



The HIV Institute
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SAN DIEGO

Fall/Winter 2021 Newsletter

Event Highlights

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 ran, you helped make our efforts successful.

Together we've raised **\$10,194!**
These funds will support UC San



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?

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

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.

Upcoming Programs

Seminar Series

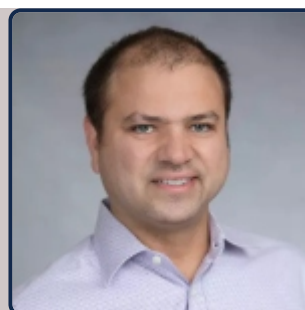
The HIV Institute Seminar Series and the San Diego Center for AIDS Research are pleased to present the following speakers:

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

TYPHANYE 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](http://tinyurl.com/2021WAD)

CAB Spotlight

UC San Diego Health

University Community Advisory Board

University CAB (UCAB)

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

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](#) 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](#)** research that brings fresh perspectives, innovation, and renewed drive to the study of HIV!

Together we give.



UNLEASH GENEROSITY

Generosity gives everyone the power to make a positive change in the lives of others and is a fundamental value anyone can act on.

November 30, 2021



Do you shop online?

Get a free [iGive.com](https://www.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](https://www.igive.com). 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](https://www.igive.com) 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!

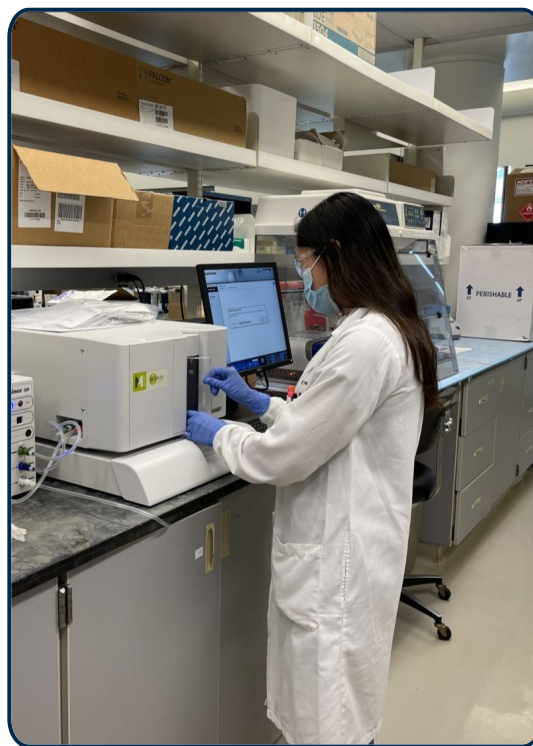
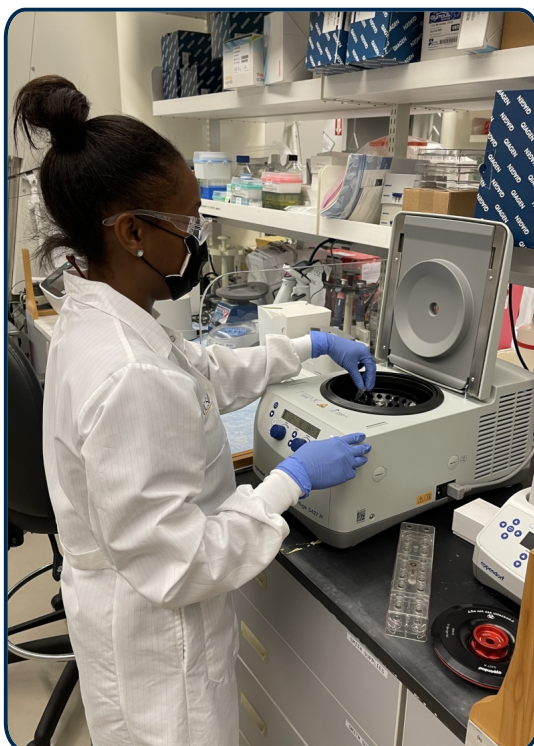
For more information on how to **ENROLL** in the community rewards program [click here](#) and follow instructions, or visit [Ralphs.com](https://www.Ralphs.com). Be sure to select "UCSD AIDS Research Institute."



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.



Subscribe

Past Issues

Translate ▼

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

Kathy Calvin



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