



Susan Samueli
Integrative Health Institute



*Transforming Health with
Whole-Person Care*

2022-2023

ANNUAL REPORT



WHOLE-PERSON HEALTH

Whole-person or integrative health involves consideration of the whole person – not just separate organs or body systems – and evaluating multiple factors that contribute to either health or disease. It means helping and empowering individuals, families, communities, and populations to improve their health in multiple interconnected biological, behavioral, social and environmental areas. Whole-person health focuses on restoring health and promoting resilience in those facing an illness as well as preventing diseases across a lifespan.

(Modified from source: National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health)

CIRCLE OF WELLNESS

With input and guidance from the UCI Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute Advisory Board and the Clinical Leadership Team, the institute's Circle of Wellness, which illustrates our approach to care, was revised to reflect the importance of self-empowered health. The new Circle of Wellness illustrates the interconnectedness of key components of whole-person health, prevention and treatment, physical health, mental and emotional health.



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MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

When I look around the Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute's spectacular new home on the UCI campus, I am reminded how far we have travelled in our five-year journey to transform healthcare through the practice of integrative health. And, in this space, I envision many opportunities for a bright future.

Walking through the research space, I see laboratory benches that will be filled with great minds exploring novel integrative health concepts. The institute looks forward to welcoming accomplished and renowned faculty like Richard Harris, PhD, professor of Anesthesiology & Perioperative Care in the UCI School of Medicine and Susan & Henry Samueli Endowed Chair in Integrative Health, whom we recently welcomed to UCI and you will meet in this annual report. Harris is recognized internationally for his contributions to understanding neuromechanisms underlying pathophysiology of pain and its treatments. As co-president of the Society for Acupuncture Research, he is promoting scientific evaluation into acupuncture and herbal medicine.

In the shiny new Mussallem Nutritional Education Center, with eight fully equipped cooking stations, participants are experiencing the joys of preparing food as medicine. As you'll read, even UCI researchers and clinicians are learning tips and techniques that they can apply to help others, including patients. We look forward to using this space to support the institute's participation in the Teaching Kitchen Collaborative (TKC)'s "Teaching Kitchen - Multisite Trial" (TK-MT) in collaboration with four other universities: Harvard University, UCLA, Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, and University of Texas Health in Houston.



Shaista Malik, MD, PhD, MPH, FACC
Photo by Kimberly Pham

Caring for patients in the clinic, I find the new clinic design facilitates interactions among our interdisciplinary team—starting from physicians, naturopathic doctors, dietitians, acupuncturists as well as many others—encouraging us to consider many options and approaches for optimal care. In this environment, people like Paul Pancoe, whose story follows, get the best of what whole-person health has to offer. Given the growth in demand for integrative health services — a 30 percent increase in outpatient visits this year — it is becoming easier to envision a time when integrative health will complement conventional care in all UCI Health clinics, an accomplishment that will be one-of-a-kind in the nation. And, as research adds to our understanding of what drives individual health, that care will become increasingly more personalized, not only helping people live their healthiest lives, but allowing them to maintain “healthspan” for the longest possible time.

Looking around the Samueli Institute's new home, I feel gratitude to you. You have helped to bring us to this point — as patients and providers, students and health leaders, researchers and philanthropists, and advocates. Through you, healthcare is being reimagined as an interdisciplinary, evidence-informed, integrative approach to health and wellness. Because of you, more people are able to experience the power of whole-person care as a path to optimum health and wellbeing. Thank you for partnering with us on prioritizing integrative and whole-person health.

In health,

Shaista Malik, MD, PhD, MPH, FACC

Founding Executive Director,
Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute
Founding Associate Vice Chancellor,
Integrative Health
Professor, Division of Cardiology, Department
of Medicine
Medical Director, Integrative Cardiology &
Cardiac Rehabilitation, Susan & Henry Samueli
College of Health Sciences and UCI Health

AWARDS & ACCOLADES



Joy in Medicine™ -
American Medical
Association



Shaista Malik, MD,
PhD, MPH, named
"Woman of the Year"
- Assemblywoman
Cottie Petrie-Norris



Excellence in
Healthcare: Wellness
Programs award -
Greater Irvine
Chamber



2022 Health Professions
Higher Education
Excellence in Diversity
(HEED) Award - *INSIGHT
Into Diversity* magazine
for HEAL-IM

Physicians of Excellence - Orange County Medical Association

- Ailin Barseghian El-Farra, MD - Cardiovascular Disease
- Anju Hurria, MD - Psychiatry
- Shaista Malik, MD, PhD - Cardiovascular Disease
- Jose Mayorga, MD - Family Medicine
- Robert McCarron, DO - Psychiatry
- Natasha Mesinkovska, MD, PhD - Dermatology
- Bavani Nadeswaran, MD - Internal Medicine
- Nimisha K. Parekh, MD - Gastroenterology

INTRODUCTION

Who We Are

The UCI Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute is leading healthcare transformation through integrative health by addressing root causes of disease, lifestyle modification and patient empowerment. By complementing conventional treatments with a whole-person approach to care that is informed by science and incorporated into the training of future health professionals to advance a model of team-based care, the Samueli Institute is trailblazing integrative care to help patients achieve their best health.

Mission

Transform healthcare through the practice of integrative health by conducting rigorous research, promoting evidence-informed treatment modalities, educating the public and future healthcare professionals, providing individualized, patient-centered care and providing services to the community that focus on obtaining optimal health.

Vision

To be the preeminent national and international academic institute for pioneering multidisciplinary research, education and healthcare practices for the care of the whole person.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2026



DISCOVER

Build a robust integrative research program that advances the discovery of the scientific basis of integrative health approaches to optimize health and wellbeing.



TEACH

Provide comprehensive, whole-person healthcare and disease prevention to our community. Expand the team-based model of care to consist of collaborative integration of all healthcare providers who share the goal of whole-person care.



HEAL

Develop an academic integrative health educational curriculum which promotes innovation, academic rigor, collaboration, cultural humility and the development of leaders in the field of integrative health and whole-person care.



SERVE

Advance and improve access to integrative care that addresses the dynamic, growing needs within our communities and beyond.

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE

21+

Years of continuous
National Institutes of
Health funding in
integrative health



DISCOVER

\$12.97M

Active funding for
research

256

UCI medical students
trained in culinary
medicine - total



TEACH

4,700+

Integrative nursing
courses completed

32,097

Integrative nursing
interventions



HEAL

3,889

UCI Health
nurses/employees trained
- largest integrative
nursing program in the
U.S.

320%

Increase in
acupuncture sessions
at Federally Qualified
Health Center (FQHC)



SERVE

8,915

Enrollees in community
events

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE

31%

Growth in ambulatory (outpatient) visits from FY22 (21,798) to FY23 (28,578)

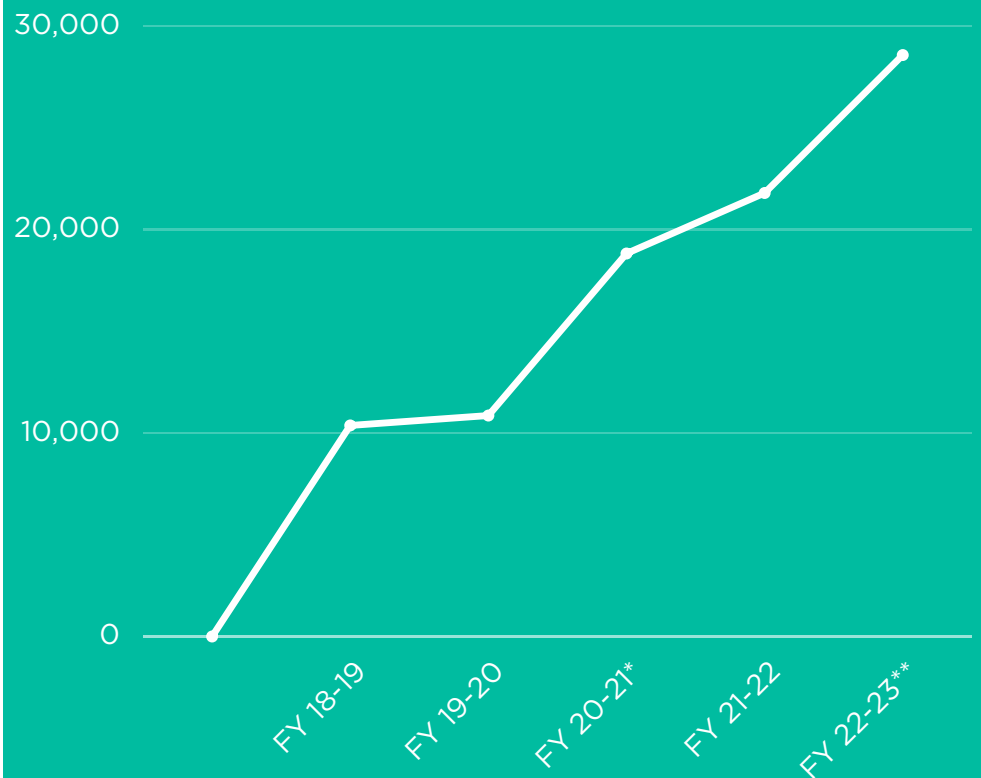
175%

Growth in ambulatory (outpatient) visits over five years

7,953

Total inpatient acupuncture treatments

AMBULATORY VOLUME



*Newport Beach Clinic opened.

**Opening of new flagship location in Irvine

The largest ambulatory and inpatient integrative health program in the U.S.

IRVINE FLAGSHIP OPENS DOORS TO NEW ERA



When the Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute's new Irvine flagship location opened on October 17, 2022, it made headlines in such publications as the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Orange County Register*, *Orange Coast Magazine* and *Orange County Business Journal*.

The new location embodies how the Samueli Institute is transforming healthcare. The Samueli Institute – known originally as the Susan Samueli Center for Integrative Medicine – was first established in 2001 with a generous gift of \$5.7 million from Susan and Henry Samueli. In 2017, a historic gift from Susan and Henry Samueli transformed the center into the Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute and established the Susan & Henry Samueli College of Health Sciences.

Tripling the space of the previous flagship location increases access for more patients and community events. This location opens doors to new ways to provide spaces for innovative student instruction; multidisciplinary, collaborative research; engaging community education; and team-based, whole-person care.

Features include

- Patient exam, treatment, procedure and consult rooms
- Pharmacy and compounding lab
- Infusion suite
- Cardiac rehabilitation
- Mussallem Nutritional Education Center
- Two activity rooms
- Palmer Family Research and Conference Room
- Outdoor wooden deck with a noise-blocking wall for Tai Chi sessions and other activities
- Two indoor living plant walls ("living walls") with built-in self-irrigation system
- Herb and vegetable garden

Learn more at ssihi.uci.edu/about/our-irvine-location/



“Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute’s approach perfectly embodies UCI Health’s vision for the future of healthcare: integrated, thoughtful care that is both high-touch and high-tech, and that engages patients from a whole-person perspective. Led by Dr. Shaista Malik, our integrative medicine teams are delivering care that meets personal, emotional, and overall health needs for our patients in calming, supportive environments that exceed expectations for experience. The Samueli Institute is leading the way for UCI Health and the industry overall.”

– Tatyana Popkova, chief strategy officer, UCI Health

DISCOVER

Science that leads the way to better health

RESEARCH THAT EXPANDS KNOWLEDGE

For more than two decades, the Samueli Institute has received continuous NIH funding for research into the mechanisms and effectiveness of acupuncture. In that time, investigators have demonstrated that repetitive electroacupuncture releases a kind of natural opioid that lowers blood pressure, that patients with hypertension treated with acupuncture experienced drops in their blood pressure, that acupuncture may mitigate burn pain and research into various aspects of the modality continues. Active Samueli Institute investigations are expanding knowledge in diverse areas of integrative health.

Acupuncture

- Neuroimmune Mechanisms Underlying Electroacupuncture Effect on Vascular Function (PI: Shaista Malik, MD, PhD, MPH; Stephanie Tjen-A-Looi, PhD)
- Neural Substrates of Electroacupuncture in Cardiovascular Control (PI: Shaista Malik, MD, PhD, MPH; Co-I: Stephanie Tjen-A-Looi, PhD)
- Mechanisms of Central Nervous System Autonomic Regulation by Acupuncture (PI: Shaista Malik, MD, PhD, MPH; Zhiling Guo, MD, PhD)

Cardiology

- Integrative Cardiometabolic Care Approach compaRative Effectiveness (ICARE) Study: Evaluating Subclinical and Clinical Markers of Disease in Cardiometabolic Syndrome Through Integrative Cardiovascular Care Approaches (PI: Shaista Malik, MD, PhD, MPH)
- South Bay Heart Watch PREDICT Study (PI: Shaista Malik, MD, PhD, MPH)
- Parenteral Infusion of Nutrients in Subjects with Chronic Health Problems (PI: Shaista Malik, MD, PhD, MPH)

Prenatal health

- Prenatal Diet-Stress Interactions and the Maternal Metabolic Response in Human Pregnancy (PREDIP) (PI: Karen Lindsay, PhD, RDN)
- Identifying an Optimal Mindfulness Intervention for Pregnant Women: A Feasibility and Acceptability Study (PI: Karen Lindsay, PhD, RDN)

Other research

- Use of Self-Regulation Training with Heart Rate Variability Biofeedback via Telehealth in the Management of Stress in COVID-19 Frontline Trainees (PI: Darlene Lee, ND, MSW; Arvin Jenab, ND; Shaista Malik, MD, PhD, MPH)
- An Observational Study Characterizing the Pain Response, Safety and Tolerability of CCTA320 (CANNABIS) in Patients with Chronic Pain (PI: Marcela Dominguez, MD)
- Low Dose CoEnzymeQ10 in Management of Post-Acute Neuropsychological Sequelae of COVID-19 (PI: Jaclyn Leong, DO; CO-I: Hayleigh Ast, ND; Ryan McNally, ND; Jacob Hwang, ND)

ACTIVE FUNDING FOR INNOVATIVE RESEARCH

National Institutes of Health (NIH) is the largest public funder of biomedical research in the world. In the past year, the Samueli Institute studies received new or continued funding from NIH.



BRAVENET

Since the Samueli Institute became the co-leader of BraveNet, a practice-based integrative medicine research network, in July 2022, the institute has continued to focus on advancing integrative health by providing clinical outcomes and cost-benefit data.

Membership in the academic health system consortium has grown from 19 national members last fiscal year to 26 members this fiscal year and has

expanded to include international membership.

Also, the first PRIMIER BraveNet practice-based research network study was published. "Patients Receiving Integrative Medicine Effectiveness Registry (PRIMIER) of the BraveNet practice-based research network: Outcomes of the PRIMIER cohort" appeared in the December 2022 issue of *Complementary Therapies in Medicine*. PRIMIER is the largest study to assess the real-world effectiveness of integrative medicine.



COLLABORATION WITH HARVARD UNIVERSITY/TEACHING KITCHEN COLLABORATIVE (TKC)



The Samueli Institute is participating in the Teaching Kitchen Collaborative (TKC) “Teaching Kitchen – Multisite Trial” (TK-MT) in collaboration with four other universities: Harvard University, UCLA, Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, and University of Texas Health in Houston. The grant amount is \$100,000 per site.

The TK-MT is a randomized controlled trial that aims to assess feasibility and preliminary impact of the TKC curriculum on health outcomes and wellbeing among adults with clinically defined obesity (body mass index, BMI, 30-39.9) and one additional metabolic syndrome symptom.

The TKC curriculum is an interactive year-long program that teaches culinary skills, nutrition education, mindfulness, and stress reduction, promotes movement, and optimizes behavior change through health coaching strategies. A total of 320 participants at the identified university sites across the United States will be enrolled.

Half of the recruited participants will be randomized to receive the TK-MT educational intervention and the other half will receive standard of care (defined as followed as usual by their primary care physician). Each site will run two cycles of the program with 14-24 subjects per cycle. Feasibility and acceptability measures will be collected, including recruitment, attendance, and satisfaction data.

Researchers will collect participants’ anthropometric measures including abdominal girth (waist circumference), weight and height (to calculate BMI) as well as biometric measures. Finally, self-reported health behaviors such as fruit and vegetable intake, frequency of exercise, and cooking abilities will be assessed at baseline and end of follow-up to assess change. Barriers and facilitators to program implementation will be a key component of the assessment, along with an assessment of fidelity of program implementation.

The TK-MT was initiated in August 2023 and will end in December 2025.

NEW ENDOWED CHAIR RICHARD HARRIS BRINGS 21 YEARS OF PAIN RELIEF RESEARCH

In April 2023, Richard Harris, PhD, joined the UCI Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute as the second Susan and Henry Samueli Endowed Chair in Integrative Health and a UCI School of Medicine professor in the Department of Anesthesiology & Perioperative Care.

Harris comes to UCI after 21 years at the University of Michigan, where he was previously a professor in the Department of Anesthesiology and a professor in the Department of Internal Medicine, Division of Rheumatology.

Harris's background is in basic science and clinical research in integrative medicine. He received his bachelor's degree in genetics from Purdue University in 1992 and his doctoral degree in molecular and cellular biology from UC Berkeley in 1997. Harris is also a graduate of the Maryland Institute of Traditional Chinese Medicine and received a master's degree in clinical research design and statistical analysis at the University of Michigan. He is the co-president of the Society for Acupuncture Research and a former member of the advisory council for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH).

Harris has investigated the neurobiological mechanisms of both pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic (acupuncture/acupressure) treatments for chronic pain and fatigue. He also has focused on the role of brain neurotransmitters and their receptors in humans with chronic pain and will continue this line of research at UCI.



In June 2023, Harris received a five-year U24 grant (funding for resource-related research projects with cooperative agreements) totaling \$5.8 million from the NCCIH. Harris will serve as a co-principal investigator to support the creation and curation of a new open-access repository and database for acupuncture research called TARA (Topological Atlas and Repository for Acupoint research). The project will create an important bridge between Traditional East Asian Medical (TEAM) theories and modern understanding of anatomy and physiology.

"I am excited for the opportunity to contribute to this innovative research on Traditional East Asian Medicine," said Harris. "TARA has the potential of making a significant contribution to TEAM research that can extend into the larger field of biomedical studies. If utilized to its fullest, TARA will benefit people's health and wellbeing, and the way in which chronic diseases are studied and treated."

Meditation and its effects on the mind are also at the top of Harris's interests. "I am

a practitioner of meditation myself, including Zen and Qigong meditation, and find them to be very beneficial. I'm interested in studying those techniques and looking forward to exploring the combination of these modalities. Because it's not just one thing that makes you whole. It's a combination of things. We've been studying these interventions individually, mostly. Now we need to start thinking about studying them in combination.

"Chronic pain also affects more than just one's physical body," added Harris. "It affects their emotional body, and it can also impact how you relate to yourself as a living person.

"I also think that there are interventions that can be used to treat the whole person. The field is now moving in the direction of studying and treating the whole person. Spirituality is also part of that. And we don't really have much strong evidence for the scientific basis for a lot of those practices. I think that is a nice, fertile area for exploration and investigation and gaining new insights and new perspectives."

Harris is enthusiastic about joining the Samueli Institute. "What I'm really excited about is to branch out into more integrative

therapies," he said. "The first part of my career has been mostly focused on pain, with a bit about integrative care. What I want to do now at UCI is to explore more integrative therapies and spend the rest of my career focusing and delving into integrative techniques. I think they're very important, and we need to have better access for them."

On his decision to come to the Samueli Institute, Harris said, "I thought this would be a really good opportunity. The institute is doing great things and growing. It has a brand-new building, and the intent is to hire more faculty. So, I felt like this is a great opportunity to get in on the ground level and be able to make a difference."

"I have had a number of conversations with Dr. Malik and other folks at UCI and SSIHI," said Harris. "I am excited about the future, and I feel everyone will work together and be supportive. Coming into the Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute on the ground level with other new endowment hires is exciting for me, and I really see our institute being a hub for integrative health teaching, research, and care."

SAMUELI SCHOLARS AWARD PROGRAM: DISTINGUISHED INVESTIGATORS CONTINUE IMPACTFUL INTEGRATIVE HEALTH RESEARCH

The inaugural Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute Samueli Scholars are UCI faculty who have made scientific contributions of national distinction in their respective disciplines and whose achievements show extraordinary promise to advance basic, translational or clinical scholarship in integrative health. Following the first year of a three-year appointment, the Samueli Scholars continue their impactful work and their scientific updates follow. For a list of publications, see page 17.



Geoffrey W. Abbott, PhD

Professor of Physiology & Biophysics, Senior Associate Dean of Academic Personnel and Vice Dean of Basic Science Research, UCI School of Medicine

The Abbott Bioelectricity Lab is leading investigations in molecular mechanisms of herbal medicines and moving them toward controlled tests in animal models. In September 2022, the lab published a paper in the *FASEB Journal*, in which they describe the molecular basis for the vasorelaxant effects of some tree barks. The in vitro study was published in *Nature Communications* in June 2023. The lab found that aloperine, from Traditional Chinese Medicine *Sophora flavescens* (Ku Shen), is 100% effective at preventing sudden cardiac death in a rat model of ischemia/reperfusion injury. This paper was accepted for publication in *FASEB Journal*.

Olivier Civelli, PhD

Eric L. and Lila D. Nelson Professor in Neuropharmacology, Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, UCI School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences; Professor of Developmental and Cell Biology, UCI School of Biological Sciences

Civelli is exploring the management of chronic pain via multiple approaches. Civelli's lab has shown that the extract of *Corydalis yanhusuo* (*Corydalis*) is analgesic in standardized animal pain models. They have also shown that the extract of *Corydalis* can reduce the need for opiates, which are often prescribed in chronic pain and are a major cause of the opioid epidemic. They have further shown that the extract of *Corydalis* can prevent opiate tolerance, the primary reason for opiate overuse, and that it can even reduce opiate addiction. *Corydalis*, if administered with an opiate, not only decreases the amount of opiate need, but also prevents opiate tolerance. Thus, *Corydalis* reduces the risk of over-use. Their aim is now to find the *Corydalis* component that prevents morphine tolerance.

Angela G. Fleischman, MD, PhD

Associate Professor of Medicine, Division of Hematology/Oncology, UCI School of Medicine

Dr. Fleischman has given presentations on her study on the effects of a Mediterranean diet to the International Congress on Myeloproliferative Neoplasms, European School of Hematology Myeloproliferative Neoplasm meeting, and Leukemia Lymphoma Society Northern California Cancer Conference.

Kalpna Gupta, PhD

Professor in Residence of Medicine, Division of Hematology/Oncology, UCI School of Medicine

Gupta's research shows that improving the diet, companionship, use of food supplements — curcumin and palmitoylethanolamide — and cannabinoids can provide pain relief. It showed inflammation and oxidative stress underlying pro-nociceptive mechanisms can be targeted with integrative approaches to ameliorate pain in chronic conditions, including sickle cell disease, hemophilia and chemotherapy-induced peripheral neuropathy. Gupta published these findings in some high-impact factor journals including *Blood*. The significance of this research is evidenced by the accompanying editorial commentary on some publications. Several grants, including two NIH grants, were funded in the last two years to examine the mechanisms of debilitating chemotherapy-induced neuropathy (NIH R01) and Alzheimer's disease (Supplement to R01). Many other grants on evaluating mechanism-based integrative approaches to prevent/treat pain in sickle cell disease were funded by the State of California, UCI and industry.

Michelle Khine, PhD

Professor of Biomedical Engineering, with affiliate appointments in Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering, Materials Science and Engineering, and Electrical Engineering, UCI Samueli School of Engineering; Associate Dean of the UCI Division of Undergraduate Education (DUE)

Khine has started projects focused on acupuncture/blood pressure in collaboration with Shaista Malik, MD, PhD; developing digital biomarkers for pain and stress in sickle cell patients in collaboration with USC's Michael Khoo, PhD, and Thomas Coates, MD; and understanding psychophysiology in underserved populations with UCI's Dewayne Williams, PhD. Khine also collaborated with Bernard Choi, PhD, of UCI, to add in parameters of monitoring blood flow, which resulted in winning second place (and a \$300K award) from the NIH Technology Accelerator Challenge (NTAC) for a monitoring sock for pregnant women.

Katrine Whiteson, PhD

Associate Professor of Molecular Biology and Biochemistry, UCI School of Biological Sciences; Associate Professor of Pediatrics, UCI School of Medicine; Co-Director of the UCI Microbiome Center

Whiteson received a new grant from the Cystic Fibrosis Research Institute (CFRI) for her New Horizons' project titled, "Targeting recalcitrant CF pathogens with phages, antibiotics, and small molecule adjuvants." She also published research in numerous publications including *NPJ Biofilms Microbiomes*, *Microbiol Spectr*, *mSystems*, and *medRxiv*. Recent seminars include the UCI Infectious Disease Grand Rounds, Harvard CTEU, Orange County Great Park Farm and Food Lab Compost Garden, UCI Wellness Day, Cancer Research Institute Symposium, and Institute for Salivary Bioscience.

Xiangmin Xu, PhD

Professor and Chancellor's Fellow of Anatomy and Neurobiology, UCI School of Medicine; Director of the UCI Center for Neural Circuit Mapping

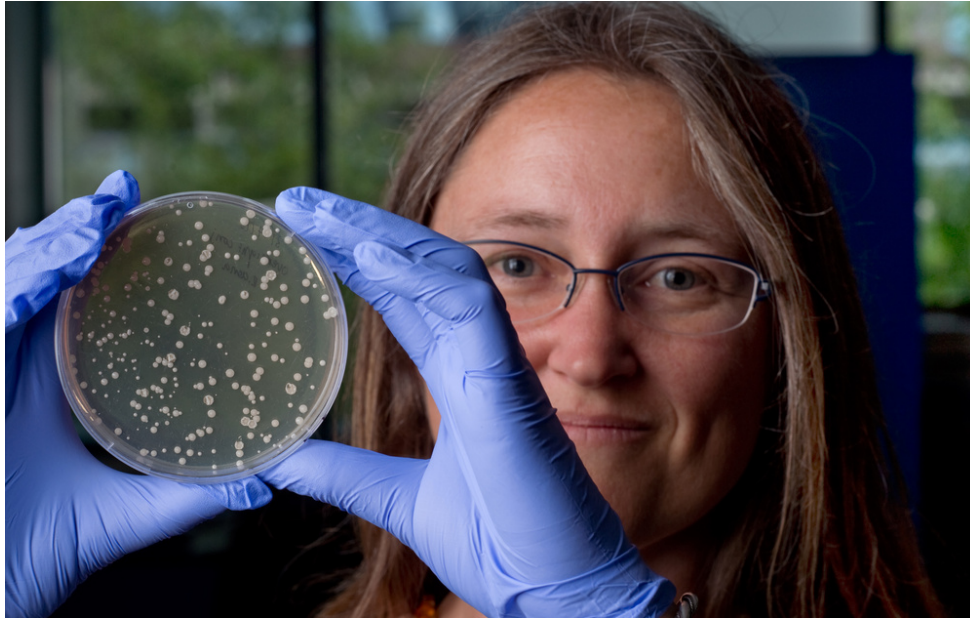
Xu received an NIH R01 AG082127 grant for his project titled, "Single-cell transcriptomic and epigenomic analysis of brain cell vulnerabilities to tauopathies in early Alzheimer's disease (AD) impacted brain region." The grant is \$10M over five years. The proposed research will use cutting-edge single-cell epigenomic and transcriptomic technologies to map molecular and neural mechanisms of selective brain cell vulnerabilities to tauopathies in early AD impacted brain regions in two complementary lines of tau mouse models.

Sean Young, PhD

Professor of Emergency Medicine, UCI School of Medicine; Professor of Informatics, Donald Bren School of Information and Computer Sciences; Executive Director, University of California Institute for Prediction Technology

Young gave the keynote address for the NCCIH/NIH fall 2022 lecture series. He is principal investigator of an approximately \$4M NIMHD/NIH R01 grant for research on cell phone digital data for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) care engagement among Black and Latinx participants living with HIV who are not in HIV care. He is the multiple principal investigator (MPI) of a \$10M NIAID/NIH grant to create a digital cohort of HIV patients to track and intervene to increase their care engagement. Young has been appointed to the Board of Population Health and Practice at National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine. He has published research in *Cureas*.

A LITTLE FIBER FOR YOUR HEALTH? SAMUELI SCHOLAR EXPLORES THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DIET AND THE GUT MICROBIOME



Katrine Whiteson, PhD, Photo by Steve Zylius / UCI

Katrine Whiteson, PhD, is on a quest to understand how microbes living in your body influence health and disease.

The human gut microbiome — a community of bacteria, fungi, viruses and other microbes that live primarily in the digestive track — has been associated with many health issues including inflammatory bowel disease, vaccination efficacy, individual responses to pharmaceuticals, diabetes and cancer. Whiteson's curiosity about this largely unknown space has led to investigations into the relationship between dietary fiber and the microbes that reside in your gut.

"I teach undergrad classes where we have the students eat 50 grams of fiber a day. And we do that for two weeks. We take fecal samples before and after, so that we can see what happens to their microbiomes," said Whiteson.

Whiteson said the study was inspired by a diet switch reported in *Nature Communications* in April 2015. People in rural South Africa swapped diets with people in Pittsburgh for just two weeks, she said, undergoing colonoscopies before and after.

"The doctors reported that the group that got more fiber saw clinically meaningful

improvements. They saw big shifts in what kinds of microbes were present and fiber getting fermented into healthy molecules. Not only are we doing this with undergrads; I'm trying to expand it to cancer patients."

Whiteson is an associate professor of molecular biology and biochemistry in the UCI School of Biological Sciences, and associate professor of pediatrics in the UCI School of Medicine. In 2022, she was named a UCI Chancellor's Fellow, an award recognizing a body of scientific work that supports a strong trajectory towards distinction. She is also a Samuelli Scholar, one of eight distinguished UCI researchers selected for the inaugural honor based on achievements that show promise for advancing basic, translational, or clinical scholarship in integrative health.

Her research connects her with investigators in nine UCI schools and other institutions. She has completed several studies with fellow Samuelli Scholar Angela Fleischman, MD, PhD, associate professor of hematology oncology in the UCI School of

Medicine. Their most recent investigation focused on how a Mediterranean diet can affect individuals with myeloproliferative neoplasm. Whiteson says they have observed associations between inflammation, the microbiome and cancer severity that she anticipates investigating in future diet studies.

She is developing a study that will evaluate the potential for a high-fiber diet to change the microbiome before breast cancer surgery in ways that improve outcomes. Collaborators include Fleischman, Laura Esserman, MD, director of the Carol Franc Buck Breast Care Center at UCSF; Karen Lindsay, PhD, Susan & Henry Samueli Endowed Chair in Integrative Health; and Karen Lane, MD, surgeon at UCI Health Pacific Breast Care Center.

The investigation is inspired, in part, by research from the NIH Center for Cancer Research at the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, which found that patients undergoing immunotherapy with immune checkpoint blocker for advanced melanomas, who consumed at least 20 grams a day of dietary fiber, lived longer without their cancer progressing than those who consumed less dietary fiber. Study findings, reported in the Dec. 23, 2021, issue of *Science*, indicated that every 5-gram increase in daily dietary fiber intake corresponded to a 30% lower risk of progression of the disease.

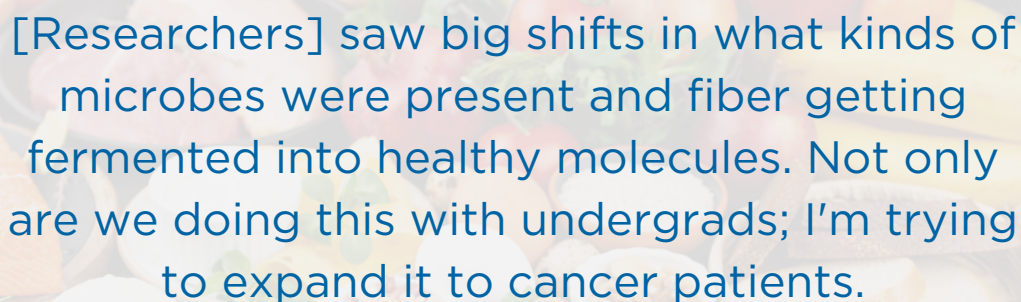
“When people are diagnosed with cancer, there is often a window of a few weeks between their diagnosis and when they start

treatment or have surgery,” said Whiteson. “The idea is to really get people’s diet in a good position before the treatment with the hope of increasing their chance of success.”

Whiteson also shares insights into diets for a healthy gut microbiome alongside food preparation demonstrations from Samueli Institute Executive Chef Jessica VanRoo. The duo has plans for sharing more microbiome insights and companion recipes in future lectures and publications.

Ultimately, she would like her research to lead to an understanding of how to assess a cancer patient’s health through the microbiome and, based on what it reveals, promote actions to optimize microbiome health and improve treatment outcomes.

She is also dedicated to illuminating the way for other scientists who are interested in exploring the human microbiome. As co-director of the UCI Microbiome Center alongside Jennifer Martiny, PhD, UCI professor of ecology and evolutionary biology, Whiteson is a leader in microbiome research. The center she helped to found, with support from the School of Medicine, the School of Biological Sciences and the Office of Research, assists UCI researchers with experiment design, sample analysis and data analysis. Whiteson and Martiny also established the Microbiome Centers Consortium to share strategies and accelerate knowledge transfer with researchers at microbiome centers nationwide.



[Researchers] saw big shifts in what kinds of microbes were present and fiber getting fermented into healthy molecules. Not only are we doing this with undergrads; I’m trying to expand it to cancer patients.

- Katrine Whiteson, PhD

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TEACH

Integrative education that empowers



NATUROPATHIC DOCTOR RESIDENCY PROGRAM

In collaboration with Bastyr University, the Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute Naturopathic Doctor Residency (NDR) Program is the only naturopathic doctor residency program at a nationally recognized university and medical center. The program attracts top graduates seeking a career in academic and integrative medicine. Led by Arvin Jenab, ND, medical director of naturopathic medicine for the Samueli Institute, this program offers the unique opportunity for naturopathic residents to learn from a diverse team of integrative health professionals.

During the 2022-23 academic year, the NDR Program had four full-time naturopathic residents: two postgraduate year-one and two postgraduate year-two residents.

Since the start of the program in 2015, a total of 12 naturopathic doctors have graduated from the NDR program. Over the last eight years, seven NDR graduates have joined the Samueli Institute team following their residency.



INTEGRATIVE CARDIOLOGY FELLOW: BRIAN CHEUNG, MD

The 2022-2023 Integrative Cardiology Fellow, Brian Cheung, MD, contributed to eight publications, including *Journal of Clinical Medicine*, *JAAD Case Reports*, *American Heart Association*, *Circulation*, and *National Lipid Association*.

In his article “The intersection of the two complimentary fields of preventive cardiology and integrative cardiology: A fellow's voice” in the *American Journal of Preventive Cardiology*, Dr. Cheung wrote:

“Through the SSIHI integrative cardiology fellowship, I had many unique opportunities to learn more about this new and exciting field. Integrative cardiology incorporates aspects of both conventional and integrative medicine to provide care that is congruent with the most up-to-date body of knowledge and guidelines on prevention. It leverages current therapeutic modalities and lifestyle interventions to provide individual care that is tailored to their personal risk and aligns with their beliefs, values, and goals.”

'A COMPLETE MISSION FIT' FOR HEAL-IM STUDENT



Anna Rasmussen always knew she wanted to take a holistic approach to the practice of medicine – not as a replacement for conventional treatment options, but to connect with her patients beyond just their physical health and partner with them in achieving optimal wellness.

She found the ideal fit at UCI in the Health Education to Advance Leaders in Integrative Medicine program, a four-year longitudinal track informed by evidence that trains physicians to be leaders in bringing effective, compassionate, whole-person care to patients in whatever specialty they choose.

“HEAL-IM was a complete mission fit for me,” says Rasmussen, who’s from L.A. “My path to medicine was anything but straight and included personal study in many of the modalities HEAL-IM exposed us to.” She began pursuing a medical degree in her mid-20s after working for several years in the legal department at Google and as a yoga teacher in her off hours.

“Learning about the mind-body connection and sharing that connection with others meant far more to me than the work I did at my desk,” Rasmussen says. “I knew I needed to make health my career.”

58

Medical students
participated in HEAL-IM
program

HEAL-IM gave her the opportunity to formally train in the principles, philosophies and evidence-based practices of integrative medicine alongside traditional medical classes. Outside the program, she shared her passion for integrative medicine with others, starting a regular group called “Meditation Mondays” where her fellow students could come together to mindfully de-stress and also teaching yoga to the broader UCI community at the Anteater Recreation Center.

I decided to pursue a career in family medicine for a few reasons,” Rasmussen says.

“I found early mentors in the specialty through the HEAL-IM program and saw firsthand how they were able to incorporate lifestyle medicine and behavioral health into their primary care practices. I also admired how family medicine physicians worked to make practical, integrative medicine available to underserved populations, rather than just privileged elites. My experience at HEAL-IM enables me to start becoming the kind of holistic physician I want to be immediately out of medical school.”

She will be joining the family medicine residency program at St. Mary’s Medical Center in Grand Junction, Colorado.

- from “Rites of Spring: Match Day” - UCI News

AIM HEALTH AND WELLNESS COACHING CERTIFICATE PROGRAM CONTINUES TO GROW



34

Health and Wellness
Coaching Certificate
graduates/students

In 2022-2023, the Academic Integrative Medicine (AIM) Health & Wellness Coaching (HWC) Certificate Program graduated its first and second cohorts. Four students passed their national board exams; more students from both cohorts are preparing for the exam.

AIM HWC students come from diverse backgrounds, including numerous healthcare professionals such as physicians, nurses, pharmacists, dental hygienists and dietitians, as well as executives, researchers, public health and higher education administrators, and other professionals. Most of the professionals in the program work with underrepresented populations in their communities and seek to add coaching skills to their current positions. Other graduates are creating private practice models for health and wellness coaching or seeking a position in the health and wellness coaching industry.

With growing state and national awareness of the need to support those with behavioral health challenges, the AIM HWC curriculum was expanded to include more behavioral health content and a behavioral health track

was created. New program content also incorporated specific coaching considerations for different patient populations including oncology, cardiology, substance use, pediatric, young adults and geriatrics.

Scholarships increased program access. Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles covered the full cost of tuition for eight students in the second cohort and two students in the third. Individuals were selected to receive scholarships based on work backgrounds, personal attributes and educations that would contribute to their ability to coach underserved and underrepresented populations in L.A. County. Going forward, the AIM HWC program will also collaborate with Orange County HealthCare Agency to secure training scholarships for those who live and work in Orange County. A three-year Mental Health Services Act funding plan has been approved. The training will support employees across different disciplines to serve those with mental and behavioral health conditions starting in 2024.

CULINARY TRAINING PREPARES FACULTY TO PRESCRIBE FOOD AS MEDICINE

Ask your doctor how much nutrition education they received during their medical training and you're apt to be surprised by what you learn. Not all medical schools offer dedicated nutrition courses.

UCI Health is one of more than 60 academic institutions to adopt the Health meets Food curriculum, administered by George Washington University, for medical student and resident training. It is offered through a collaboration between the Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute and UCI School of Medicine.

This past year, faculty were offered the opportunity to fill their nutrition education gap with an adaptation of the curriculum focused on their needs.

"The culinary medicine training offers a multidisciplinary approach to food as medicine," said Nimisha Parekh, MD, MPH, FACG, AGAF, director of Culinary Medicine. "It combines nutrition education and motivational interviewing with culinary skills to give healthcare providers at all levels effective tools to improve the health of patients and communities."

Nine professionals representing areas such as internal medicine, family medicine and pathology, completed the inaugural faculty training during the fiscal year and began to apply their learnings with students, patients, community groups and in research. Three faculty program graduates shared how they have put their culinary insights to use.



Nimisha Parekh, MD, MPH, FACG, AGAF, Director of Culinary Medicine

Dr. Dylan Hanami

Family Physician

UCI Health Santa Ana and UCI Health
Anaheim Federally Qualified Health Center

I work at a clinic located in a 'food swamp' where access to fresh and healthy foods is not readily available due to multiple factors — distance, cost, misinformation, behaviors. I noticed that I started feeling like a broken record in each patient room. I had the same conversation with patients 20 times per day. We would dive deep into their dietary habits, and I would repeatedly give the same recommendations about eating more vegetables with each meal, eliminating sugary beverages, and incorporating more legumes.

Approximately 8.4 percent of Orange County residents — more than 267,000 people — struggle with food insecurity, according to 2021 data reported by Feeding America. In particular, the Orange County Latinx community faces many barriers with regard to access to healthy and nutritious foods that extend beyond our clinic doors. These barriers stack on each other and create a huge obstacle for patients.



Dylan Hanami, MD, (far right) with pre-medical, medical and pre-law students. Photo by Joshua Ramirez.

Culinary medicine is one way we can lower one of the many barriers patients face. It teaches us to address the behavioral and psychological aspects of healthy eating and cooking. We can talk about what a healthy breakfast can look like, or how to make a heart-healthy and affordable lunch.

This past year, my culinary medicine training helped me contribute to the community through nutrition and cooking classes at CRECE Urban Farm in Santa Ana and in virtual nutrition and cooking courses with Madison Park Neighborhood Association, a community partner in Santa Ana.

I see patients enjoy being in community and cooking together. It does seem to get to the heart of a primal need that all people are seeking — connectedness. This is especially salient in our 'post-pandemic' world.

Dr. Tan Nguyen

**Family Physician
UCI Health Santa Ana and UCI
Health Anaheim Federally
Qualified Health Center**

I had some basic training in nutrition at my medical school about 20 years ago, but it was nothing like this. There is a lot to learn! Besides learning more about the nitty gritty scientific facts about food and health effects, the course also taught fun culinary techniques like knife skills, and insider tips

from Chef Jess [Samueli Institute Executive Chef Jessica VanRoo] on product evaluation, packaging, quality and sourcing, etc. I find those tips helpful as we evaluate the products that we use.

I have interactions with many medical students in didactics and clinical settings. This was a great opportunity to get to know them more, in a relaxed setting where we learn together and enjoy some fun time together. Not only do we get to have better tools to serve our patients, but I think the students also benefit as well for their own wellbeing.

We recently had an exciting opportunity to be at a community health fair at a local church in Anaheim. Our students had a table where they demonstrated healthy cooking and provided nutrition counseling after screening for diabetes and high blood pressure. Students used simple and easy-to-follow recipes and instructions to tailor their education to participants. I felt that the participants were happy to sample the simple healthy snacks and could see the correlation between their blood test results and what they eat or how they cook. Even a simple takeaway like that, I think, goes a long way.

I'm working with some of the students on trying to collaborate with the local food bank to improve the student experience. I think it would be really fun for the students to work with local farms to actually harvest the foods, package donated goods and distribute them to our community members. It would help us serve the community better knowing where the foods come from and how they're processed and know the resources to share with our patients in need.



Faculty training in culinary medicine: Tan Nguyen, Angela Fleischman, Hannah Park, Jeff Wong

Dr. Bavani Nadeswaran

Internal Medicine Physician, UCI Health
Bariatric Medicine Specialist
Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute

Culinary medicine education empowers patients and providers to improve health, primarily through food. The program has expanded my knowledge of evidence-informed, simple cooking methods and skills that are specific to an individual's health and condition. It combines the joy of cooking with the science of medicine.

It's not only learning a recipe. It's learning from the Samueli Institute's executive chef, Jessica VanRoo, how to prepare healthy and delicious, culturally appropriate dishes. It's being introduced to where and how to shop; which cooked foods can be stored and how to store them properly; how to prepare protein in different ways; what vegetables to buy and how to chop them properly.

I've learned a practical and effective way to talk with patients and families about culturally sensitive, affordable approaches to food and nutrition. I still prescribe medications, but now I also have the tools to educate patients on proven lifestyle interventions.

At the Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute, we offer Healthy Weight group visits. Because these are medical visits, they are covered by most insurance plans and Medicare. The people who take part in the visits all have some degree of struggle with weight.



We get to know each patient at a basic level: what kind of food types they enjoy; how they eat; how often they go out to eat; what they understand about food, cooking and behavioral nutrition. It becomes a truly a personalized experience for the patients.

As a bariatric medicine specialist, I always find it rewarding to see an improvement in the objective outcome—like the weight going down, the body mass index improving, the blood pressure improving. When I hear patients make statements like, 'I started doing this and I am absolutely enjoying it,' I feel like these are things that they're going to do for a long time. Culinary medicine is a way of looking at how you eat for the rest of your life.



Samueli Institute Executive Chef Jessica VanRoo

49

Culinary Medicine
students
(Record-breaking
enrollment)

HEAL

Powerfully personalized integrative care

GROUP MEDICAL VISITS HELP PATIENTS HEAL TOGETHER

Opening the new Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute Irvine flagship location triples the former space, allowing more ways to serve patients and increases access to care. One of the first activities launched in the new space was an innovative approach to group medical visits, which provides more comprehensive care to patients who may not have had access to or been aware of integrative health treatments and services.

Group visits consist of 6-12 patients with a similar condition, who meet with an integrative health provider for an extended session at the clinic. The sessions are intentionally kept small in order to foster the kind of support that allows patients to have the best access to care and to speak freely.

At the visits, discussions focus on a particular treatment option or strategy relevant to the condition. Patients learn about and experience healthy nutrition, naturopathic medicine, acupuncture, Tai Chi, mindfulness, aromatherapy, and recommended supplements that are safe and supported by science. Patients also learn from the questions and experiences of others in the group, finding support and often forming a meaningful bond together.

Group visits, which are typically 120 minutes, are intended to supplement and enhance, not replace, patients' relationships with their treating providers.

Group medical visit programs include:

- Integrative Cancer Group Visit
- Integrative Healthy Weight Medical Group Visit
- Integrative Cardiology Medical Group Visit
- Integrative Long-COVID Medical Group Visit



“

The group sessions are
wonderful! I can't express my
gratitude enough.

– Laverne Masaki
Integrative Cancer Group Visit patient

Read more by scanning the QR code
or visiting ssihi.uci.edu/news



CARDIAC REHABILITATION OPENS

In 2023, the Samueli Institute's Cardiac Rehabilitation program began at the Irvine flagship location. Cardiac Rehab is a personalized and comprehensive program recommended and designed to help individuals recover from a heart attack, heart surgery or other cardiovascular events.

The new Cardiac Rehab team — Efrain Cerrato, MBA, ACSM-EP, lead exercise

physiologist, and Michelle Fisher, RN, BSN, registered nurse — guides patients along the path to cardiac health. Cerrato and Fisher work with a team of healthcare professionals, including cardiologists, nurses, dietitians, mindfulness and meditation practitioners, and trained acupuncturists to provide individualized, patient-centered clinical care focusing on recovery and prevention.



INTEGRATIVE CONCIERGE CARE CONTINUES INTEGRATIVE HEALTH SERVICES

Demand for the UCI Health Integrative Concierge Care program continues to grow. The membership-based program is designed for people who want consistent access to comprehensive care and are interested in integrative treatments and healthy lifestyle changes.

Members appreciate convenient access to an array of complementary therapies available in one location to support health and wellness goals. Health and wellness coaching is a new service offered to members. They also have access to clinical trials that focus on expanding understanding of the mechanisms and effectiveness of integrative treatments, led by Marcela I. Dominguez, MD.

CLINICAL SERVICES

Comprehensive Integrative Care



Whole-health programs

- Concierge primary care
- Executive health

Integrative specialties

- Breast wellness
- Cardiology
- Children's health
- Dermatology
- Gastroenterology
- Inpatient health services
- Mental health
- Pain care
- Weight management
- Women's health

Treatments and services

- Acupuncture
- Biofeedback
- Cardiac rehabilitation
- Group visits
- Health and wellness coaching
- Integrative cancer group visit
- Integrative cardiology group visit
- Integrative healthy weight group visit
- Integrative long-COVID group visit
- IV infusion therapy
- Massage therapy
- Mindfulness
- Naturopathic medicine
- Neurofeedback/brain mapping
- Nutrition counseling
- Osteopathic manipulation treatment
- Physical therapy
- Psychotherapy
- Tai Chi/Qigong

See a list of providers: ssih.uci.edu/meet-the-team/

UCI HEALTH SUSAN SAMUELI INTEGRATIVE HEALTH INSTITUTE CLINICAL LOCATIONS

NATIONAL RESEARCH CORPORATION PATIENT SATISFACTION SCORECARD

Rating of providers

91.5%

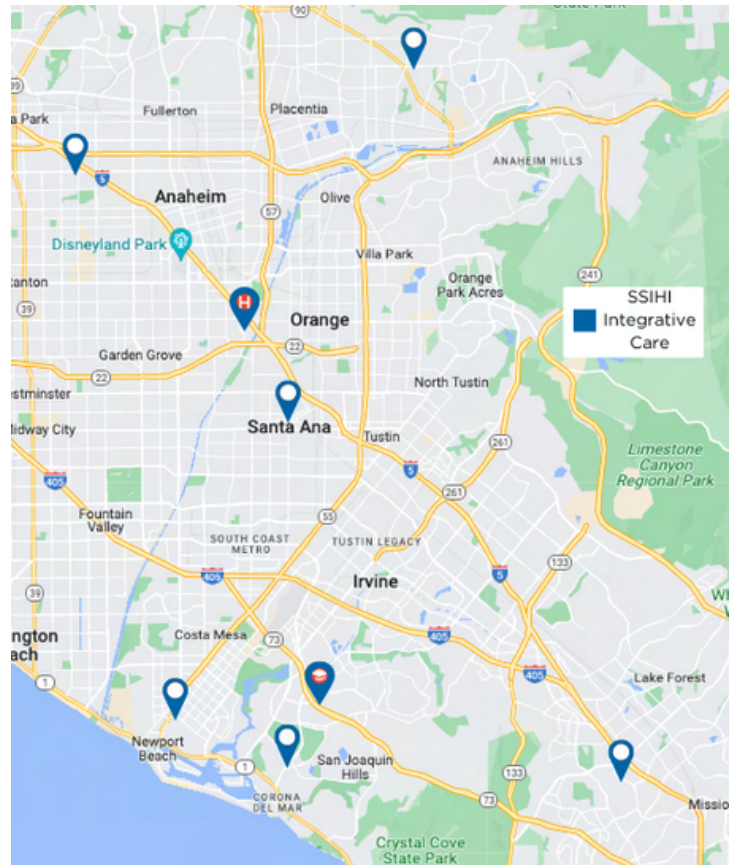
Staff courtesy

91.6%

NAVIGATING THE PATH TO WHOLE-PERSON HEALTH

In February 2023, Theresa Nutt, MA, BSN, HNB-BC, NBC-HWC, director of Health and Wellness Coaching and a health and wellness coach, assumed a new role as the Samueli Institute's first whole-person navigator, which will eventually become a dedicated position. As the current whole-person navigator, Nutt combines her decades of healthcare experience as a nurse and certified health coach to help new patients to the Samueli Institute find the best path toward their whole-person health with compassion and comprehensive knowledge.

Nutt has seen many success stories through health and wellness coaching. But she knows the start of a new journey can be overwhelming, and as a whole-person navigator, she is pleased to serve as a guide. In her role, she consults with patients to determine the right paths for their individual needs and helps them take their first steps forward. Nutt provides patients with recommendations of where



may be best for them to start receiving care through the Samueli Institute. Through this process, Nutt helps patients reach their health goals more quickly and efficiently with a customized approach for their needs.

"My role as a whole-person navigator is part detective, part nurse and part health coach," explained Nutt. "I am able to connect with people who aren't sure where to start at our integrative health clinic, ask questions to find out more about what they are seeking in their health, and help them understand how insurance will cover services so they can make informed decisions about where to start."

As a whole-person navigator and health coach, Nutt works closely with the Samueli Institute's clinical team. "I am so impressed with the collaboration and partnership of the diverse providers in the institute," said Nutt. "I have never worked with a more dedicated group of individuals who have their patients' best interests at heart."

INPATIENT ACUPUNCTURE

Acupuncture offered to patients at UCI Medical Center in Orange continued to be a growing service and received positive feedback from patients and providers. The inpatient acupuncture team gave 7,953 treatments during this fiscal year, demonstrating an increase from last year. UCI Health providers share their experiences with inpatient acupuncture and the benefits that acupuncture provides to their patients.



Availability and provision of acupuncture service at the Acute Rehabilitation Unit (ARU) with the Department of PM&R has been very well received by the patients and has also benefitted patients in their rehabilitation.

Some of the benefits patients have reported include less pain, improvement in sleep quality, as well as facilitating functional gain when applied along with traditional physical therapy. Patients are happy that they can continue with the acupuncture treatment during their stay at the acute rehabilitation unit (which was started at the acute hospital).

Some patients have never tried acupuncture in the past, but when offered during their stay at ARU, they appreciate the available option and most report great experience with plans to continue after discharge from the hospital.

– Jay Han, MD

Professor and Chair, Dept. of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

“

[Experience with inpatient acupuncture has been] Very helpful in co-managing symptoms in patients with either life limiting or otherwise chronic illnesses.

[Observed in patients with inpatient acupuncture] Improvement in pain, anxiety and nausea symptoms.

It has been a true pleasure to work with the Acupuncture team in general and Scott [Phelps, LAC] in particular as they bring such a philosophical holistic approach to help us manage our sickest of the sick in palliative care settings.

– Mudit Dabral, MD

Palliative Care Hospitalist, Clinical Professor

”

7,953

Total inpatient
acupuncture treatments

NURSES INTRODUCE INTEGRATIVE PRACTICES TO HELP HOSPITALIZED PATIENTS

As one of the few academic medical centers in the nation where integrative care is a core element of the professional practice model for nurses, UCI Health is able to explore innovative applications of complementary therapies to help patients achieve their best health.

With inpatient nurses trained in integrative care and training rolled out to ambulatory clinics, during the year Nursing staff began to explore creative initiatives such as the following to help patients benefit from integrative services.



Tools to Restore & Rebalance

An online resource library, launched last spring with support from the Samueli Institute, gives UCI Health patients a resource for engaging in whole-person health practices. Referred to as Restore & Rebalance, the new library offers mindful meditations, guided imagery, aromatherapy, yoga therapy, acupressure and massage — resources for managing symptoms that might interfere with completion or success of their therapy.

“Let’s say, you’re going in for infusion therapy. You’re worried your blood pressure is going to be high, and they’re not going to be able to start your test. So, as you’re waiting for infusion therapy, you can access mindful meditations or breathwork or guided imagery and be able to relax,” said Molly Nunez, director of Women’s & Children’s Services and co-lead of Integrative Nursing for UCI Health.

A Restore & Rebalance reference guide is provided at the bedside and in patient waiting areas. Nurses trained in integrative care are available to assist patients who are interested in using these tools to help them manage the healthcare experience.

551 New employees trained in Integrative Nursing - FY’23

3,889 UCI Health nurses/employees trained in Integrative Nursing



NEW INTEGRATIVE PHARMACY FILLS PRESCRIPTION FOR INTEGRATIVE HEALTH



The Samuelli Institute, in collaboration with UCI Health, continues to transform care with a new integrative pharmacy at the Irvine flagship location. This state-of-the-art pharmacy will specialize in integrative health supplements, medications, vitamins and IV micronutrient therapies, which are compounded onsite in the sterile compounding room.

A specialized integrative pharmacist was hired following an extensive search. Hung Du, PharmD, MSc, joined the Samuelli Institute in January 2023. Du brings a variety of pharmaceutical expertise and a unique perspective with his 10 years of experience in sterile and nonsterile compounding focused on integrative medicine. He has been a pharmacist for 25 years, with professional experience that includes the Food and Drug Administration, pharmaceutical companies and various retail pharmacies.

Student pharmacists at the UCI School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences will also have the opportunity to participate in

clinical rotations in the new integrative pharmacy. “I’m excited about fulfilling my role as an integrative pharmacist and teaching students,” said Du.

According to Du, “The benefits of an integrative pharmacy include minimizing side effects, taking advantage of healing properties in plants and the ability of the human body to heal itself. When we integrate these natural treatment modalities with current conventional medicine, I believe we can advance medicine to the next level and fulfill the mission of the Susan Samuelli Integrative Health Institute to transform healthcare.”

Melanie Joe, PharmD, founding associate dean for Pharmacy Professional Affairs at the UCI School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences and Chief Pharmacy Officer for UCI Health, said, “The development of a pharmacy, capable of providing sterile and non-sterile medicines, and inclusion of a pharmacist specialist to consult with patients and provide health information to integrative health care specialists creates a unique opportunity for learners and demonstrates the commitment of the Samuelli Institute to improve care for patients. With this pharmacy, we can guarantee our patients are receiving quality products and accurate, evidenced-informed information about these therapies.”

UCI School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences Founding Dean Jan Hirsch, BS Pharm, PhD, added, “Having this integrative pharmacy provides a unique opportunity for advancing the specialty of integrative pharmacy while training student pharmacists to serve as the medication expert for patients and healthcare teams by advising on benefits and risks of all medications — prescription, over-the-counter, supplements and complementary medications.”

RETIRED SUPPLY CHAIN LEADER RELIES ON CAST OF MANY TO RESTORE HEALTH

Paul Pancoe was winding down an accomplished career in supply chain management. At 65, he was ready for his second act...acting, swimming and maybe a little supply chain consulting. But, chronic foot pain kept him in the wings.

When Pancoe was 18, a forklift ran over the right foot, dislocating three toes, blocking blood flow, and leading to a gangrene infection. Doctors surgically removed the gangrenous tissue, but the foot was permanently damaged. That damage affected how he walked and led to other health issues over the years, including weight gain.

The chronic pain, however, was relatively new. He'd lived with it for about year. On his worst days, he couldn't walk for more than five minutes.

Treatment at a major sports medicine institute failed to achieve the pain relief he needed to take the stage. He tried a local physician, also to no avail. The physician suggested he consider acupuncture at the UCI Health Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute.

His first visit was with licensed acupuncturist Milim Jeon, PhD. That experience became a springboard for exploring the evidence-informed team care that distinguishes the integrative health institute from others.



Paul Pancoe, left. Photo courtesy of Wayward Photo.

In 2021, Pancoe had his first appointment with Dr. Kim Hecht, a board-certified specialist in physical medicine and rehabilitation, and the institute's medical director.

"Paul came in with multiple issues that could not be addressed by only one provider," said Dr. Hecht. "It required the support of a team that could truly address mind, body and spirit and was complemented by Paul taking responsibility for his health as well."

Dr. Hecht suggested that Pancoe meet with April Reilly, physical therapist, for integrative physical therapy techniques. Reilly combined manual therapy with mindfulness to address memories and emotions linked to the pain. After six visits, he was walking about three-quarters of a mile and reporting 80 percent relief of his foot pain.

“People want to feel like they matter. They don’t want to feel like they are part of a system,” said Pancoe. “I’ve never once felt that with anyone at the institute — particularly not with April. She goes the extra step. Her approach is not transactional; it’s transformative. She changes the way you look at your body and your pain.”

When Pancoe’s left foot began to hurt without any physical injury to cause the discomfort, Dr. Hecht introduced him to pain reprocessing therapy (PRT), an evidence-informed approach that has been shown to be effective in treating chronic pain. PRT uses psychological techniques to retrain the brain to interpret and respond to signals from the body in ways that break the cycle of chronic pain. And, it worked for him.

Pancoe visited with Dr. Bavani Nadeswaran, an internal medicine physician

“I still want chips,” said Pancoe. “But, I used to be like a bear in a campground. I used to stand in front of the fridge for no reason,” he said. “Now, I want to nourish my body. I love going to the farmers market.”

Pancoe swims with the Mission Viejo Nadadores Masters Swimming Club, benefiting from the instruction of U.S. Masters certified swim coach Robert Mitchell. His feet are pain-free. And, although his weight fluctuates, he continues his weight loss journey with the support of institute resources. He is also exploring ways the institute can help him improve his heart health.

“The biggest thing for me is that it’s not an assembly line,” said Pancoe. “They’re not looking at a chart, spending 10 minutes with you and going on to the next thing. They look at me and tell me what’s best for me, not just ‘you need to weigh 190.’ I get

“The level of care I have received is amazing. It’s a very caring community. You ultimately have to do it yourself, but there’s a village to help.”

- Paul Pancoe

who specializes in bariatric medicine, for weight management. As part of her comprehensive approach, she proposed neurofeedback, a form of biofeedback which would use brainwaves to teach him new ways to respond to underlying issues related to weight and pain.

Dr. Christine Kraus, a clinical neuropsychologist, administered the neurofeedback.

“The treatments that Paul received allowed him to become more aware of his pain and the emotions related to it,” Dr. Kraus said. “He learned relaxation techniques and listened to positive affirmations. He became able to prioritize his behaviors to address his physical health, such as swimming more, eating healthier.”

good information; I can make more informed decisions.”

As for the acting, he’s moving forward. This year, Pancoe appeared on stage at Grand Central Arts Center in Santa Ana for JUICE, a festival of one-act plays co-produced by The Wayward Artist and the Orange County Playwrights Alliance in January. In July, theatergoers enjoyed his performance of detective Joe Mameet in “Murder Me Always” at another local playhouse.

He reflects on the whole-person approach to health that helped him release the pain interfering with life’s second act.

“The level of care I have received is amazing. It’s a very caring community,” he said. “You ultimately have to do it yourself, but there’s a village to help.”

SERVE

Whole health for the whole community

FQHC INCREASES ACCESS TO INTEGRATIVE CARE

Providing integrative care to underserved communities is part of the Samueli Institute's commitment to making integrative care accessible to all. In efforts to expand access to care, the Samueli Institute partners with the UCI Health Family Health Center, which is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), which provides health services to underserved communities in Orange County located in Santa Ana and Anaheim, California. It is ranked in the top 10% of FQHCs nationally as a quality leader.

Throughout years of collaborations and joint efforts, the UCI Health Family Health Center has a history of implementing whole-person care through their offerings of group medical visits, activities in the teaching kitchen, and integrative health treatments such as acupuncture and mindfulness. This integrative care helps patients gain access to information and resources to help prevent diseases and improve their overall health.

As part of the commitment to integrative health, the UCI Health Family Health Center worked with the Samueli Institute to provide 206 acupuncture sessions, a 320% increase from last year's 49 sessions. In addition, integrative health visits, including acupuncture, mindfulness and group visits, were provided to 1,185 patients, a 70.5% increase from 695 in the last fiscal year to meet the growing need and desire for whole-person care. Jose Mayorga, MD, executive director of UCI Health Family Health Centers, noted the significant increases are due to the center adding integrative health sessions to meet the demand for acupuncture, patients' requests for more integrative health services, and not many other acupuncturists accepting Medi-Cal patients.

320%

increase in
acupuncture at
Federally
Qualified
Health Center
(FQHC)

70.5%

Increase in
patients
receiving
integrative
health visits,
including
acupuncture,
mindfulness,
group visits at
FQHC



OFFICE OF WELLBEING LAUNCHES NEW PROGRAMS FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS AND STUDENTS



UCI students practice mindfulness exercises.

In 2023, the Samueli Office of Wellbeing launched the Departmental Wellness Officer program. Ten School of Medicine clinical departments had faculty who devoted time to learning how to improve the wellbeing and retention of the staff and the faculty within their department. These officers completed a six-month fellowship in clinician wellbeing and have worked on year-long surveying and interventions for their departments that are focused on camaraderie and efficiency.

The Office of Wellbeing started a quarterly wellness council for UCI Health leaders that is run jointly with Human Resources. This council provides the opportunity for all involved with wellbeing to regularly share information and resources. The office also began offering quarterly Grand Rounds for UCI Health providers on topics that promote health providers' wellbeing.

One-to-one, 30-minute mental health check-ins with Negar Shekarabi, PsyD, coordinator for faculty and staff support, were made available to all faculty and staff free of charge, resulting in approximately 335 support sessions.

The UCI Wellbeing Initiative for Susan & Henry Samueli College of Health Sciences Students began in 2022. A grant from the UC Equity in Mental Health Funding Plan enabled the Samueli Office of Wellbeing and the Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute to provide wellbeing services to students for the 2022-2024 academic years.

1,642

UCI faculty and staff served through UCI Wellbeing Initiative (includes UC members/spouses/dependents)

1,529

Mindfulness participants

MINDFULNESS PROGRAMS HELP COMMUNITIES FLOURISH



Not only did patients benefit from mindfulness experiences through clinical services including group medical visits and inpatient integrative nursing care, the evidence-informed meditation practice helped many people on the UCI campus and in the community increase their sense of health and wellbeing during the year.

UCI Susan & Henry Samueli College of Health Sciences students had access to “Mindfulness for College of Health Sciences Students” and “Self-Compassion for College of Health Sciences Students” through the UCI Student Wellbeing Initiative, sponsored by the Office of Wellbeing. All UCI students were invited to participate in mindful meditation livestreams, yoga, and 1:1 wellbeing and mindfulness check-ins.

The UCI Faculty and Staff Wellbeing Initiative included offerings such as mindful meditation livestreams, 1:1 mindful meditations, and 1:1 wellbeing and mindfulness check-ins. Additional sessions included “Self-Compassion for Healthcare Communities” and a “Self-Compassion Retreat,” which were offered to faculty in the UCI School of Medicine. “Mindful Self-Compassion Short Course” was offered to community members through UCI Family Medicine. Participants, many from underserved communities, learned evidence-informed practices to tend to their own pain. Participants reported positive effects on their wellbeing and evaluated the program as highly beneficial.

“Mindful Self-Compassion for Educators” offered educators at the Saddleback Valley Unified School District Virtual Academy mindfulness tools to alleviate stress and better cope with the daily challenges. Numerous educators said they found the course useful and noted they will use the methods they learned to improve working with students and teachers.

Presentations requested by various university groups and community organizations reflected growing interest in mindfulness practices. The institute introduced meditation concepts to UCI entities such as the Office of Inclusive Excellence, Schools of Social Ecology and Social Sciences, Clinical Support Services, Transplant Services and UCI Health Clinician Health & Wellbeing. Our practitioners spoke at events for organizations such as Project Hope Alliance, Merage Jewish Community Center of Orange County, Henkel, Rancho San Joaquin Middle School and Irvine Unified School District.

SAMUELI INSTITUTE HELPS ZOV'S CELEBRATE 35 YEARS WITH TASTY MEDICINE

UCI Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute collaborated with Zov's restaurants to develop a special menu option for the restaurant's 35th anniversary. Creative chefs from both organizations teamed to build a meal that demonstrated the best of food as medicine and delighted long-time guests who appreciate the restaurant's innovative cuisine.

"The Samueli Institute culinary education programs tie into the Mediterranean diet, which is essentially the foundation of our business," said Armen Karamardian, chief executive officer of Zov's Restaurant Group. "That's what we've been doing for 35 years. We decided this is something we wanted to do to share this collective message and shared mission with our guests through our restaurants."

Zov's founder and renowned chef Zov Karamardian entered the kitchen with Jessica VanRoo, executive chef overseeing the Samueli Institute's Mussallem Nutritional Education Center. The culinary pros tested and tasted different ingredients. The resulting meal served at Zov's in Newport Beach, Tustin and Irvine included roasted beet dip with tahini swirl and toasted pita; pan-roasted sea bass, with seared zucchini cake and toasted feta in a lemon caper sauce; and, for dessert, chia seed yogurt with turmeric and fresh mango.

"This menu offered guests the opportunity to explore new and unfamiliar ingredients, such as turmeric, and



encouraged them to incorporate these beneficial components into their diets," said VanRoo. "The collaboration emphasized the profound influence that doctors, nutritionists, and chefs can have when they work together to create dishes that are not only delicious but also promote our health and wellbeing."

VanRoo said the Samueli Institute and Zov's are planning more creative collaborations to promote the concept of food as medicine including seasonal menus, cooking classes and food preparation demonstrations.

“

We decided this is something we wanted to do to share this collective message and shared mission with our guests through our restaurants.

— Armen Karamardian
CEO, Zov's Restaurant Group

MEGAN STIRRAT PROMOTES INTEGRATIVE HEALTH AS THE VOICE OF WOMEN'S WELLNESS DAY



Megan Stirrat, center, with 2023 Women's Wellness Day participants

As emcee of Women's Wellness Day, Megan Stirrat has a special relationship with the event and its guests.

It began ten years ago, when Stirrat, now founder and senior partner at Revel Private Wealth, decided to become sponsor of the one-day, integrative health education event.

Stirrat, a Certified Financial Planner, specializes in helping women address their financial picture as they go through significant life transitions such as divorce, retirement or widowhood. She saw Women's Wellness Day as an opportunity to advocate for the health of women in her local community and, perhaps, establish and strengthen client relationships. She still remembers her first event.

"The day started with a panel describing a typical patient," said Stirrat. "The patient wasn't sick. Instead, she was a person who just maybe wasn't the healthiest version of herself. I remember sitting there thinking, 'That's me. They're talking about me.' And I loved the day; I loved every minute of it."

Stirrat expanded her relationship with the Samueli Institute's signature event, eventually serving as co-chair, then chair and each year finding an opportunity to connect with the audience from the podium. She's lost track of how many Women's Wellness Days she has hosted and chaired, but her commitment to the role has never wavered.

"I feel like they know me, and want me to be myself onstage," Stirrat said. "And that allows me to authentically connect with the audience. Let's together put our guard down and be comfortable. I'm here learning, too. And, I just want you to enjoy the day and soak it in."

Stirrat was in peak form at Women's Wellness Day in 2023, with her familiar humor keeping an in-person and online audience of more than 400 engaged. She led attendees through a day that included a curated marketplace in the Balboa Bay Resort courtyard; experiences such as guided meditation and yoga; and an impressive collection of nationally recognized speakers.

The roster included a keynote address by Dr. William Li, president and director of the Angiogenesis Foundation and author of the *New York Times* bestseller *Eat to Beat Disease*, as well as presentations by Medicine Lodge Ranch founding director Dr. Tieraona Low Dog, director of Pain Management at the Scripps Center for Integrative Medicine Dr. Robert Bonakdar and hormone expert Dr. Tara Scott.

From her podium view, Stirrat has watched in real-time as the audience learns the benefits of adopting whole-person care.



Dr. Shaista Malik at 2023 Women's Wellness Day

Over the years, she has seen how integrative health concepts have entered the mainstream, a view which is supported by a 175 percent increase in annual outpatient integrative health visits to UCI Health Samueli Institute clinics over the past five years. The institute's new flagship location on the UCI campus, which opened in October, allows for continued growth, with three times the patient capacity of the former hub.

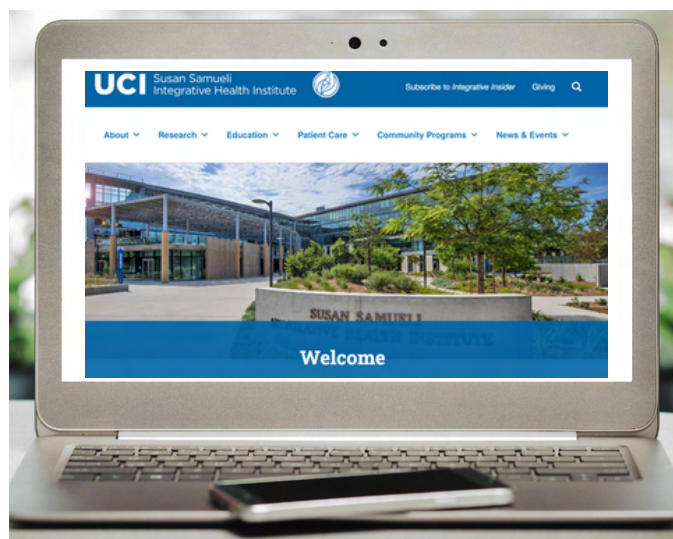
Stirrat knows that Women's Wellness Day often becomes the first step in a person's whole-health journey. She does her part at the podium to simplify the next step.

"What I emphasize at Women's Wellness Day is that, just like with financial advice, you may feel reluctant to take the next step because you don't know for sure what to say, or what to ask, or where to go," she said. "But that's what the Samueli Institute does. You don't have to know all those things — just call this number. This is where you start."

NEW WEBSITE AND LEARNING LIBRARY ENHANCE ACCESS AND EXPERIENCE

At the beginning of 2023, the Samueli Institute redesigned and launched a new website, with a new Learning Library making wellness education accessible to anyone anytime anywhere, for free. The library features downloadable audio and video mindful meditations, biofeedback and relaxation techniques, and healthy recipes. The Learning Library will continue to expand to increase access to whole-person health resources for the community.

Access the Learning Library by scanning the QR code or visit ssihi.uci.edu/community-programs/learning-library/



PHILANTHROPY

Philanthropic support opens new doors to healthful living

COMMUNITY LEADERS SUPPORT TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE THROUGH WHOLE-PERSON HEALTH

Strategically positioned at the corner of Michael Drake Drive and California Avenue, the new home of the Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute serves as a physical and metaphorical point of entry to an environment of innovations in health.

“Our new flagship location inspires clinicians, educators and researchers from diverse areas of expertise to incorporate integrative practices and philosophies into their pursuits,” said Dr. Shaista Malik, executive director of the Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute. “We are grateful to the community leaders whose philanthropic contributions have sustained the progress that led to our new home and the achievements it represents. Thanks to these generous individuals, the institute is poised to contribute to a better understanding of the mechanisms of integrative medicine at the national level and, ultimately, improve health through personalized, whole-person care.”

A historic gift from Susan and Henry Samueli in 2017, which led to the Susan Samueli Center for Integrative Medicine becoming the Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute, sparked the design and construction of the functional and aesthetically impressive hub that became home this year.



Susan and Henry Samueli. Photo by Steve Zylius/UCI

“Opening our doors on the UCI campus, and many other achievements of the past year, would not have been possible without the Samuelis’ visionary leadership and their sustained financial and innovative contributions to the evolving role of integrative health at UCI,” said Malik.

In the past year, community philanthropic support advanced integrative health in many ways. Individuals experienced integrative practices for vibrant health beyond cancer as group visit participants. Medical students, residents, fellows and faculty learned culinary medicine tips and techniques in the Mussallem Nutritional Education Center, while the Palmer Family Research and Conference Room hosted meetings that advanced collaborations across disciplines and institutions. Nationally recognized experts in whole-person health offered local residents an opportunity to expand their personal knowledge at the twenty-first annual Women’s Wellness Day.

Major gifts from four couples, in particular, advanced the potential to improve health for others in significant ways.



Linda and Mike Mussallem

Linda Mussallem, community leader and member, Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute Advisory Board, and Mike Mussallem, retired chairman and chief executive officer, Edwards Lifesciences; member, Susan & Henry Samueli College of Health Sciences Advisory Board; and trustee, UCI Foundation, donated to advance educational programs in nutrition for healthcare professionals and trainees, patients and community members. The Mussallems have also donated \$5 million in support of integrative cardiology research, education and health and wellness coaching efforts at the Samueli Institute.

Laura Khouri, president, Western National Property Management, and member, Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute Advisory Board, and Michael Hayde, chairman and chief executive officer, Western National Group, donated \$2.25 million. The couple was also one of the lead sponsors of the twenty-first Women’s Wellness Day.

Leadership gifts made by Sally and Greg Palmer, Sherry and John Phelan were vital to advancing the institute’s mission as well. Their gifts are described in this annual report.



Michael Hayde and Laura Khouri

“These individuals, and the many others who support the institute, are changing the lives of Samueli Institute patients, students and researchers and the local residents who participate in the institute’s community programs,” said Malik, “These donors have helped the institute make great strides toward becoming the preeminent national and international academic institute for pioneering multidisciplinary research, education and healthcare practices for the care of the whole person. Thanks to their leadership and support, we are indeed on a course for a brilliant future for whole-person health.”

INTEGRATIVE HEALTH JOURNEY INSPIRES GREG PALMER TO GET INVOLVED

As a healthcare company executive and private equity investor, Greg Palmer knew a few things about healthcare. It wasn't until he became a patient, however, that he discovered the power of integrative care.

Palmer, who is chairman and chief executive officer of Supplemental Health Care, had lived six decades with the knowledge that he could be at risk for a cardiac event. While visiting a mutual friend who was hospitalized at UCI Medical Center for treatment of a life-threatening condition, he ended up speaking with his friend's friend, Dr. Michael Stamos, dean of UCI School of Medicine.

"Somehow it came up that my family has a history of heart issues," said Palmer. "Dean Stamos said 'I need to introduce you to Dr. Malik and the Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute. It'd be perfect for you.'"

Palmer met with Dr. Shaista Malik, who is the executive director of the Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute (SSIH) and associate vice chancellor for integrative health in the Susan & Henry Samueli College of Health Sciences. They toured the integrative health center in Costa Mesa, and he was introduced to the clinical team.

Dr. Malik, who also serves as medical director of Preventive Cardiology and Cardiac Rehabilitation for UCI Health, explained the integrative cardiology program. It offers a comprehensive assessment of early heart disease, including coronary artery calcium scoring, carotid artery imaging, endothelial function, and central blood pressure assessment, along with a personalized plan to reduce risk factors. The integrative health



program also provides access to services such as nutritional counseling, stress management, mindfulness training, relaxation techniques, and information about supplements and other complementary therapies.

"I said okay, yeah, it sounds like a great idea," said Palmer. "I had no idea where the journey was going to lead."

Palmer completed the assessment. It confirmed that he had atrial fibrillation. He also had high cholesterol and sleep apnea. He learned that these risk factors for cardiovascular disease were manageable with lifestyle changes. He chose to take charge of his health and optimize his risk for future cardiovascular disease.

In addition to having atrial fibrillation ablation to treat his irregular heartbeat, he started exercising three to four times a week, adopted a Mediterranean diet, gave up alcohol, added supplements

and began using a continuous positive airway pressure machine for sleep apnea.

"I felt it was very customized for what was ailing me, or what was just beginning to come," said Palmer. "I'm 66 now. I started working on this when I was in my early 60s, and I'm in way better health today than I was five years ago."

Inspired by what he had learned from the integrative preventive cardiology program, Palmer took action that helped him lose weight, lower his cholesterol, and improve his sleep. His blood and imaging markers began to show reversal of signs of heart disease. The experience made him an advocate for integrative health.

"Having gone through it, and having experienced the benefit, seen how the process works, seen the quality of the providers and how they went about their business, it's fairly easy to get behind it and really evangelize better. I've been so pleased that I have referred several of my friends, who are also beginning their own personal journey to better health," he said.

As Palmer's health began to improve, his wife, Sally, was inspired to explore her

options with UCI Health. She learned she had breast cancer and chose UCI Health to address the condition. The former kindergarten teacher continues to receive care from UCI Health providers, including many at the Samueli Institute.

"We became raving fans of UCI Health," said Palmer.

Grateful for the care Sally received, the Palmers made a gift to the UCI School of Medicine. That donation helped the medical school purchase hand-held ultrasound devices for all medical students in the class of 2023.

They followed with a gift to the Samueli Institute, which has expanded high-value opportunities for exploring and advancing integrative healthcare. And, their generous contribution to Women's Wellness Day helped the institute reach more people in the community with integrative health concepts and evidence.

"The Palmers turned their positive experiences with UCI Health, the Samueli

Under Dr. Malik's leadership, and with her incredible team, this has become the premier integrative health program in the country.

- Greg Palmer

Institute and whole-person care into an opportunity to help others achieve improved health and wellbeing," said Dr. Malik. "The Samueli Institute is grateful for their visionary support, which will fund scientific investigations and educational activities that lead to more people exploring the benefits of personalized, whole-health options."

The Palmer Family Research and Conference Room, a showcase conference center at the Samueli Institute's flagship location on the UCI campus, is named to honor their significant contributions to integrative health research, education and patient care. In other areas, the couple has helped to fund equipment, supplies and educational tools to further medical simulation, as well as research in hematology/oncology and neurological oncology. The Palmers champion increased community access to academic medicine through support for UCI Health - Irvine, the state-of-the-art medical complex currently under construction near the corner of Jamboree Road and Campus Drive. Their philanthropic support will be recognized at the new medical campus through the Palmer Family Patient Education and Conference Room.

Palmer contributes his considerable leadership experience to transforming healthcare as a member of the SSIHI advisory board and advocates for the integrative health mission as a member of the UCI Health Advisory Board and UCI Foundation Board of Trustees.

"Under Dr. Malik's leadership, and with her incredible team, this has become the premier integrative health program in the country," said Palmer. "It's fun to be on a winning team and doing such meaningful work for so many people."

PHELAN GIFT SUPPORTS NEW SPACE AND APPROACHES TO WHOLE-PERSON HEALTH

The new home for the UCI Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute opened to rave reviews on the university campus in October 2022, a testament to a generous community committed to expanding the boundaries of whole-person health.



Sherry Phelan, PhD, and her husband, John, have supported integrative health and the UCI Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute in many ways. Their philanthropic contributions include a substantial gift to foster brain health and diabetes research, education and programs in the new flagship location.

“It’s a magical healing environment, as you notice just walking through the doors,” said Sherry. “I know of no other place like it. And it’s right here in our backyard to benefit the Orange County community.”

The Phelans have promoted integrative health awareness and education as sponsors of the institute’s annual Women’s Wellness Day.

They also funded development of an integrative cancer healing program that includes group visits, which launched during the year. Through this program, referred to as Beyond Cancer, individuals in treatment for cancer are introduced to complementary tools such as food as medicine, acupuncture, Tai Chi, mindfulness and more to help them pursue what Sherry refers to as vibrant health. The idea is to use the diagnosis and all healing modalities to move beyond the diagnosis to greater levels of health and healing on all levels — body, mind and spirit.

John had a successful career in financial services and now shares his expertise on boards of nonprofit organizations. Sherry is an author, artist, and coach who has worked with executives and entrepreneurs. As she neared completion of her second year as chair of the Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute Advisory Board, Sherry took a few minutes to reflect on her association with the institute.

How do you envision your gifts impacting the health of others?

I love the work that I do one on one and with groups, coaching vibrant health. But, I can only reach so many people. So, I like to invest in organizations that are able to have a broader and richer impact than I can do on my own. The institute is doing that with the clinics, with the classes, with medical students and through community outreach.



A small seed, a small gift can go a long way if it's nurtured. There's a financial impact to our community, but there's also a health impact to the families that live in our community.

Motivational speaker Jim Rohn has been quoted as saying, "You are the average of the five people you hang around most." When you surround yourself with people like those you meet through the institute — people who are committed to health, who are talking about health, who are joining groups that are health oriented, who are taking health-related classes — it can have a very far-reaching impact on the health and wellbeing of others.

In your view, what makes the Samueli Institute an exceptional philanthropic investment?

My husband, John, and I like to invest in one of four areas: physical, mental, emotional or spiritual. The Samueli Institute checks all those boxes.

I have a background in spiritual psychology, with an emphasis on consciousness, health and healing. I'm also certified as a Radical Remission Coach. I believe in the importance of an integrative approach that addresses the whole person. That's why our first philanthropic gift to the institute was to create a program for integrative cancer care that would

help give a patient "response-ability" for their own healing by providing mind-body-spirit tools and skills along with the traditional medical care.

I also think that we need to take more ownership of our health as individuals. With a growing population, we will have fewer and fewer doctors per capita. So, we all need tools that empower us to participate in our own care. The Samueli Institute's integrative approach provides so many tools — from managing nutrition and exercise to mindfulness — tools that I think are so important to put into practice. That's why I think the Samueli Institute is an exceptional philanthropic investment.

As chair of the Samueli Institute advisory board, how do you see the community contributing to the growth of evidence-informed, whole-person healthcare in the year ahead?

I think everyone on the advisory board has an interest in a particular area of health. As chair, I'd love to see the institute serve as a funnel for their energies and ideas. I also hope to see the evolution of the integrative cancer group visit program, with it expanding to attract many more people who can benefit from the approach.

I feel really honored and privileged to contribute to the institute at the level that I have been invited to participate. I have great respect for our clinicians. I love being part of the team.

ADVISORY BOARD



DeAnna Colglazier
Community Strategist



Jennifer Friend
CEO, Project Hope Alliance



Sandi Jackson
Community Leader & Philanthropist



Laura Khouri
President, Western National Property Management



Linda Mussallem
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Greg Palmer
Founder & Director, G. Palmer & Associates;
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Co-Chair Susan & Henry Samueli College of Health Sciences Board



Janie Tsao
President of Miven and Co-Founder of Linksys

For SSIHI leadership, visit ssihi.uci.edu/about/leadership/

WELLBEING CIRCLE



Wellbeing Circle members on a nature hike led by Heather Rice, LAc.

The Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute Wellbeing Circle is a community of philanthropists that shares the institute's passion for whole-person health. Wellbeing Circle members support the institute with an annual philanthropic contribution. Through these gifts, they help to advance whole-person health in research labs, classrooms and clinics.

Throughout the year, Wellbeing Circle members and their invited guests enjoy events and activities that deepen their understanding of the institute's role in helping people achieve optimal health.

With the opening of the new Irvine flagship location, members continue to learn from SSIHI providers and researchers. They also enjoy special activities held there like healthy cooking at the Mussallem Nutritional Education Center and topics like healing qualities of herbs from the garden and mindfulness practices, which contribute to their and the community's whole-person health and wellbeing.



Wellbeing Circle

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