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Fall 2019 Newsletter



Celebrating Dr. Douglas Richman

On November 1, 2019, physicians, researchers and staff from across UC San Diego and the globe gathered together to celebrate the esteemed career of Dr. Douglas Richman. Dr. Richman has dedicated his life to making major clinical and laboratory contributions to the field of HIV/AIDS, as well as translational medical research as we know it.

Dr. Richman's commitment to fostering the next generation of leading scientists has left an indelible mark in our field. He has recruited and assembled some of the most brilliant,

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As such, a key component of our "Doug Day" symposium featured talks by some of Dr. Richman's beloved mentees. Additionally, Assemblymember Todd Gloria proclaimed November 1, 2019, as "Dr. Douglas Richman Day" in the State of California and encouraged all citizens therein to celebrate the many contributions he has made to our region, state and nation throughout his distinguished career.

To learn more about the speakers and events of our Doug Day Symposium [click here](#).

Investigator Spotlight

The HIV Institute greatly appreciates UC San

Diego's hardworking, dedicated research scientists accelerating the field. The Investigator Spotlight gives us an opportunity to acknowledge our leading investigators and to share with the community how they are pursuing life-changing discoveries.



Dan Werb, PhD

Assistant Professor, Division of Infectious
Diseases and Global Public Health
Department of Medicine
University of California San Diego

Tell us a little about yourself.

I was born in Vancouver, Canada and went to college in Montreal. Fun fact: I'm on my fourth career. I started out in book publishing, then worked in journalism, then was a professional touring musician, and now I'm an epidemiologist.

What attracted you to this field?

I was attracted to epidemiology because it is one of the most powerful tools to reveal and communicate the inequalities that marginalized populations face. I grew up in Vancouver, which has one of North America's largest open-air illegal drug markets in the Downtown Eastside neighborhood. The extreme poverty that exists in this neighborhood – and in other neighborhoods across the United States – is a testimony to our collective failure in understanding and responding to the many health conditions of poverty. Epidemiology seemed to me as the best way to advocate for

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How did you land in San Diego and/or start working at UC San Diego?

I was invited to do a postdoctoral fellowship with Dr. Steffanie Strathdee focused on the impact of policing and addiction treatment barriers in Tijuana on the health of people who inject drugs.

What are the major issues facing HIV researchers today?

The major issues facing HIV researchers are those that have been in place for decades: the fact that policy dictates health to a massive degree, and the related issue that people who are at greatest risk of HIV often have had their political voices silenced by marginalization. As scientists we need to collectively amplify the voices of key populations – women who engage in sex work, people who use drugs, and LGBTQ+ communities – to push for the reform of policies that criminalize, marginalize and stigmatize them. This is the best path towards eradicating HIV.

What are some of your research interests and/or what are you working on right now?

My main research interest is in understanding the process of injection drug use initiation and finding ways to disrupt it. It's an underserved area of 'upstream HIV prevention' with a huge potential upside in reducing the burden of HIV morbidity and mortality among people who inject drugs.

What are some of your favorite or most important projects?

I am super proud of PRIMER (*PReventing Injecting by Modifying Existing Responses*; (www.primerstudy.com), which is the international cohort consortium that I established to investigate ways to prevent injection drug use initiation using a harm reduction lens. I am also really proud of my non-fiction book, *City of Omens: A Search for the Missing Women of the Borderlands* (<http://smarturl.it/cityofomens>), which was selected by the New York Times Book Review as one of six true crime books on its 2019 Summer Reading List. You should buy it!

What is most important lesson you have learned during your tenure at UC San Diego?

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you can be sure you will have a positive impact, and that's by being a committed and supportive mentor. I learned that from my mentors, especially Dr. Steffanie Strathdee, and I am doing my best to pay it forward.

Support UC San Diego's HIV Programs

As we enter the final month's of the year it's a great time to give back. There are several ways you can GIVE to UC San Diego HIV Institute.



December 3rd is **#GivingTuesday**, a global day of giving, fueled by the power of social media — the perfect opportunity to show your support.

With your help, we can end the HIV epidemic!

The HIV Institute **needs your help to [support](#)** research that brings fresh perspectives, innovation, and renewed drive to the study of HIV!

Do you shop online?

Get a free [iGive.com](https://www.give.com) account so UC San Diego HIV Institute can earn money every time you shop online. It's so easy! To learn more or sign up now, [click here](#). There are over 1,900 businesses supporting [iGive](#). When you use your iGive button installed on your browser 3% of your purchase amount will come back to the charity of your choosing. Give back today by signing up for a free [iGive](#) account and select the "UC San Diego HIV Institute."

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For more information on how to **ENROLL** in the community rewards program [click here](#) and follow instructions, or visit Ralphs.com. Be sure to select "UCSD AIDS Research Institute."



Upcoming Events

Seminar Series



Substance Use and Immune Outcomes in HIV

The UC San Diego HIV Institute and San Diego Center for AIDS Research are pleased to present Jennifer Fulcher, MD, PhD, in seminar on Friday, Dec 6, from 8:00-9:00am in conjunction with HIGH Rounds at the [AVRC's first floor conference room](#).

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Save the Date

Ending the HIV Epidemic Community Summit

Saturday, February 29, 2020

10:00am - 2:00pm

Jacobs Center for Community Innovation



Profoundly changing the study, treatment and prevention of HIV throughout the world.

Since the 1980s, HIV/AIDS research at UC San Diego has been at the forefront of discoveries that shape care and treatment standards on a global scale. We are

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For 23 years [The HIV Institute](#) has served as an umbrella organization to UC San Diego's many HIV-related activities. We work within and across departments, in multidisciplinary programs and with many other collaborators to translate new discoveries from our laboratories to patient care.

"Happiness doesn't result from what we get, but from what we give."

Ben Carson



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