

# MIND Matters

FALL 2020

## SPECIAL FEATURE

## The Power of Leadership



*Brethren Community Foundation Board of Directors with Harriet Harris, center*

More than 50 years ago, a group of leaders in Long Beach had a vision to give seniors their “rightful dignity” by providing them an affordable home, transportation, and a nurturing social environment so they may live stress free in the twilight of their years. The group, led by Willard V. Harris, Sr., transformed this vision into reality with the construction of the Long Beach Brethren Manor in 1964. Since then, this service has evolved into a new generation of Harris family leadership in philanthropic giving through the Brethren Community Foundation.

The Foundation supports youth education and senior health through philanthropic grants to non-profit organizations and individuals of all backgrounds in need of financial assistance.

As a non-profit organization seeking to improve senior health through research and education, Foundation board member and daughter-in-law of Harris, Sr., Harriet Harris identified UCI MIND as a natural partner.

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Dear Friends of UCI MIND,

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact our lives this fall, the fight to solve Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD) must charge forward. This November, the U.S. FDA will convene an advisory committee to assess potential approval of Biogen's *aducanumab*, a monoclonal antibody in development for treatment of early AD. We will watch closely as *aducanumab* could be the first new approved drug for AD since 2005. Regardless of the outcome of the meeting and subsequent FDA decision – anticipated in March 2021 – this represents a milestone for the field.

Here at UCI MIND, our mission marches on as well. Our investigators continue to be highly successful in securing NIH funding for cutting-edge projects (p. 7). UCI MIND continues to play leadership roles in training the next generation of AD researchers.

This includes a new national clinical trials program (p. 4), and the addition of two new neuropsychologist trainees with the generous support of the Brethren Community Foundation (pp. 1, 3). Essential to this focus is ensuring a diverse workforce of investigators, who can better recruit diverse participants to our studies (p. 6). Support from philanthropists, like the Brethren Community Foundation, remains vital to our mission. We acknowledge the remarkable generosity of many of our supporters on page 5. Along with our investigators and research participants, you will be the reason we find solutions for ADRD. We thank you, happy holidays, and please stay safe.



**Joshua D. Grill, PhD**

Director, UCI MIND

## Faculty members

### Anatomy & Neurobiology

Aileen Anderson, PhD  
Tallie Baram, MD, PhD  
Christine Gall, PhD, Chair  
Alan Goldin, MD, PhD  
Kei Igarashi, PhD  
Gary Lynch, PhD  
Steven Schreiber, MD  
John Weiss, MD, PhD  
Xiangmin Xu, PhD

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Gregory Brewer, PhD

### Chemistry

James Nowick, PhD

### Developmental & Cell Biology

Ali Mortazavi, PhD  
Diane O'Dowd, PhD

### Epidemiology

Maria Corrada, ScD  
Karen Edwards, PhD, Chair  
Daniel Gillen, PhD

### Medicine

Masashi Kitazawa, PhD  
Steven Tam, MD

### Microbiology & Molecular Genetics

Emiliana Borrelli, PhD  
Alan Goldin, MD, PhD

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Charles Glabe, PhD  
Andrea Tenner, PhD

### Neurobiology & Behavior

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Jorge Busciglio, PhD  
Carl Cotman, PhD  
Christine Gall, PhD  
Kim Green, PhD  
Joshua Grill, PhD  
Claudia Kawas, MD  
Frank LaFerla, PhD, Dean  
Michael Leon, PhD  
Craig Stark, PhD  
Vivek Swarup, PhD  
Leslie Thompson, PhD  
Marcelo Wood, PhD, Chair  
Michael Yassa, PhD

### Neurology

Tallie Baram, MD, PhD  
Maria Corrada, ScD  
Carl Cotman, PhD

### Neurology (continued)

David Cribbs, PhD  
Malcolm Dick, PhD  
Mark Fisher, MD  
Lisa Flanagan, PhD  
Claudia Kawas, MD  
Ira Lott, MD  
Mark Mapstone, PhD  
Tahseen Mozaffar, MD, Int. Chair  
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Steven Schreiber, MD  
Gaby Thai, MD  
John Weiss, MD, PhD  
Michael Yassa, PhD

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Ronald Kim, MD  
Edwin Monuki, MD, PhD, Chair  
Mari Perez-Rosendahl, MD

### Pediatrics

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Virginia Kimonis, MD  
Ira Lott, MD  
Andre Obenaus, PhD

### Pharmaceutical Sciences

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### Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

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Brian Cummings, PhD

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David Sultzer, MD  
Leslie Thompson, PhD  
Michael Yassa, PhD

### Psychological Science

Daniel Nation, PhD

### Radiation Oncology

Charles Limoli, PhD

### Statistics

Daniel Gillen, PhD, Chair  
Bin Nan, PhD

"Senior health is a critical component to our mission. UCI MIND is at the forefront of Alzheimer's research, which is severely affecting our seniors and all of mankind. We wanted to step up to support the critical research needed to help not only today's senior population, but also future generations," said Harriet.

Since Harriet facilitated the partnership in 2018, the Brethren Community Foundation has contributed \$350,000 to research and training at UCI MIND. With its dual focus on education, the Foundation took a special interest in supporting fellowships for new clinician investigators focused on senior health.

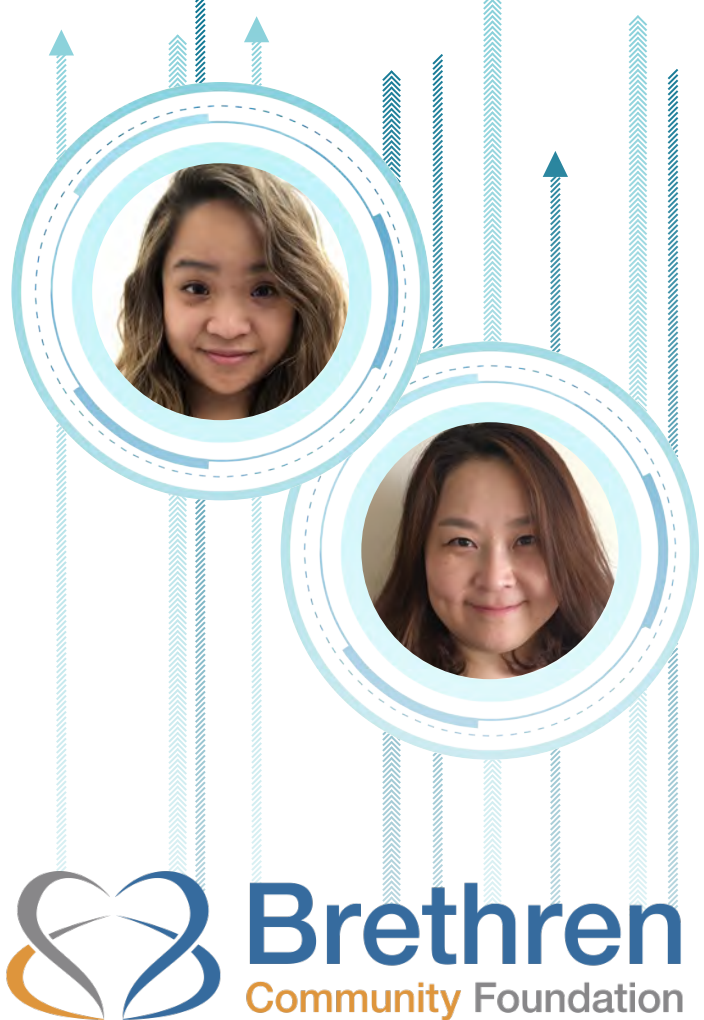
"We wanted to step up to support the critical research needed to help not only today's senior population, but also future generations."

So far, the partnership has resulted in the recruitment of two neuropsychologist fellows, Jean Ho, PhD and Jung Jang, PhD.

Dr. Ho's research focuses on the link between blood pressure medication use in older adults and potential cognitive benefits. As part of her fellowship at UCI MIND, Dr. Ho will receive training in the design and analysis of clinical trials to test this association, which may have implications to future dementia prevention.

Dr. Jang's research focuses on the understudied emotional and behavioral symptoms associated with dementia, and she has already published several important findings on this topic. As a UCI MIND fellow, she aims to improve understanding of how vascular damage to the brain may contribute to these symptoms, hopefully providing insights to potential new assessments and treatments for dementia.

The research training opportunities provided to these bright young clinicians were made possible by the vision and leadership of Harriet and the Brethren Community Foundation.



*Drs. Jean Ho (left) and Jung Jang (right) were awarded UCI MIND Fellowships supported by the Brethren Community Foundation.*

The Foundation considers its grant recipients partners in the mission to improve the well-being of its community, and UCI MIND is a proud partner and witness to the power of leadership demonstrated by the Foundation. Together, community leaders and UCI MIND *can* and *will* solve Alzheimer's disease and related dementias and improve circumstances for future generations.

In demonstration of the Foundation's continued commitment to this mission, they have offered to match, dollar-for-dollar, the first \$100,000 raised before December 31, 2020 for new UCI MIND Fellowship opportunities. Please [click here](#) to make a donation and see your contribution go twice as far.

Together, community leaders and UCI MIND *can* and *will* solve Alzheimer's disease and related dementias and improve circumstances for future generations.



# UCI MIND faculty launch national training program to promote diverse leadership in clinical trials

UCI MIND, along with experts from across the country, launched a unique and comprehensive course this fall to educate and diversify the next generation of leaders in clinical trials for Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.

The program, called IMPACT-AD, is co-directed by UCI MIND director Joshua Grill and Rema Raman, director of biostatistics at the USC Alzheimer's Therapeutic Research Institute. UCI MIND faculty Drs. David Sultzer and Dan Gillen are also part of this innovative program. It is funded for five years by a joint \$4 million in grants from the National Institute on Aging and the Alzheimer's Association.

Nearly 6 million Americans are living with Alzheimer's disease. Almost two-thirds of them are women. Older Black Americans are about twice as likely to develop Alzheimer's or other dementias as older whites, and Hispanics are about 1.5 times as likely to develop Alzheimer's or other dementias as older whites.

The purpose of the course, Dr. Raman said, "is to make the clinical trials' workforce as diverse and representative as the participants we hope to recruit for our studies." Out of more than 100 applicants, 35 were selected for the inaugural course, held virtually this past September. The group includes medical doctors, nurses, public health professionals, study coordinators and other scientists as well as postdoctoral researchers and research fellows from universities and health care systems across the country. Seventy percent were women and 40% self-identified as persons of color; one-fifth of the cohort were the first in their families to earn advanced degrees.

Said Dr. Grill, "With this new program, we really want to invigorate the field by engaging trainees at many levels, from many backgrounds, with different personal experiences and demographics as well, because we wholeheartedly believe in team science and the diversity of ideas will move the field forward."



*The inaugural IMPACT-AD class attended the week-long course via Zoom.*

## PHILANTHROPY

You're invited to the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual  
**A December to Remember Gala**  
benefiting Alzheimer's research  
at UCI MIND!

This year's virtual event  
will feature inspiring  
testimonials, an online  
auction, and engaging  
performances.

Registration is complimentary.  
Meal delivery options are  
available for purchase for  
Orange County residents.

For more information,  
visit [gala.mind.uci.edu](http://gala.mind.uci.edu)

*Music, magic, and memories*  
**FOR ALZHEIMER'S RESEARCH**  
**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2020**



*Presented by*  
**UCI MIND**  
**HARRIS TAYLOR FAMILY**

# Thank you to our donors



To make a gift, call 949.824.3793  
or visit [www.mind.uci.edu/donate](http://www.mind.uci.edu/donate)

### Gifts of \$100,000+ (Sept. '19-'20)

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### Gifts of \$50,000+ (Sept. '19-'20)

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Robert A. Kleist  
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### Gifts of \$5,000+ (Sept. '19-'20)

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### \$5,000+ (continued)

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The William K. Applebee Family  
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### UCI MIND Legacy Society

(Donors who have included  
UCI MIND in their estate plans)  
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Mrs. Carolyn Rorman  
Mrs. Karen Rockel Speros

\* Indicates multiple donors



## Efforts to increase diversity in research participation



The UCI C2C Registry (left) and the new statewide registry, CARE (right), are now live in multiple languages.

The scientific evidence informing our understanding of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD) comes from studies comprised overwhelmingly of non-Hispanic white participants. Far fewer data are available from other racial and ethnic groups, such as Hispanics, African Americans, and Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI). And even less is known about brain aging and dementia among diverse groups in their 90s and beyond.

Better representation of diverse racial and ethnic groups across the lifespan in research could offer insight into the burden of ADRD in different populations and lead to more effective diagnosis, treatment, and prevention for all people. In particular, it will be essential to know if new treatments are equally safe and effective in the diverse communities who need them. At UCI MIND, we are dedicated to increasing diversity in research studies to better represent all people affected by ADRD, and Orange County's diverse community creates an opportunity to do so.

In 2016, UCI MIND launched a local recruitment registry – the *UCI Consent-to-Contact (C2C) Registry* – to raise awareness of research participation

opportunities at UCI ([c2c.uci.edu](https://c2c.uci.edu)). We are excited to announce that this fall, the UCI C2C went live in Spanish, Korean, Chinese, and Vietnamese to allow more people to access this online tool. Additionally, in partnership with UCSF, UC Davis and AAPI advocacy organizations, UCI MIND is now participating in a new statewide registry – the *Collaborative Approach for AAPI Research and Education (CARE)* – to support representation of AAPI in aging research ([careregistry.ucsf.edu](https://careregistry.ucsf.edu)). Also in partnership with UC Davis, as well as the Kaiser Division of Research in Northern California, UCI investigators are helping establish a one-of-a-kind multi-ethnic cohort of individuals age 90 and older, called *Life After 90*, which will redefine our knowledge of dementia and brain pathology in the oldest-old.

UCI MIND continues to partner with an Asian American Community Advisory Board to increase participation in our longitudinal cohort study, and we have recently initiated a Hispanic Advisory Board and are seeking new members. Together with our diverse community, we will improve our understanding of ADRD in diverse populations and find solutions for people of all backgrounds.

# Faculty earn competitive NIH awards for biomarker projects

## Alzheimer's Biomarker Consortium – Down Syndrome (ABC-DS) Award

Drs. Elizabeth Head and Mark Mapstone were awarded a five-year \$100 million grant to study biomarkers for Alzheimer's disease in people with Down syndrome. The ABC-DS evolved from the longstanding contributions of Dr. Ira Lott and Eric Doran, who had the insight to include older people with Down syndrome in Alzheimer's disease research. People with Down syndrome are at very high risk for Alzheimer disease as their extra copy of chromosome 21 leads to accelerated amyloid buildup with aging. The new grant will help researchers improve understanding of the unique disease progression in this population.



## Standardized Centralized Alzheimer's Neuroimaging (SCAN) Award

Early diagnosis and tracking of Alzheimer's disease progression are central to our national effort to identify effective treatments. Led by Drs. David Sultzer and Craig Stark, this new project will contribute novel brain imaging data to improve biomarkers of Alzheimer's disease and reveal their links to disease progression and clinical symptoms, such as early behavioral changes. The project will also evaluate several cutting-edge, less invasive approaches to collecting biomarker information, which will be critical to accelerating Alzheimer's disease clinical trials.



Institute for Memory Impairments  
and Neurological Disorders  
2643 Biological Sciences III  
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National Institute on Aging  
Designated  
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## CONTACT US

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ucimind@uci.edu

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cgcox@uci.edu

### Giving Opportunities

949.824.3793  
ddharper@uci.edu

### Research Participation

949.824.0008  
research@mind.uci.edu



Connect with us  
on social media!

## OC COVID-19 RESOURCES

### ASSIST Program for Isolated Seniors

UC Irvine | 714.497.0315

### Virtual Caregiver Support Groups

Alzheimer's Association | 800.272.3900  
Alzheimer's OC | 844.435.7259

### Food, Housing, Financial Support

211OC | Call 211 or Text Zip Code to 898-211

### In Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Hotline

OC Social Services Agency | 714.825.3000 (Dial 4)

### Mental Health Support

NAMI Warm Line | 877.910.9276  
New Hope Crisis Hotline | 714.639.4673



For more resources, visit  
[www.mind.uci.edu/blog](http://www.mind.uci.edu/blog)



### Upcoming events

#### 11<sup>th</sup> Annual A December to Remember Gala

Saturday, December 5, 2020 | 5:30 - 7:00 pm PDT  
FREE Virtual Event | Register: [gala.mind.uci.edu](http://gala.mind.uci.edu)

#### 2020 Facebook LIVE Q&A Series

##### *Guest experts from UCI MIND*

Monthly | 11:00 - 11:30 am PDT  
Facebook: [facebook.com/UCIrvineMIND/live](https://facebook.com/UCIrvineMIND/live)

#### Past educational sessions are archived on Facebook and YouTube

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