition through outreach, mentoring, education, support services, research, and professional internships with community partners.

2024 & 2025 Week of Research, Scholarly, and Creative Activity (RSCA)

Center for Latino Community Health Inaugural Student Research Symposium

11+ students presented their research at the CSULB Symposium at Week of RSCA

Cruz, F., Trinidad, P., & Garcia, M. (2024). Does Latino parents' praise for their children's health behaviors differ based on gender?

Marroquin, M., Gatdula, N., Garcia, M. (2024). The association between self-efficacy for food security and the consumption of home-prepared meals among Latinx in the U.S.

Mendoza, J., Trinidad, P., Garcia, M. (2024). The relationship between physical activity perceptions and children's physical activity levels in Eat, Play, Go! obesity prevention study.

Perez Martinez, S., Gatdula, N., Garcia, M. (2024). The association between housing type and access to COVID-19 vaccination and testing in the Latinx population of Long Beach.

Polo, Y., Trinidad, P., Garcia, M. (2024). What is the association of zip code and Latino childhood overweight in Long Beach?

Ramirez, M., Trinidad, P., Garcia, M. (2024). Is there an association between Latino children's health insurance status and their BMI Percentile?

Rodriguez, M., Trinidad, P., Garcia, M. (2024). A comparison of food intake and activity levels between children classified as normal and overweight.

Ruiz, C., Gatdula, N., Garcia, M. (2024). The association between immigration status, medical insurance, and perception of physical and mental health among Hispanic/Latinx in Long Beach.

Soto, S., Gatdula, N., Garcia, M. (2024). What is the influence of language on perception of availability of services and resources for priority health issues among Hispanic/Latino adults in the Long Beach community?

Tovar, B., Gatdula, N., Luna, A., Garcia, M. (2024). The association of time living in the U.S. and household structure and food insecurity among foreign-born Hispanic/Latinos.

Tovar, S., Gatdula, N., Garcia, M. (2024). The influence of the home environment on physical activity and sedentary time among Latino children.

Center for Latino Community Health, Evaluation, and Leadership Training

The California State University Long Beach (CSULB) Center for Latino Community Health, Evaluation, and Leadership Training (hereafter Center) strives to improve, promote, and advocate for the health, culture, and well-being of diverse Latino/Hispanic communities. The Center's research, evaluation, and program areas embody the use of community based participatory research methods – an academic model that promotes community empowerment, learning, and participation in society. The research promotes faculty excellence through research, prepares students for success, expands the self-efficacy of community members involved in our projects, and creates collaborative partnerships aimed at impacting the delivery and messaging of Latino health through culturally and linguistically appropriate methods. The Center is committed to student success and the academic and professional preparation of future generations. In collaboration with faculty and staff across the campus, they provide student trainings and workshops to support academic and professional development.



Paul Ho, Dr. Amber Johnson, Stephanie Jackson and Alexa Basa (from left to right)

The Center for Health Equity Research (CHER) promotes health equity by engaging researchers and community partners in conducting rigorous and innovative public health research, and place-based and program evaluation. Our research focuses on diverse, underserved, and high-risk populations. Center staff and affiliated faculty have extensive experience in community-based research. CHER has mentored approximately 122 Fellows since 2017 and CHER Fellows come from diverse disciplines including medicine, nutrition, nursing, psychology, public health, rehabilitation services, sociology, social work, speech and language pathology. The majority of the CHER Fellows are from minority serving institutions and from underrepresented minority populations. CHER is currently engaged in a study to evaluate cardiovascular disease risk among Black women, as well as program evaluations through health equity perspectives.

In the spring, Associate Professor Amber Johnson was named the new Director of the CSULB Center for Health Equity Research (CHER). A valued faculty member since 2016, Amber has committed her career to addressing health disparities affecting marginalized communities. Dr. Johnson's partnerships with organizations such as the National Institute of Health and the City of Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services bring valuable resources and knowledge to CHER.

Understanding Cardiovascular Disease Risk Among Black Women

This study seeks to deepen understanding of how discrimination and sociocognitive processes impact cardiovascular disease risk among African American women. As cardiovascular disease remains a leading health concern in this population, the research focuses on examining stress-related physiological responses to discrimination as a potential contributing risk factor. Researchers are actively recruiting African American women over the age of 18 for this study. Please reach out to Amber Johnson if you are interested in participating.

Program Evaluations

Black Infant Health Media Campaign

The purpose of this evaluation study is to assess the efforts of this program to raise awareness of Black maternal and infant health disparities while promoting the Black Infant Health Program in California.

Black Health Equity Fund Evaluation

This fund supports culturally tailored strategies to address COVID-19 disparities in Black communities.

Black Mental Health Program

This program included 3 mental health organizations to provide no-cost treatment to uninsured and underinsured Long Beach Black residents in need of mental health support.

Summer Internship Programs

We are excited to have the CSULB Center for Global Health (CGH) collaborating with the Tajikistan Ministry of Health. Under the leadership of both Dr. Arash Alaei and Dr. Kamiar Alaei, faculty and students across various institutions are collaborating to develop research projects utilizing the national HIV Data from the Tajikistan Ministry of Health. Students in the CSULB CGH are also on other programs such as the Masters in Public Health (MPH) and California Consortium for Public Health Informatics & Technology (CCPHIT) programs. Under the biostatistics mentorship of Dr. Brian Kwan, students of diverse backgrounds develop collaboration skills in an inclusive training environment for analyzing global health data using statistics and data analytic methods.

Activities in the Republic of Tajikistan

The CSULB CGH has published two peer-reviewed articles in the year of 2024 (article citations provided below). These two articles contribute to the field by (1) developing a first-of-its-kind study on population-level differences in early detection of HIV across time within Tajikistan and any country in the Central Asia region and (2) proposing to expand the definition of key population to include labor migrants in Central Asia who should be emphasized as a vulnerable population at high risk of HIV.

APHA Travel – October 2024

Two undergraduate and two graduate students received funding to attend the American Public Health Conference held in Chicago in October 2024 to increase their knowledge of the field, expand their network, and grow professionally.

Dr. Lilia Espinoza, Co-PI on the LINK Program at CSU Fullerton, presented on the importance of training the future public health workforce on chronic disease prevention among Latino



Study Abroad

South Korea 2024

Dr. Brian Kwan developed a faculty-led study abroad program to South Korea for Summer 2024 with two course offerings: (1) HSC 260 – Introduction to Public Health Informatics and Technology and (2) HSC 420 – Global Health for 10 students (6 undergraduate and 4 graduate students). These students came from a variety of academic backgrounds across the CSULB campus community: public health, chemical engineering, accountancy, nursing, marketing, fashion merchandising, and human development. During the program, Dr. Kwan connected and partnered with faculty colleagues from Kyungbok University and Dankook University to provide unique educational experiences that included field trips to explore South Korea's health care technology at both the Samsung Medical Center and Bundang Jesaeng General Hospital as well as collaborated in the development of a hands-on workshop on Digital Health Literacy, which featured the CEO of Philips Korea. Special thank you to Dr. Kamiar Alaei and Dr. Arash Alaei for their contributions with Dr. Kwan to make this program possible!



HEALTH SCIENCE STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS



HEALTH SCIENCE STUDENT ASSOCIATION (HSSA)

The purpose of HSSA is to give enriching experiences to students that are interested in the allied health field. Our organization is committed to emphasizing professionalism, stewardship, advocacy, and servant leadership through volunteering, networking, and learning to prepare our members for future careers and educational pursuits.



HEALTH SCIENCE GRADUATE ASSOCIATION (HSGA)

The Health Science Graduate Association (HSGA) seeks to maximize the student experience. Collaboration between faculty and students is our goal and open communication is kept between the executive board and the faculty to ensure accurate and timely information. CSULB provides both an intimate and well connected environment to foster relationships and the HSGA will continue to encourage students towards excellence through their own leadership and highlighting the leaders this program has been blessed with.



ETA SIGMA GAMMA (ESG)

Eta Sigma Gamma (ESG) is a national honor society designed for Health Science major and minor students. Eta Sigma Gamma is open for both undergraduate and graduate student. The organization is focused on research, service, and teaching. We aim to help the community through our volunteer work and education. We also aim to build connections within the health community.



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



CHANNEL RUIZ

When Channel Ruiz applied for the CSU's Sally Casanova Pre-Doctoral Scholarship, she was motivated by her desire to promote health equity in her community of Cudahy, Southeast LA. A second-year Master of Public Health student focused on community health education, Ruiz was encouraged to apply by mentors Dr. Melawhy Garcia, Natalia Gatdula, and Toni Espinoza-Ferrel. Ruiz, who also earned her bachelor's degree from CSULB, collaborates with faculty and staff at the Center for Latino Community Health on projects addressing nutrition, obesity, and diabetes in Hispanic/Latinx families. In her role as a student researcher, she has participated in projects like

Healthy Habits and the Comprando Rico y Sano initiative, which empower the Hispanic/Latinx community with tools for healthier living. After graduation, she plans to pursue a doctorate and hopes to become a program manager or director, focusing on community-based health programs. Ruiz is completing her Master's while also pursuing a certificate in Latino Health and aims to create programs to support families in underserved populations. As the first in her family to navigate higher education, she is determined to tackle health disparities and has already made a significant impact at CSULB. Her future endeavors are poised for success.



STEPHANIE PEREZ MARTINEZ

Stephanie Perez Martinez is one of ten recipients of the CSU's Sally Casanova Pre-Doctoral Scholarship, aligning her passion for health informatics with her training in community health education. Last year, she participated in the Harvesting Healthy Habits project at the CSULB Center for Latino Community Health, leading health education classes in nutrition and gardening for children in grades 3 to 5. She hopes the scholarship will help her gain admission to her dream school for further community-based projects. Martinez is considering UC Irvine and UC San Diego for her doctoral studies, inspired by her mentor

Dr. Melawhy Garcia's Ph.D. in public health from UC San Diego. She aims to research childhood obesity while supporting Latino communities through health informatics. Martinez, a first-generation college student, is excited about the opportunities the scholarship provides, allowing her to attend various universities and health science conferences. She graduated from UCLA with a degree in sociology and a minor in global health and will complete her Master of Public Health in community health education in Spring 2025. Her family is extremely proud of her achievements, especially as a first-generation student. With her ambitions and dedication, the future looks bright for Martinez, and she is poised to make a significant impact in her field.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Adebimpe “Bimpe” Akinwalere

Adebimpe “Bimpe” Akinwalere is a graduate student in the Master of Public Health program at California State University, Long Beach (CSULB) and a Medical Doctor from Nigeria. She has dedicated her academic and professional career to advancing public health research, addressing health disparities, and improving health outcomes. At CSULB, she has contributed to groundbreaking research on the HIV epidemic in Tajikistan working alongside Dr. Kamair Alaei, Dr.



Arash Alaei, and Dr. Brian Kwan, leading to her first three academic publications in leading journals. Since this publication, the research project has supported the launch of the Center for Global Health here at CSULB. Bimpe is also a graduate research assistant on Dr. Niloofar Bavarian’s team, contributing to an NIH/NIDA-funded project, an intervention focused on prescription stimulant misuse among college students. This research bridges the gap between understanding public health challenges and implementing evidence-based solutions to improve behavioral health outcomes. Her dedication to research and academic excellence earned her the CSULB Graduate Equity Fellowship and selection as a student participant at the CSU Health Policy Conference. Beyond research, Bimpe is passionate about health equity, maternal and child health, and public health information technology. Her long-term aspiration is to become a physician who integrates clinical practice, research, advocacy, and public health information technology initiatives to drive meaningful, innovative, and sustainable healthcare improvements.

AWARDS:

- Graduate Student on Research, Scholarly, and Creative Activities
- Graduate Dean’s List of University Scholars and Artists

SPRING 2025

COMMENCEMENT AWARDS

GRADUATE STUDENT HONORS

Channel Ruiz
Patricia Cortez

OUTSTANDING STUDENT CITATION

Makenzie Beaty
Jackeline Flores-Godinez
Primavera Garcia Trabanino
Emily Jones
Juliana Lane
Janelle Ledezma
Kitzia Maciel
Diana Martinez
Arden Nguyen
Lupita Nieto
Tiffani Rabun
Jasmine Sohal
Stephanie Soto
Sarai Turner
Valeria Valencia
Rithy Techavoan Yean

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- AbilityFirst Joan & Harry A. Mier Center
- AbilityFirst Long Beach Center
- Alzheimer's Family Center American
- Academy of Pediatrics-Orange County
- American Heart Association
- American Red Cross, Southern California Region
- Antelope Valley Partners for Health
- APLA Health
- Arthritis Foundation, Pacific Region
- Asian American Drug Abuse Program
- Asians for Miracle Marrow Matches
- Beach Cities Health District
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County & The Inland Empire
- Blind Start of America
- Bloom Behavioral Health
- Boys & Girls Club of Buena Park
- Boys & Girls Club of Whittier & Pico Rivera
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Garden Grove
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Anaheim-Cypress
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Long Beach
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Los Angeles
- Braille Institute California Association of Health and Education
- Linked Professions JPA
- Casa De La Familia
- Children's Hospital Orange County
- City of Long Beach, DHHS, Bureau of Environmental Health
- City of Long Beach, DHHS, Early Childhood Program
- City of Long Beach, DHHS, Healthy Active Long Beach
- City of Long Beach, DHHS, HIV Surveillance
- City of Long Beach, DHHS, Physician Services Bureau
- City of Long Beach, HHSD
- Community Action Partnership of Orange County
- Community Health Initiative of Orange County
- Compassionate Cancer Care Med Group
- Compassionate Care hospice
- CSULB, ATOD Program CSULB, Center for Health Equity at Charles Drew
- CSULB, Center for Latino Community Health
- CSULB, Center for Successful Aging
- CSULB, Health Resource Center
- CSULB, Student Health Services
- Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Orange County Chapter
- Dignity Health
- Dr. Riba's Health Club, Inc.
- Epilepsy Support Network of Orange County
- Families in Good Health
- Filipino Migrant Center
- Fountain Valley Regional Hospital
- Garden School Foundation
- Gente Organizada
- Good Neighbor Clinic, Inc.
- Grandma's House of Hope
- Harbor-UCLA Medical Center
- Health Career Connection
- Hunger Action Los Angeles
- Intecore Physical Therapy
- JWCH Institute, Inc.
- Kaiser Foundation Hospitals (So. Cal)
- Lakewood Regional Medical Center
- Latino Health Access
- Lettuce Gather, LLC
- Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
- Long Beach Community College District
- Long Beach Forward
- Long Beach Gray Panthers
- Long Beach Parks, Recreation and Marine
- Los Alamitos Medical Center, Inc.
- Los Angeles County Dept of Health Services
- Los Angeles County Fire Department
- Los Angeles LGBT Center
- Married to Health
- MemorialCare Memorial Health Services
- Mental Health Association of Orange County
- MiOra
- Molina Health Care, Inc.
- Molina Health Care, Inc.
- Multi-Ethnic Collaborative of Community Agencies (MECCA)
- Muscular Dystrophy Association
- NAMI Orange County
- National Asian Pacific American Families
- Nhan Hoa Comprehensive Health Care Clinic
- Norooz Clinic Foundation
- Nutrition As Therapy, Inc.
- Orange County Asian Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA)
- Orange County Health Care Agency, TUPP
- Orange County Superintendent of Schools
- Partners4Wellness
- Pediatric Therapy Network
- Phoenix House California
- PIH Health
- Planned Parenthood of Orange and San Bernardino Counties
- Project Access
- Project MotiVATe, Inc.
- Providence Health System
- Pulmonary and Sleep Consultants
- Rising Tide @ MKEC
- Riverside County Department of Public Health
- San Bernardino County Department of Behavioral Health
- San Bernardino County Department of Public Health
- St. Joseph Hospital of Orange
- St. Jude Medical Center
- St. Jude Medical Center - Senior Service
- Standup for Kids Orange County
- The Children's Clinic Family Health
- The Happiness Project
- The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
- The LGBTQ Center Long Beach
- The LGBTQ Center Orange County
- The Raise Foundation
- The Truong Neuroscience Institute
- Tichenor Clinic for Children
- United Cambodian Community
- WellPath Partners
- YMCA of Greater Long Beach
- YMCA of Greater Long Beach - Fairfield

ONGOING GRANTS

KAMIAR ALAEI, PI

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICE, OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL COORDINATOR FOR HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (ONC) \$10,235,000.00. 9/22/2021- 9/21/2026. PUBLIC HEALTH INFORMATICS & TECHNOLOGY (CCPHIT) PROGRAM.

BANERJEE, PI AND KAMIAR ALAEI, CSU LEAD

UCLA-HSI PATHWAYS TO DOCTORAL DIVERSITY 4/12/2024- 4/11/2029.

KAMIAR ALAEI, LUCY HUCKABAY, ARASH ALAEI

IRES \$100,000.00. 07/2022-9/2023. INTER-DISCIPLINARY CAPACITY BUILDING FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH.

DEBBIE HUANG, HEIDI WEST

PRESIDENT & PROVOST INITIATIVE: FACULTY RESEARCH AWARDS IN INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE. EQUITY IN HEALTH SERVICES: THE ROLE OF IMMIGRATION AND FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS IN HEALTHCARE ACCESS FOR CSULB STUDENTS

NILOOFAR BAVARIAN, PI

SCREENING AND BRIEF INTERVENTION FOR PRESCRIPTION STIMULANT MISUSE AND DIVERSION: REFINING AND PILOTING A CURRICULUM FOR COLLEGE HEALTH PROVIDERS

THE GOAL OF THIS NIDA-FUNDED R34 IS TO REFINE A TTI-GUIDED TRAINING CURRICULUM FOR COLLEGE HEALTH PROVIDERS TO ADDRESS PSM AND PSD, AND TO PILOT IMPLEMENTATION OF A SBI VIA AN RCT WITHIN ONE CAMPUS HEALTH CENTER.

BRIAN COLE

COLLABORATIVE STUDY OF AIRCRAFT EMISSIONS NEAR AIRPORTS IN LOS ANGELES
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR FOR CSULB SUB-AWARD FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND DATA COLLECTION FOR A RESEARCH CONTRACT PROPOSAL SUBMITTED TO THE CALIFORNIA AIR RESOURCES BOARD BY DR. SUZANNE PAULSON (UCLA). AUGUST 2025 – JULY 2028.

IMPROVING THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF MIGRANT WORKERS RESPONDING TO CLIMATE RELATED DISASTERS. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR ON SUB-AWARD (PI OF OVERALL PROJECT: KEVIN RILEY, UCLA). RESEARCH GRANT FROM THE CALIFORNIA CLIMATE ACTION INITIATIVE ADMINISTERED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND INNOVATION. AUGUST 2023 – OCTOBER 2025.

PUBLICATIONS

Jin, H., Ashrafi, N., **Alaei, K.**, Elham Pishgar, G. Placencia, & **Maryam Pishgar.** (2025). A Novel Multi-Task Teacher-Student Architecture with Self-Supervised Pretraining for 48-Hour Vasoactive-Inotropic Trend Analysis in Sepsis Mortality Prediction.

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A Shumilov*, Y Zhu*, N Ashrafi*, A Abdollahi*, G Placencia*, **K Alaei, M Pishgar.** Data-Driven Machine Learning Approaches for Predicting In-Hospital Sepsis Mortality. Intelligent Computing. Springer Nature. May 2025 (In Press).

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Ashrafi, N., Yousefi, S., Aby, G. R., Issa, S. F., H. Darabi, **K. Alaei**, G. Placencia, **M. Pishgar** (2025). AI-driven Solutions to Improve Safety and Health: Application of the REDECA Framework for Agricultural Tractor Drivers. PLOS Global Public Health, 5(6), e0003543.

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MEET THE TEAM

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Department Chair & Professor

Niloofar Bavarian Ellis, DrPH, MPH

Associate Chair and Associate Professor

Brina Mendoza

Administrative Coordinator

Marisol Gonzalez

Administrative Coordinator

Lucy Huckabay, PhD, MSN

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Vikki Bisorca, MPH

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Graduate Coordinator & Lecturer

Lisa Sparks, EdD, MPH

Graduate Internship Coordinator
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Natalie Whitehouse-Capuan

Undergraduate Internship Coordinator
& Lecturer

Claire Garrido-Ortega

Lead Instructor Coordinator & Lecturer

Kelley Tenny, MPH

Outreach Coordinator

Melawhy Garcia, PhD, MPH

Director of the Center for Latino Community Health, Evaluation, &
Leadership Training & Associate Professor

Amber Johnson, PhD, MPH

Director of the Center for Health Equity Research & Associate Professor

Arash Alaei, MD

Director of the Center for Global Health
& Lecturer

Brian Kwan, PhD

PHIT Certificate Coordinator
& Assistant Professor

Nicole Ha

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