AIDS Walk & Run San Diego 2021

Please accept our **deepest**
*gratitude* for your support of our
AIDS Walk & Run San Diego team!
Whether you donated, walked, or
rان, you helped make our efforts
successful.

Together we’ve raised **$10,194**!
These funds will support UC San
Diego’s premiere HIV programs, including the Owen Clinic, Antiviral Research Center, HIV Neurobehavioral Research Program and San Diego Center for AIDS Research.

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.

Britt Skaathun, PhD, MPH
Assistant Professor
Division of Infectious Diseases and Global Public Health
Department of Medicine, UC San Diego

Tell us a little about yourself.
I’m an epidemiologist by training (MPH and PhD) and my research mainly focuses on how we can use social networks to engage people in HIV prevention and care. I’m originally from Chicago and joined UCSD in January of 2017.

Fun fact - my grandfather, Robert Sweet, was an Ethnographer that traveled with the circus. His background in sociology sparked my interest in medical sociology, which eventually led me to
What attracted you to this field?
In addition to my grandfather’s influence, HIV impacts communities that I identify with and care about, so I was compelled by the opportunity to contribute to work toward its elimination. Also, the spread and prevention of HIV (like many infectious diseases) relies on several complex factors (e.g., social, biomedical, behavioral, etc.) which makes it an interesting problem to solve.

How did you land in San Diego and/or start working at UC San Diego?
Dr. Susan Little came to speak at my dissertation advisor’s (Dr. John Schneider) lab when I was a doctoral student at the University of Chicago. She published a manuscript that was very similar to one of my dissertation aims on calculating a “network viral load” so I thought it would be a great place to continue my career. I applied for a postdoctoral fellowship at UCSD and was fortunate to be accepted. I since became faculty in March of 2020.

What are the major issues facing HIV researchers today?
Although HIV infections overall are beginning to decline in the U.S., certain subpopulations continue to be disproportionately impacted. Reducing incidence in the remaining groups is challenging because they are historically disenfranchised, with higher rates of HIV being linked to social and economic environments and stigma. We need to shift our focus to address these issues.

What are some of your research interests and/or what are you working on right now?
I have two projects right now that I’m excited about that both utilize network methods. The first is a NIH-NIDA career development award (K01). The goal of it is to develop methods to better understand the complex and overlapping social and molecular network dynamics involved in HIV transmission among substance-using populations.

The other is a Center for AIDS Research (CFAR) administrative supplement that I was awarded over the pandemic. The goal of this study is to assess the impact of drug tourism networks on HIV outcomes (i.e., engagement in services and HIV incidence) in the San Diego and Tijuana border region, and how border restrictions in the era of CoV-2 affect network dynamics as a structural driver of HIV risk.

Ultimately, I hope the knowledge gained from both will help us more effectively prioritize interventions that reduce HIV incidence.

**What are some of your favorite or most important projects?**

I am very fortunate to currently be working on projects that I really enjoy and that I feel are all important, so it’s hard to choose between them. My first exposure to HIV research was the most important to me overall because it shaped my interests. I started my career in HIV research as an interviewer/outreach worker for the National HIV Behavioral Surveillance project in Chicago. At the time, all of the data collection was done at venues. I absolutely loved being in the field and getting to talk with people about their experiences. Being in those physical spaces gave the work more context.

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

The value of collaboration. I am inspired by my colleagues at UCSD as well as our community partners and have witnessed both increased efficiency and the evolution of great ideas when we come together.

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**Upcoming Programs**

**Seminar Series**

The HIV Institute Seminar Series and the San Diego Center for AIDS Research are pleased to present the following speakers:

**Tuesday, November 30, 2021**

12:00 - 1:00pm

**ROBERT DEISS, MD**

Cryptococcal Antigen Screening in Resource-Limited Settings

**Wednesday, December 8, 2021**

4:00 - 5:00pm

**TYPOHANYE VIELKA DYER, PhD, MPH**

Syndemics and Intersectional Frameworks: Application to HIV prevention and treatment in marginalized, priority populations

**Tuesday, January 25, 2022**

11:00am - 12:00pm

**SUMIT CHANDA, PhD**

RID HIV

A Martin Delaney Collaboratory Grant
World AIDS DAY 2021 Event

Virtual Event

December 1, 2021

11:30am - 12:30pm

Join us as we commemorate World AIDS Day 2021 with a reflective and celebratory event highlighting innovative research to address HIV and syndemics of trauma, substance use and mental health disorders 40 years after the first reports of HIV/AIDS in Southern California.

- Research Highlights
- Community Perspectives
- Call to Action

REGISTER HERE

CAB Spotlight

UC San Diego Health
University Community Advisory Board

University CAB (UCAB)
UCAB works to better integrate community involvement across UC San Diego's HIV programs to advance HIV research, prevention, clinical care, and treatment. Our overarching aims are to strengthen synergies across our community network by fostering inter-CAB collaborations and serve as a vehicle for training and capacity building. UCAB meetings typically include summaries of key activities from each CAB, trainings by subject matter experts, discussion of best practices, and strategies to increase community participation and engagement. Our current participating advisory boards are: Antiviral Research Center (AVRC) CAB, Health Equity CAB, OWEN Clinic CAB, and the SD CFAR Transgender/Nonbinary CAB (TCAB).

UCAB meets quarterly and our next meeting is February 28, 2022, at 12:00pm.

If you are interested in participating in our next UCAB meeting please email: hiv@ucsd.edu

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**Support UC San Diego's HIV Programs**

As 2021 draws to an end it's a great time to give back. There are several ways you can [GIVE](mailto:hiv@ucsd.edu) to UC San Diego HIV Institute.

#GivingTuesday is a global generosity movement unleashing the power of people and organizations to transform their communities and the world.

The HIV Institute needs your help to [support](mailto:hiv@ucsd.edu) research that brings fresh perspectives, innovation, and renewed drive to the study of HIV!
Do you shop online?
Get a free iGive.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."

Shop at Ralphs?
It's easy . . . just shop, swipe your Ralphs rewards card at checkout and save while supporting HIV research!

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."
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 internationally recognized as a place that combines the art of healing with the science of medicine and serves not only San Diego, but communities around the world.

For 25 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.
“Giving is not just about making a donation. It’s about making a difference.”

Kathy Calvin