

Newsletter | Winter 2026

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. The mission of the center is to forge research excellence, open career paths and build research capacity in reproductive science with transformative inquiry and innovative education.

Director's Message



This winter quarter I have thought extensively about the purpose of higher education and the awesome responsibility we have as professors to perform impactful research, serve our community, educate our students and inspire the next generation to be the best versions of themselves. I was the first in my family to attend university and discovered that a bachelor's degree was the gateway to further education and a career that gives me so much joy. One of the best parts of my job is the daily interactions I have with students, fellows, staff and colleagues, whether it be an undergraduate who has created an insightful piece of data that changes the way we think about our research or a beautifully constructed seminar where everyone walks out of the room having learned something new. Universities like UCLA are places of discovery, wonder and understanding. If we do our jobs right, we have the potential to positively shape the trajectory of people's lives. How awesome is that!

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amander Clark".

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

Upcoming Event: Distinguished Speaker Series with Teresa Woodruff

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

UCLA Center for Reproductive Science, Health and Education (CRSHE)
Distinguished Speaker Series

Featuring
Teresa K. Woodruff

"Oncofertility: Bench to Bedside to Babies"

**Wednesday, April 8, 2026
4:00 p.m. PT**

California NanoSystems Institute
(CNSI)
UCLA Campus



RSVP HERE:



National Medal of Science awardee and champion of women's health research, Teresa K. Woodruff, Ph.D. will join us for a fascinating public conversation on her pioneering work at the intersection of oncology and fertility preservation.

The goal of CRSHE's Distinguished Speaker Series is to showcase high-powered work advancing reproductive equity and to celebrate influential leaders shaping the future of reproductive, maternal and sexual health and care. We are thrilled to announce that Dr. Teresa Woodruff, National Medal of Science awardee and an internationally recognized leader in reproductive science and women's health research, will be our next distinguished speaker.

As president emerita of Michigan State University and a Research Foundation Distinguished Professor in Obstetrics, Gynecology, Reproductive Biology and Biomedical Engineering, she is widely known for bridging the fields of oncology and fertility preservation as well as for her national leadership advancing inclusive biomedical research policy. Join us on April 8 at 4 p.m. in the CNSI Building on UCLA's campus. This event is free and open to the public.

You can register for the event [here](#).

Seminar Series Recap

The goal of CRSHE's seminar series is to convene scientists, physicians, students and trainees in person to discuss the latest scientific development in reproductive, maternal and sexual health on the UCLA campus. For this series, we are fortunate to spotlight the expertise of internationally recognized experts and professors at UCLA. This quarter, we welcomed a range of voices, and we would like to highlight the work of Professors Molly Fox (anthropology) and Chuchu Zhang (physiology). The series is open to UCLA students, fellows and faculty.

"Mothers, Minds and Matrilines" with Professor Molly Fox



We were grateful to host Molly Fox at our CRSHE seminar series for her talk, "Mothers, Minds and Matrilines." An associate professor of anthropology in the UCLA Division of Social Sciences, Fox discussed how humans have shaped an evolutionary system of shared caregiving, where mothers are supported by grandmothers, family and broader kin networks. This cooperative care benefits maternal health, infant development and even long-term outcomes like microbiome diversity and cognitive resilience later in life. This raises important questions about how modern social isolation may represent an evolutionary mismatch with real health consequences across the lifespan.

"Neural Mechanisms of Nausea" with Professor Chuchu Zhang

Professor Chuchu Zhang was our February speaker for the CRSHE seminar series. An assistant professor in physiology and neuroscience in the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA, she was initially recruited to UCLA in autumn 2023 from Harvard Medical School to build a research area focused on mechanisms of nausea and interoception. She shared fascinating insights into a region of the brain called the area postrema, which mediates the nausea response and the new insights she is learning about this brain region during pregnancy. We're thankful for the chance to learn something new, and for her generosity in sharing her work with us!

Fellow Spotlight



Each year, CRSHE awards competitive funding to trainees and fellows engaged in reproductive, maternal and sexual health research on the UCLA campus. So far, CRSHE has awarded 32 fellowships that have contributed to career and workforce development by enabling our trainees and fellows to present scientific research at conferences by providing funding for research supplies, datasets or equipment. In our first fellow spotlight, we are thrilled to introduce you to Julia Peloggia De Castro, a postdoctoral fellow in the lab of Heather Christofk in the Department of Biological Chemistry. De Castro's research is focused on how metabolism shapes cell type specification during embryonic development. With support from CRSHE, she purchased a new microscope with an integrated camera: an essential addition to her lab that has transformed how she conducts tissue dissections and mentors students. The new setup makes it easier to teach graduate and undergraduate researchers, share techniques in real time, and foster hands-on learning in the lab.

CRSHE Research Funding Opportunity and Fellowship Competition



We are thrilled to announce that in collaboration with the UCLA Clinical Translation Research Institution and the Iris Cantor Women's Health Research Center, we have joined forces to create pilot funding for scientific research proposals focused on the science of reproductive, maternal, and sexual health. The letter of intent was due on Monday, March 16 and this competition was open to faculty. We thank everyone who submitted their materials and look forward to announcing the winners in our next newsletter.

In addition to supporting faculty research, we are delighted to open the call for the annual CRSHE Fellowship competition. This competition is open to graduate students, postdoctoral fellows and clinical fellows performing research in reproductive, maternal, and sexual health on the UCLA campus. We look forward to seeing your applications and funding your research and career development. Please see our [funding opportunities](#) page for details.

Call for Artists: Sculptor or Muralist



Call for Artists - Sculptor or Muralist

The UCLA Center for Reproductive Science, Health & Education (CRSHE) is seeking a sculptor or muralist to create an original artwork that reflects the themes of maternal health, pregnancy, and reproductive health.

We are interested in work that thoughtfully engages with the physical, emotional, cultural, and social dimensions of pregnancy and caregiving. Artists are encouraged to interpret these themes broadly and creatively, with attention to inclusivity, equity, and the diverse experiences of pregnancy and reproduction.

Please email crshe@ucla.edu to learn more.

Since the launch of CRSHE, we are committed to strategies that promote conversations at the intersection of art and reproductive science. The inaugural CRSHE art projects created by Saskia Baden (M.F.A. '23) have achieved just that. Baden is a Los Angeles-based artist whose photographic and sculptural works deal with intimacy, eroticism, transformation and the amphibious. For over a year, CRSHE displayed the beautiful and provocative piece "[Abyssal](#)," highlighting the beauty of the placenta immediately post-birth. On permanent display are gorgeous silver gelatin [prints of reproductive organs](#). To complement and extend our collection, CRSHE seeks proposals from a sculptor or muralist to create an original artwork that reflects the themes of maternal health, pregnancy and reproductive health. We are interested in work that thoughtfully engages with the physical, emotional, cultural and social dimensions of pregnancy and caregiving. Artists are encouraged to interpret these themes broadly and creatively, with attention to inclusivity, equity and the diverse experiences of pregnancy and reproduction.

Save the Date!



Bruin Giving Day -- April 28-29, 2026

We are excited to announce that CRSHE will be participating in UCLA's Bruin Giving Day on April 28 and 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.

Interested in supporting the research you read in this CRSHE newsletter? [Contact us](#) to learn more.