

**UCLA** College | Life Sciences  
**Center for Reproductive  
Science, Health & Education**

**Newsletter | Winter 2025**

The UCLA Center for Reproductive Science, Health and Education envisions a future in which reproductive policies and care are based on rigorous science, and access to this care is more equitable.

**Director's Message**



I wish you all good health for the first quarter of 2025. The devastation of the Los Angeles wildfires touched many, including members of the CRSHE. The continued outpouring of kindness and support to those affected underscores our shared value of belonging to a community that looks out for each other. Community is also essential in times of uncertainty. CRSHE continues its important work to promote outstanding science, lift up the scientists and trainees who perform the work, educate the next generation of thought leaders in reproductive science, and engage with the public.

Below, you will learn that in January we hosted [Ariel Hart](#) M.A.'20, a M.D./Ph.D. student and CRSHE Fellow, who presented her ethnography study of a Black-led birth center in Los Angeles. This continues a theme in CRSHE exploring research behind alternate models of care focused on improving the lives of Black birthing persons.

This month we also launched the "Expert Miniseries" podcast on contemporary topics in reproductive science and health, with our first podcast focusing on maternal mental health. Our undergraduate students have been busy working on science communications by creating science-based fact sheets on a range of reproductive, maternal and sexual health topics. This quarter, some of their work focused on the effects of wildfires as this topic is very much front of mind for us in Los Angeles. I am excited to see this important body of work grow into a publicly available, concise evidence-based resource.

Now, more than ever, the work of CRSHE is vital as we stand together in our shared vision and mission of accessible science being the foundation to equitable health and care.

Warm regards,

Amander Clark, Ph.D.  
Director, Center for Reproductive Science, Health and Education  
Professor, Molecular, Cell and Developmental Biology  
UCLA College of Letters and Science

**Recent News**

**Our CRSHE Podcast Has Launched!**

In our inaugural podcast episode, CRSHE Associate Director Stephanie Kiesow-Edoh sits down with Eynav Accortt, Ph.D., maternal mental health expert, director of Cedars-Sinai's Reproductive Psychology Program and research scientist. They talk about recent perinatal mood and anxiety disorder statistics, the importance of considering the biopsychosocial nature of mental illness, and the best practices for screening today. They discuss the mutual goal of not having mothers fall through the cracks, as well as novel concepts such as a fourth trimester clinic.

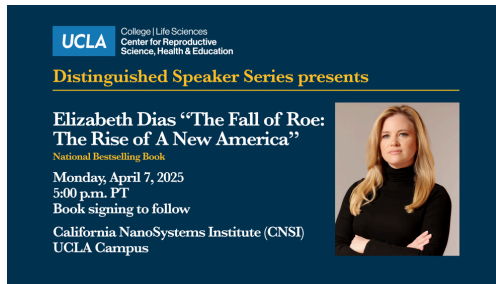
Listen to the podcast on maternal mental health featuring Dr. Eynav Accortt [here](#).



## Upcoming Event!

### Distinguished Speaker Series

CRSHE is excited to host an in-person conversation with New York Times national correspondent Elizabeth Dias to discuss her reporting with Lisa Lerer that culminated in their book, "The Fall of Roe: The Rise of a New America." Please join us for our spring distinguished speaker series event on April 7 at 5:00pm on the UCLA campus. To learn more, [view this clip](#) of Elizabeth Dias and Lisa Lerner on "The Daily Show."



## CRSHE Fellow Spotlight

### Alec Szlachta-McGinn

We enjoy learning from our previous fellows where their career path is taking them! Our 2023 Reproductive Health and Science Research Fellow, Alec Szlachta-McGinn, started his career as a tenure track assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology at the University of Illinois Chicago. In addition to practicing clinical medicine, he plans to continue his research investigating the molecular mechanisms by which urinary fungi modulate bladder pain. He will also be responsible for teaching medical students and residents about female pelvic floor disorders and the principles of gynecologic surgery in the operating room.



## CRSHE Featured in the UCLA College Magazine

We were thrilled to be featured in the "Lab to Life" feature in UCLA College's most recent magazine, which focused on how UCLA College experts are translating the power of science into real-world health solutions. Read the article [here](#).

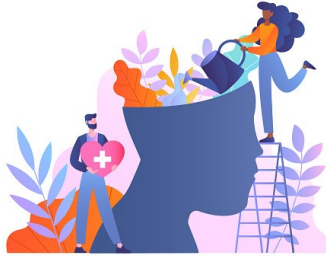


## Student Fact Sheet Program

CRSHE mentors UCLA undergraduate students to create concise, informative fact sheets on various topics, including reproductive science and policy as well as sexual, reproductive, maternal, and child health.

### “Mental Wellness and Reproductive Health” Fact Sheet

One of our student volunteers, Sadhana Jeyakumar, explored the topic of how stress impacts the body and how to foster habits of wellness for reproductive health. Read it [here](#).



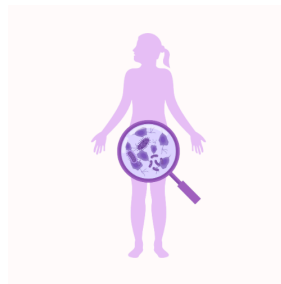
### “Strategies to Reduce Maternal Mortality Among Black Birthing Persons” Fact Sheet

Volunteer and alumna Katrina Mae Reyes '24 recently conducted an extensive literature review to evaluate what factors may be at play when considering the important topic of maternal mortality for Black birthing persons. Read it [here](#).



### “Women’s Wellness and Bacterial Vaginosis” Fact Sheet

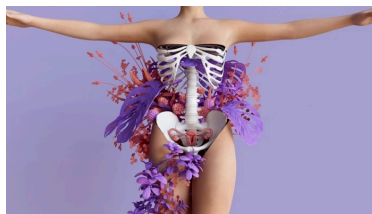
Student volunteer Nora Tayara created a fact sheet examining an important topic to women’s wellness and health: bacterial vaginosis. To learn more about the pathology, symptoms and treatment, [click here](#).



Browse through our other [fact sheets](#) created by UCLA CRSHE students!

## CRSHE Has a New Student Blog!

Our first post, written by UCLA alumna Lea Baskin Monk '24, dives into “The Landscape of Women’s Reproductive Health.” Read more about the conversations CRSHE students are having [here](#).

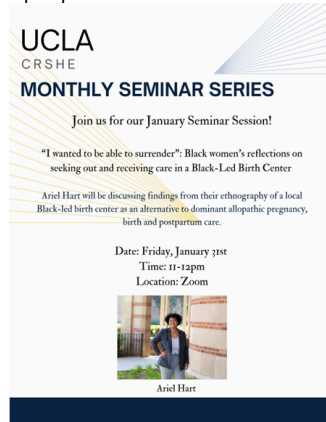


## Recent Events

### January CRSHE Seminar Series featuring Ariel Hart

This past January we held an incredible seminar session with Ariel Hart, who discussed the

findings from their ethnography of a local Black-led birth center as an alternative to dominant allopathic pregnancy, birth and postpartum care.



**February CRSHE Seminar Series featuring Dr. Vibha Singhal**

We were delighted to have hosted Vibha Singhal, UCLA associate professor of pediatrics, at our February seminar series. Her research and clinical work on obesity in children and its next generation effects are truly impactful!



**We are now on Bluesky! Follow us @UCLACRSHE**



Follow us on [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), and [X](#) to keep up with our current news.

**Save the Date!**

**Bruin Giving Day — April 29-30, 2025**

We are excited to announce that CRSHE will be participating in UCLA's inaugural Bruin Giving Day on April 29! On Bruin Giving Day, you can support initiatives across campus, including CRSHE's Reproductive Health and Science Research Fellowships. Stay tuned for more information as we get closer to the date.

