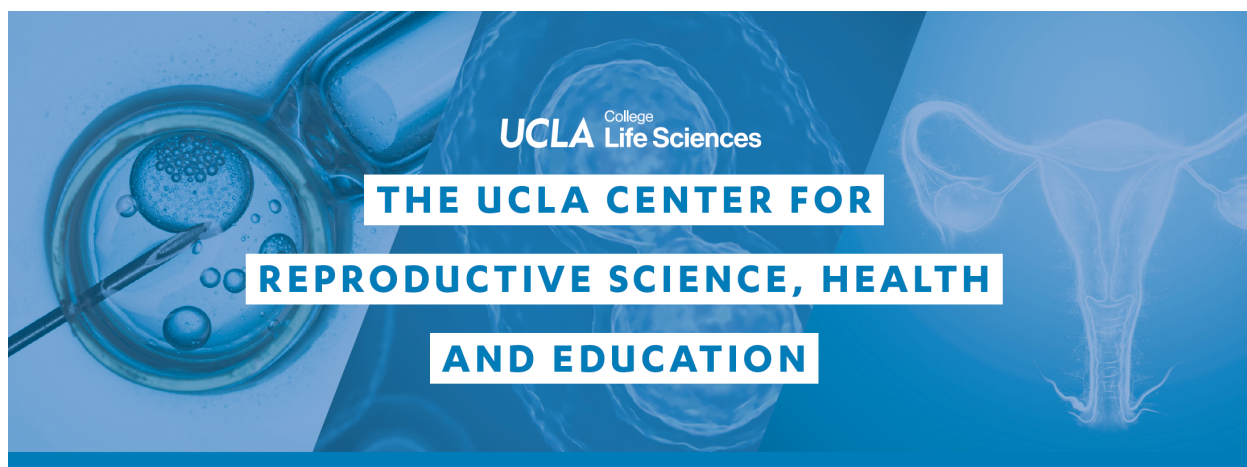


The background of the entire page is a microscopic image of cells. The cells are stained with a blue and green fluorescent dye, making them appear as glowing, translucent structures against a dark background. The cells vary in size and focus, with some being sharp and others blurred in the foreground and background. The overall aesthetic is scientific and modern.

Engagement

2025 Annual Report for the UCLA Center
for Reproductive Science, Health and
Education



Director's Message

As I reflect on the third year of the UCLA Center for Reproductive Science Health and Education, I am filled with profound gratitude for the remarkable progress we have achieved together in advancing this critical field of study. What began as an ambitious vision has evolved into a thriving hub of intellectual inquiry, scientific discovery, and educational excellence.

This year has been transformative for our Center where we focused on community engagement. Beginning with our monthly seminar series, we used this series as a platform to showcase the research of the 2024 CRSHE fellows. Together with our invited speakers we sought to create opportunities for cross-disciplinary collaboration and knowledge exchange. It is my belief that these seminars have strengthened the bonds within our growing community, and I look forward to our next season in 2025-2026.

Our commitment to innovations in education saw the launch of diverse comprehensive educational materials. These include student fact sheets and blog posts as well as our podcast. Through these interactive materials the CRSHE is reshaping how reproductive science is taught and understood. These resources represent our dedication to making complex scientific concepts accessible to diverse audiences and they are freely available.

The distinguished speaker series brought world-renowned experts in science and journalism to our campus, exposing our community to emerging trends in reproductive science and society. These presentations have positioned UCLA as a destination for leading voices and thought leaders in the field.

Perhaps most significantly, we have welcomed a new cohort of reproductive science fellows whose enthusiasm, diverse perspectives, and research contributions will further energize our Center. These emerging scholars represent the future of reproductive science, and their

presence underscores our role as a catalyst for the next generation of scientific leaders in this area.

As we look toward the coming year, our focus turns to deepening faculty engagement and expanding our scholarly community. We are committed to recruiting exceptional faculty members who will strengthen our research portfolio and enhance our educational mission. This strategic priority reflects our understanding that sustained excellence requires continuous investment in human capital and intellectual diversity.

The work we do at the Center extends far beyond the confines of our institution. Reproductive science touches every aspect of human health and well-being, and our research has the potential to improve lives, inform policy, and shape the future of healthcare. This responsibility drives our commitment to excellence and our determination to push the boundaries of scientific knowledge.

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the people who have attended our events, enrolled in our classes and supported us financially through your giving. Below are the total number of people who have engaged with our major activities. These numbers show that together, we are building something extraordinary—a center that values engagement and will serve as a beacon for reproductive science research and education for years to come.

With gratitude and anticipation for the year ahead,



Amander Clark PhD
Director, UCLA Center for Reproductive Science, Health and Education
Professor, Molecular Cell and Developmental Biology.

CRSHE Reach and Engagement



Meet Our 2025-2026 Center for Reproductive Science, Health and Education Fellowship Winners

We are thrilled to introduce the 2025-2026 CRSHE Reproductive Health and Science Research Fellows! This exceptional group of scholars is conducting innovative and impactful research across the fields of reproductive science, maternal health, and sexual health. Each fellow brings a unique perspective and passion to advancing knowledge and driving meaningful change in these critical areas of health.



Halina Yee, MD (Mira Hershey STEM Fellowship)
Clinical Fellow, Obstetrics and Gynecology
Mentor: Dr. Radhika Rible

Halina's work focuses on understanding the effect of glucagon like peptide agonists on the endometrial transcriptome.



Laura Cortes, PhD (Mira Hershey STEM Fellowship)
Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Integrative Biology and Society
Mentor: Dr. Stephanie Correa

Laura's research explores the neurobiological mechanisms underlying metabolic changes in pregnancy.



Michael Richardson, MD
Clinical Fellow, Obstetrics and Gynecology
Mentor: Dr. Sandra Orsulic

Michael's research examines MUC6 reconstitution as a preventive strategy against ovarian cancer initiation.



Julia Peloggia De Castro, PhD
Postdoctoral Fellow, Biological Chemistry
Mentor: Dr. Heather Christofk

Julia seeks to understand the metabolic control of cell type specification in embryonic development.



Tenzin Khando, MPH

Graduate Student, Community Health Science

Mentor: Dr. Jessica Gipson

Tenzin is interested in exploring transnational sexual and reproductive healthcare use among Asian immigrants in the U.S. through a transnational feminist lens.



Lingyu Zhan, PhD

Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Psychiatry

Mentor: Dr. Roel Ophoff

Lingyu studies the genetic architecture of maternal neuropsychiatric disorders with a focus on rare and structural variations.



Merin Rixen

Graduate Student, Chemistry and Biochemistry

Mentor: Dr. Margot Quinlan

Merin's work focuses on single-cell mass spectrometry of *Drosophila* oogenesis to uncover protein networks driving fertility.



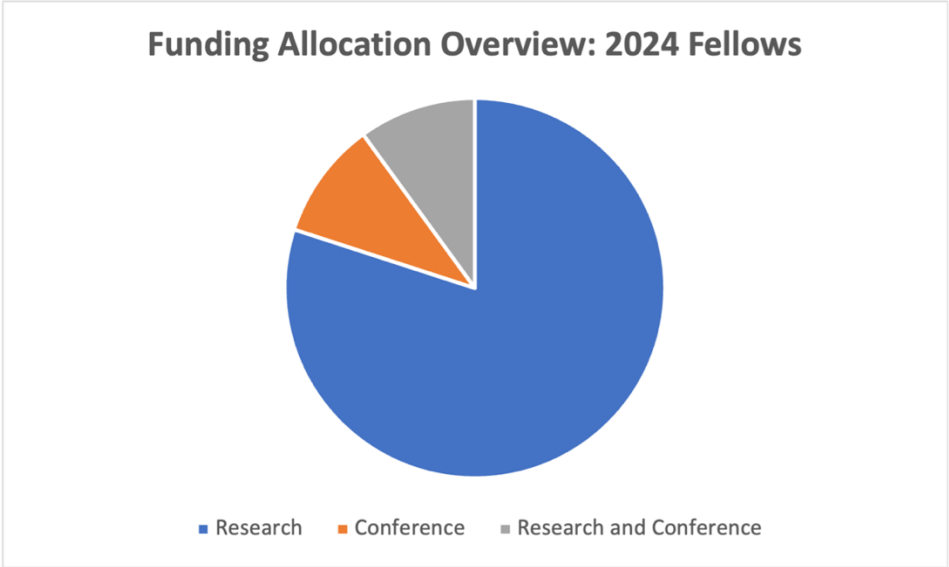
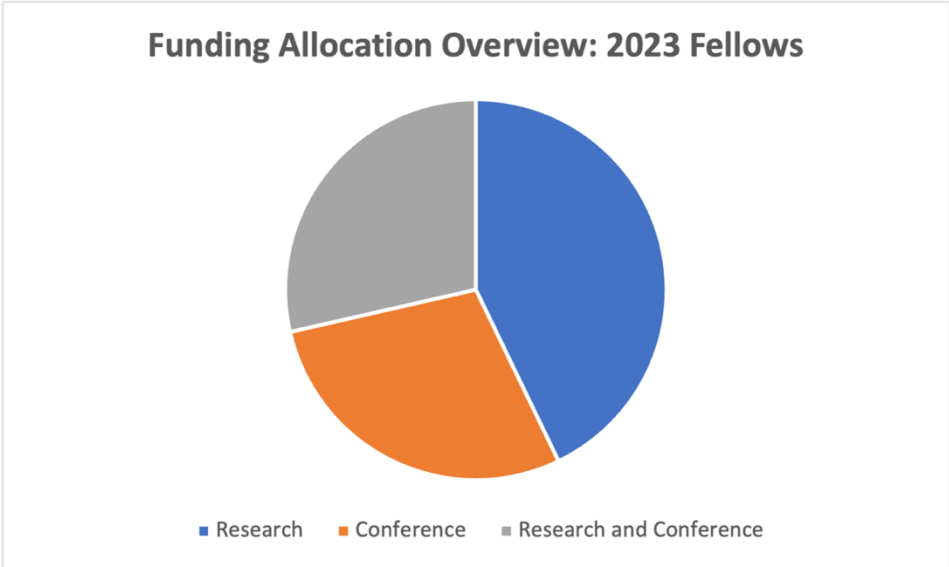
Kobie Boslough

Graduate Student, Ecology & Evolutionary Biology

Mentor: Dr. Karen Sears

Kobie studies the effects of aging on ovarian function and milk composition in female bats.

Below, we also report how our previous CRSHE Fellows (awarded in 2023, 2024) used their funding. At the CRSHE we provide flexibility to the awardees allowing the Fellows to determine how to best to utilize the funds for their project and career needs. As illustrated below, some Fellows allocated their funds toward research related expenses – such as purchasing tools, materials or data sets to support their projects – while others prioritized travel to academic conferences. A number of Fellows opted for a combination of both. Over the course of 2024-2025, a notable shift occurred, with most fellows directing their funding toward research-focused activities.



Distinguished Speaker Events

- **Fall 2024**

In Fall 2024, we were honored to host the highly-esteemed researcher Dr. Magdalena Zernicka-Goetz, who delivered a compelling talk on embryo models. The presentation was rich in scientific content and sparked an engaging and insightful discussion. For more information please visit the following link:



<https://reprohealth.ucla.edu/2024/11/18/attendee-reflections-on-crshes-distinguished-speaker-series-with-dr-magdalena-zernicka-goetz/>

- **Spring 2025**

We were thrilled to welcome Elizabeth Dias—New York Times religion correspondent and best-selling author of *The Fall of Roe: The Rise of a New America*—as our featured guest for the Spring 2025 Distinguished Speaker Series. Drawing on her extensive investigative journalism Elizabeth offered a compelling look into the political, cultural, and religious forces that led to the fall of *Roe* and the role of women in American life. For more information please visit the following link:



<https://lifesciences.ucla.edu/2025/04/a-journalists-perspective-on-the-battle-over-abortion-the-ucla-center-for-reproductive-science-health-and-education-hosts-event-with-new-york-times-correspondent-elizabeth-dias/>

Art and Science Project

This year, our Artist-in-Residence, Saskia Baden, completed her final project with us—an evocative series of silver gelatin prints created in the darkroom using scientific images from UCLA students and fellows as her raw materials. These striking works of art now fill the hall outside the Center for Reproductive Science, Health and Education’s headquarters where we hope they inspire reflection and curiosity.



Reproductive Science Education

Seminar Series

Over the past two years, our Seminar Series has continued to highlight the outstanding work of students, postdoctoral fellows and clinical fellows. The seminars are attended by an engaged audience including faculty, clinicians, graduate students, postdocs, and undergraduates. Each session features a 40-minute talk followed by a 20-minute discussion, fostering thoughtful dialogue and interaction. To view our 2024-2025 seminar speaker list please visit here:

<https://reprohealth.ucla.edu/events/>



Reproductive Science and Health Course (MCD BIO 120)

This year, we proudly offered a 5-Unit course called *Reproductive Science and Health* to 55 undergraduate majors in the Life Sciences. This class fills a critical gap in the UCLA undergraduate curriculum by covering topics rarely explored elsewhere on campus. Students



delve into the cellular and molecular biology of the reproductive system across the lifespan—beginning with the ovary and egg—and explore key processes such as fertilization, embryo development, sex determination, pregnancy, and birth. Through this course, students gain not only scientific knowledge but also a deeper awareness of the ethical, cultural, and societal dimensions of reproductive science—preparing them to be thoughtful leaders in both research and policy.

Science Communication and Research (MCD BIO 188)

In Winter 2024, we launched a new course designed to equip students with the skills to develop impactful, evidence-based fact sheets on timely and relevant topics. This inaugural offering students selected topics that reflect both pressing public health concerns and ongoing scientific developments in the news. To see the reproductive factsheets created by UCLA undergraduate students and CRSHE volunteers, please click here:

<https://reprohealth.ucla.edu/fact-sheets/>

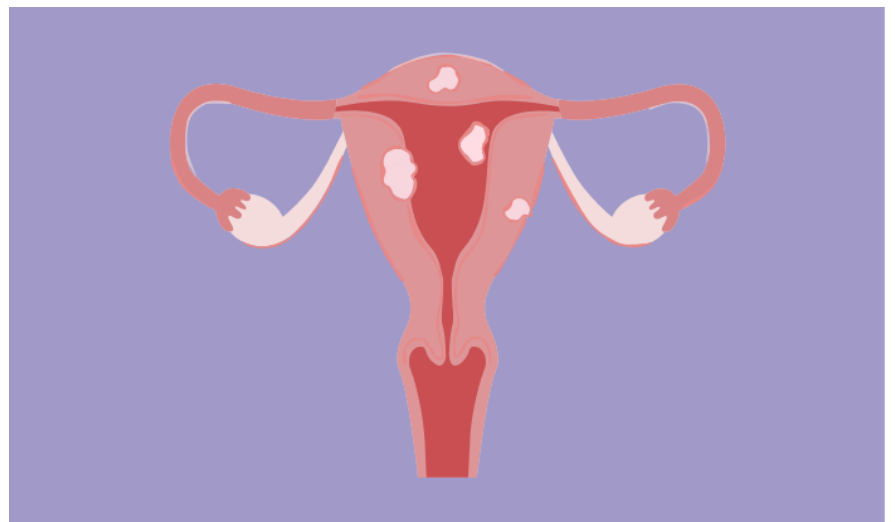


Student Blog

Over the past year, we launched a student-led blog designed to give students the opportunity to dive deeply into topics in reproductive science with close mentorship from our Associate Director Stephanie Kiesow-Edoh. This initiative offers a meaningful platform for our work-study students and volunteers to actively engage with the Center's mission while providing additional opportunities to hone their research and science communication skills.

The blog not only highlights the diverse interests of our student contributors but also shares compelling insights on topics that resonate with the broader campus community. To read our new student blog, please click here:

<https://reprohealth.ucla.edu/student-blog/>



Podcast

Our Associate Director, Stephanie Kiesow-Edoh, launched a new podcast through the Center for Reproductive Science, Health, and Education, creating an engaging platform to connect UCLA students with leading experts and researchers in the field. The podcast features insightful conversations on a wide range of timely and thought-provoking topics—including maternal mental health, the neurobiological changes that occur in fathers during pregnancy and postpartum, and the questions surrounding surplus embryos and assisted reproductive technologies. Designed to inform and inspire, the podcast aims to spark curiosity, deepen understanding, and encourage students to foster future careers in reproductive science and maternal health. To listen to our new CRSHE podcast, please click here: <https://reprohealth.ucla.edu/podcast/>



Newsletters

We are happy to share our 2024–2025 newsletters. These issues highlight recent events, important updates, and upcoming opportunities, and we’ve truly enjoyed connecting with our community through each edition. Please find newsletters from this past academic year listed below.

- Fall 2024 Newsletter: <https://reprohealth.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2025/06/UCLA-CRSHE-Fall-2024-Newsletter.pdf>
- Winter 2025 Newsletter: <https://reprohealth.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2025/03/CRSHE-Winter-2025-Newsletter.pdf>
- Spring 2025 Newsletter: <https://reprohealth.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2025/06/CRSHE-Spring-2025-Newsletter.pdf>

If you are interested in learning more about the activities of the Center, getting involved in the science, education or public outreach of the Center, or supporting initiatives that you care about where science and education can make a difference, we welcome you to get in touch with us.

<https://reprohealth.ucla.edu> or crshe@ucla.edu