MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR:

Welcome to Spring quarter! As the COVID-19 vaccines become more widely available, the hope to soon reconnect in person continues to grow. Thank you to every member of the FSPH Epidemiology community for continuing to remain active and fully committed to public health. Visit our department website to see the latest highlights.

For the latest news on COVID-19, visit FSPH’s COVID_19 Information Page.

Happy Spring!

Dear Members of the Epidemiology Department:

As we mark the one-year anniversary of COVID-19 being declared a pandemic and taking us all online for the better part of our days we start to see some light at the end of the tunnel. While considerable uncertainty remains there is reasonable hope that with the fall quarter we may return to campus and at least partially to in-person courses. The current plan is to take courses with less than 60 students back to the classroom. Until September, the situation will be reevaluated on a continuous basis. In the meantime, our hopes lie in the race in getting as many people immunized as possible.

We all look forward to rekindle our community, to return to learning, researching, and working together, and to that precious chat in the hallway. We will not take it for granted again.

Thanks for all you do to support the mission of public health and epidemiology.

Be well and in good health!

Warm wishes,
Karin Michels, ScD, PhD
Professor and Chair
Congratulations!

A team of researchers co-led by Dr. Matthew Mimiaga has received an $8.8 million grant from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases to conduct a nationwide study aimed at reducing the spread of HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, among young transgender women through the use of a mobile app. Description of the study at UCLA Newsroom.

Drs. Eleanor Hayes-Larson and Elizabeth Rose Mayeda recently published a paper in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society: Racial/Ethnic Differences in Health-Related Quality of Life in Persons With and Without Dementia. The paper was selected as the Editor’s Choice paper and was featured on the cover of the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society for the March 2021 issue.

Drs. Beate Ritz and Kimberly Paul received a grant funded by The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson’s Research (MJFF) to support the proposed research project: Pesticide Exposure, Systems Biology, and Parkinson’s disease.

Dr. Catherine Carpenter was chosen as the Guest Editor of a special issue in Nutrients: The Role of Nutrition in the Prevention of and Recovery from Infectious Diseases. This special issue belongs to the section "Nutritional Epidemiology" and is currently open for manuscript submission.

Dr. Liwei Chen has been selected as the Associate Editor for the journal "Trials." Congratulations, Dr. Chen!

Welcome EpiStaff!

Co-Chairs: Rey Soto and Amy Ragsdale

The Department of Epidemiology formed a staff association (known as “EpiStaff”) in January 2021. EpiStaff provides administrative staff networking opportunities and a forum to discuss cross-cutting issues. The group meets on a monthly basis and has formed a Slack channel to facilitate communication. Current EpiStaff projects include discussion of UC-wide staff advocacy projects and the Epi Anti-Racism Task Force recommendations for staff. Leadership rotates every six months and the current co-chairs are Amy Ragsdale and Rey Soto. Co-chairs will represent staff on Epi Faculty meetings.
In the News

**KNBC-TV** interviewed Dr. Robert Kim-Farley about public communications problems and the vaccination campaign. "The main thing is to be getting the vaccine, for the protection that it offers," Kim-Farley said. Additional news outlets: **KPCC-FM, Bloomberg, The Los Angeles Times, and The Los Angeles Daily News.**

**MSNBC** interviewed Dr. Anne Rimoin about the national vaccination campaign amidst concerns about another infection surge. Additional news outlets: **CNN, KTLA5, and CBSN.**

**KNBC-TV** interviewed Dr. Karin Michels about outdoor dining and how to tell if a restaurant tent is COVID-19 safe. Additional news outlets: **Rolling Stone, STAT News, and The Washington Post.**


**The New York Times** interviewed Dr. Timothy Brewer about why the seven-day average for daily new reported vaccinations given to Americans declined.
Dr. Pamina Gorbach, Janell Moore, and India Richter volunteered with Clinica Romero to help vaccinate 500 individuals eligible for the COVID vaccine in Palmdale. The clinic serves immigrant families and underserved communities of Greater Los Angeles by providing quality, affordable, and culturally-sensitive health care.

Janell, who is a midwife, spent the day vaccinating individuals. Dr. Gorbach and India worked with patients to check-in, register for their dose, and document their medical history. All three are fluent Spanish-speakers and spent the day communicating in Spanish.

Epidemiology Doctoral students, Allie Rosen and Anna Brachter volunteered in an effort organized by Dept of Epi PhD graduate Dr. Chelsea Shover (now UCLA faculty) to administer COVID-19 vaccines in Los Angeles County. She said "They’ve both been totally above and beyond… Allie has been working with St. John’s and Annie B with the homeless." Pictured with other volunteers and a key player as Head of Epidemiology and Data Unit for COVID-19 Response since January is another Dept of Epi PhD Graduate Dr. M. Claire Dillavou Jarashow, Director, Vaccine Preventable Disease Control and Chief, Epidemiology and Data, Acute Communicable Disease Control, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health.
Gilma Vaona, Senior Fund Manager, joined UCLA about 36 years ago as a volunteer at UCLA Medical Center. She began her career in an administrative role, gaining experience in accounts receivable and accounts payable. Utilizing her experience, Gilma transitioned into a fund management role with the Department of Biological Chemistry before joining the Department of Epidemiology in 2020.

What do you like most about working at UCLA?
"I like the security, the great benefits, and the great retirement plan. It’s a big community that provides a variation of jobs. I’ve made many friends here."

What hobbies do you have outside of the office?
"Right now, because of COVID, I’ve been doing a lot of hiking with my daughter, friends, and my dog. If not for COVID, I would be exploring the world. I love traveling, experiencing different cultures, and understanding their history."
Epidemiology Student Association Spring Updates

By: Ryan Assaf & Julia Koerber, ESA Co-Presidents

Message to Students:
Happy Spring, everyone! Here is a highlight of upcoming events from the Epidemiology Student Association. Watch out for emails about additional upcoming events, including the Epi Department Town Hall, spring quarter Epi Slam, and a graduation celebration to commemorate this momentous year. In addition, the Task Force on Anti-Racism and Racial Justice will be finishing their recommendations to the Department this quarter, more news to come.

Sincerely,
Ryan Assaf (rassaf@ucla.edu)
& Julia Koerber (juliajkoerber@g.ucla.edu).

Featured Events This Quarter:

Epi Department Seminar Series with Dr. Zinzi Bailey
Tuesday, April 13th, 12-1PM PST
Join ESA for a presentation from Dr. Zinzi Bailey, a social epidemiologist from the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine.

Epidemiology Student Association Information Session
Wednesday, April 28th
Interested in joining the Epidemiology Student Association? Learn more about the organization and how to apply to be on next year’s Board!

Epi Department Seminar Series with Dr. Stephen Cole
Tuesday, May 18th, 12-1PM PST
Join ESA for a presentation with Dr. Stephen Cole, an epidemiologist from the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health. After the talk will be a discussion led by Dr. Sander Greenland.

National Public Health Week
Epidemiologic Methods for Racial Justice: A Workshop on Use and Interpretation of Race/Ethnicity Data with Dr. Onyebuchi Arah
Tuesday, April 13th from 4-5:30PM PST
Registration Link: https://ucla.zoom.us/j/93266827354?pwd=VGZmTmlNYlVDWDhla0xnTW9SbENDUT09
This National Public Health Week, join Dr. Arah for this workshop to understand the problems with how race and ethnicity data is commonly analyzed and interpreted in research. This workshop will also introduce actionable epidemiologic methods that can offer more critical and just alternatives to approach data. Open to students, staff, and faculty of all departments. Attendees will be entered into a raffle for prizes!

Workshop and Mentorship Session with Dr. Sealy-Jefferson
Wednesday, May 26th, 12-3PM PST
Join ESA for this incredible chance to learn about social epidemiology as a tool for social justice from scholar-activist Dr. Sealy-Jefferson of the Ohio State University College of Public Health. The last hour of the event will be dedicated to focusing on how personal growth, and honing your purpose as a researcher, is critical for creating works that will make real change in the world. Two attendees will be able to win a copy of the textbook Racism: Science & Tools for the Public Health Professional.

ESA 2020-2021 Board:
- Co-Presidents: Ryan Assaf and Julia Koerber
- VP of Financial Affairs: Victoria Murray
- VP of Doctoral Affairs: Melissa Soohoo and Angie Barrall
- Outreach/Communications: Stephen Ma, Elizabeth Agredano, Lamia Khan, and Weilu Song
- PHSA Liaisons: Jackie Mark Maloney and Nayelie Benitez Santos
- Mentorship Chairs: Elizabeth Chen and Haesoo Kim
- Seminar Series: Pat Arena, Angie Barrall, Nehaa Khadka, and Xinyue Liu