

Newsletter | Spring 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



The spring quarter on the UCLA campus was electric with possibilities. Our seniors graduated, our graduate students defended their theses, and our clinical fellows prepared for their next career steps. This year, the Center supported eight phenomenal trainees and fellows who conducted cutting-edge scientific research across a range of topics in maternal, reproductive, and sexual health and disease. We wish them all the best in their future endeavors and gratefully acknowledge our donors, whose generosity provided the resources that made this program possible.

The Center's seminar series was once again well attended and, in some cases, standing room only, demonstrating the widespread interest in reproductive science and health at UCLA and the value our community places on gathering in person. We were honored to host Professor Teresa Woodruff, PhD, as our Spring 2026 Distinguished Speaker. Professor Woodruff is a pioneer in the field of women's health research and a fierce advocate for the importance of reproductive science in changing lives.

As we head into the summer months, I wish you good health and happiness and look forward to reconnecting in the fall.

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

Oncofertility: Bench to Bedside to Babies



Hear from National Medal of Science awardee Professor Teresa Woodruff

We are feeling very inspired after our recent Distinguished Speaker Series event "Oncofertility: Bench to Bedside to Babies," featuring National Science awardee and champion for women's health research Teresa Woodruff. Thank you to Professor Woodruff for sharing her insights, experiences and remarkable oncofertility research with us. Her words sparked meaningful conversations and left us all motivated to advance reproductive science and remember the impacts of this research for the community. You can watch a recording of Professor Woodruff's event [here](#).

We are grateful to see our recent Distinguished Speaker Series featured in the UCLA Daily Bruin. Read more [here!](#)

We are also excited about this new, detailed feature on our event by UCLA Life Sciences. Read more [here!](#)

Building the Future: CRSHE's Early Career Advisory Board



The Center recently launched an early career advisory board, which offers insight on UCLA undergraduate activities in reproductive health and science in the areas of research, education and public engagement. Members are selected from a competitive candidate pool and commit to meeting monthly throughout the academic year. This year, the advisory board focused on identifying undergraduate clubs on campus focused on reproductive health and began outreach to identify areas of collaboration and synergy with the Center.

Applications for two positions will open in fall 2026 with the possibility of renewal. This opportunity is open to freshmen, sophomores and juniors in the UCLA College. Email crshe@ucla.edu for more information.

See more [here!](#)

Now Streaming: Reproductive Science at UCLA with Amander Clark

The graphic features the UCLA logo and the text 'College | Life Sciences Center for Reproductive Science, Health & Education'. Below this, it says 'Podcast Series' and 'Reproductive Science at UCLA'. Two portrait photos are shown: one of Dr. Amander Clark, Director of UCLA CRSHE and Professor at UCLA MCDB, and one of Stephanie Kiesow-Edoh, Associate Director of UCLA CRSHE.

The Center's podcast was created to highlight innovative research, leadership, and conversations shaping the future of reproductive science, health, and education. In previous episodes, we have featured experts and leaders whose work is advancing discovery, collaboration, and community impact.

In this new episode, CRSHE Associate Director Stephanie Kiesow-Edoh sits down with Dr. Amander Clark, award-winning scientist and founder and inaugural director of UCLA's Center for Reproductive Science, Health and Education. Together, they explore Dr. Clark's journey in reproductive science, the launch of the Center and how interdisciplinary collaboration is shaping the future of reproductive science on campus. From exciting new courses to research initiatives, this conversation highlights the intersection of science, education, and impact. Join us for a forward-looking discussion on leadership, discovery and the future of reproductive science at UCLA and beyond.

Listen to the episode [here](#) and learn more about the episode and reproductive science [here](#).

Highlights from Recent Seminars

The goal of the Center'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. This spring quarter, we welcomed a range of voices, and we would like to highlight the work of Bruin faculty members Sriram Sankararaman, Kathrin Plath and Vibha Singhal.

"Insights into the Evolutionary and Genetic Architecture of Human Complex Traits from Biobank-Scale Data" with Professor Sriram Sankararaman



We were grateful to host Professor Sriram Sankararaman at our CRSHE Spring Seminar Series for his talk, "Insights into the Evolutionary and Genetic Architecture of Human Complex Traits from Biobank-Scale Data." A professor of computer science, human genetics and computational medicine at UCLA, he discussed how large-scale biobank data are transforming our understanding of the relationships between evolution, genetics and complex traits across diverse populations. The talk also highlighted new insights into Neanderthal DNA contributions and how gene-gene and gene-environment interactions play a significant role in shaping human traits beyond traditional additive models.

"Exploiting X Chromosome Dosage and Blastoids to Model Human Development" with Professor Kathrin Plath

Professor Kathrin Plath was our second speaker for the series. She is a professor at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. Her talk explored how early human development is shaped by signaling pathways and gene regulation, using human stem-cell-derived embryo models (blastoids) to study cell fate decisions. The talk also highlighted complementary research in mouse and human stem systems on how X chromosome dosage is established, offering new insights into how signaling and gene dosage control cell identity.

"GLP-1 Analogs and the Next Generation: Promise, Risk and the Unknown" with Professor Vibha Singhal



Professor Vibha Singhal was our final speaker for the series. She is an associate professor in pediatrics at UCLA. Her talk explored the rapid rise of glucagon-like peptide1 (GLP-1) receptor agonists, including medications such as Ozempic and Wegovy, and their transformative impact on obesity treatment over the past decade. This talk explored the current evidence and ongoing research examining the potential effects of GLP-1 receptor agonists on male and female reproductive health, fertility, and possible implications for offspring and future generations.

Research Funding Opportunity

We are excited to share that, in collaboration with the UCLA Clinical and Translational Science Institute and the Iris Cantor-UCLA Women's Health Center, we launched the first Women's Research Pilot Program earlier this year. The program was created to support innovative research from faculty focused on reproductive, maternal, and sexual health.

We are thrilled by the strong interest and outstanding proposals submitted, and the review process is now underway. We look forward to announcing the inaugural awardees soon and supporting the impactful work ahead. Learn more [here](#).



Celebrating our 2025-26 Fellows!

2025-2026 Reproductive Health and Science Research Fellows



Tenzin Khando
(Graduate Student)
Exploring transnational sexual and reproductive healthcare use among Asian immigrants in the U.S through a transnational lens



Laura Cortes
(Postdoctoral Fellow)
Neurobiological mechanisms underlying metabolic changes in pregnancy



Halina Yee
(Clinical Fellow)
Understanding the effect of glucagon like peptide agonists on the endometrial transcriptome



Kobie Boslough
(Graduate Student)
Effects of aging on ovarian function and milk composition in female bats



Julia Peloggia De Castro
(Postdoctoral Fellow)
Metabolic control of cell type specification in embryonic development



Merin Rixen
(Graduate Student)
Single-cell mass spectrometry of Drosophila oogenesis to uncover protein networks driving fertility



Lingyu Zhan
(Postdoctoral Fellow)
Genetic architecture of maternal neuropsychiatric disorders with a focus on rare and structural variations

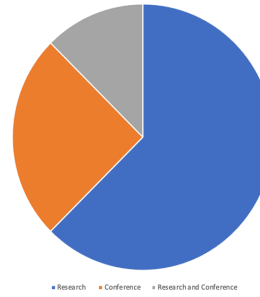


Michael Richardson
(Clinical Fellow)
MUC6 reconstitution as a preventative strategy against ovarian cancer initiation

We are happy to celebrate another incredible year supporting our outstanding trainees and fellows. To date, the Center has awarded 32 fellowships that have helped advance careers and strengthen the future workforce by supporting scientific conference presentations, research supplies, datasets, equipment and more.

We are incredibly proud of all that this year's fellows have accomplished and are grateful to be part of their journey. Stay tuned as we prepare to announce the next round of fellows — we were inspired by the many exceptional applications we received this year.

Funding Allocation Overview: 2025-2026 Fellows



Building Community Through ReGen



We are excited to announce that we are a partner in the recently established cross-disciplinary campus collective called ReGEN.

The UCLA Reproductive Health and Gender Equity Network (ReGEN) advances reproductive science and care, reproductive rights, and reproductive justice. We are an interdisciplinary collective that convenes, connects and amplifies UCLA faculty, staff and students dedicated to this work, on campus and beyond.

Donate to CRSHE

Your generous support helps make all this possible.

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