

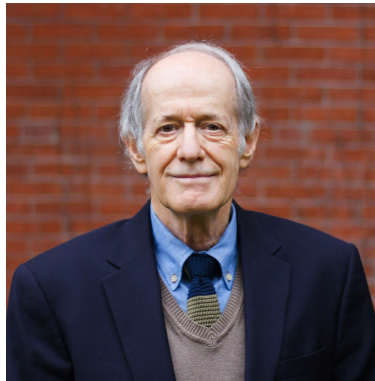


## SPRING 2022 NEWSLETTER

### TB/HIV SCIENTIFIC WORKING GROUP HIGHLIGHT



DR. KAREN JACOBSON, TBIG SWIG DIRECTOR (CFAR), ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE, BOSTON UNIVERSITY



DR. C. ROBERT HORSBURGH, TBIG SWIG CO-DIRECTOR (CFAR), PROFESSOR OF EPIDEMIOLOGY, BOSTON UNIVERSITY



DR. E. JANE CARTER, TBIG SWIG CO-DIRECTOR (CFAR), PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE, BROWN UNIVERSITY

The HIV/TB Scientific Working Group was established in 2017 to bring together researchers from Brown and BU working in HIV, TB or both to generate new ideas and form collaborative partnerships. The SWG is led by Karen Jacobson, Jane Carter and Bob Horsburgh. The goal of these partnerships is to seek research funding that will advance our understanding of the interactions between HIV and TB and advance prevention agendas for both conditions. The SWG is particularly focused on building HIV/TB research capacity at our international partner sites and advancing the careers of young investigators.

A major activity of the SWG is the TB Interest Group Seminar series that occurs biweekly on Zoom. A second major activity has been working with early-stage investigators interested in HIV/TB to design research projects, identify collaborators, prepare developmental grant applications and implement funded developmental projects. Over the course of the SWG, 14 developmental proposals have been submitted and 10 were approved for funding. Moreover, 30 NIH proposals and 5 other agency proposals have been submitted; 16 have been funded and 6 are pending.

In 2021 the CFAR recognized that the HIV/TB SWG had matured to the point where it had become an important ongoing focus of Providence/Boston CFAR activity. Therefore, its activities are being incorporated into the Clinical and Behavioral Sciences Core, where Dr. Jacobson will become co-

## UPCOMING EVENTS & FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

**JUNE 14, 2022**

### **PROV/BOS CFAR SURC RESEARCH IN PROGRESS WEBINAR**

Dr. Abigail Batchelder - (Harvard Medical School and Harvard University CFAR) *presents 'Enhanced Incentivized Directly Observed Therapy for People Living with HIV Who Inject Drugs in Massachusetts (Project iSTRIVE)'*

[\*\*REGISTER HERE\*\*](#)

**JUNE 16, 2022**

### **INTERNATIONAL URBAN ARCH CENTER VISITING SCHOLAR RESEARCH IN PROGRESS WEBINAR**

Dr. Sylvie Naar (Florida State University) and Dr. Karen MacDonell (Wayne State University) will discuss their recent NIAAA-funded P01 HIV/Alcohol center, the SHARE Program.

[\*\*REGISTER HERE\*\*](#)

**AUGUST 3, 2022**

### **FALL 2022 DEVELOPMENTAL GRANT LOIs DUE**

[\*\*SUBMIT YOUR LOIs HERE\*\*](#)

Notification of Selected LOIs: *August 10*

Full Applications Due: *October 1*

Funding Decisions: *November 25*

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## SCIENCE SPOTLIGHT

My name is Silvia Chiang and I am a physician-scientist with an expertise in tuberculosis (TB) in children and adolescents. At Hasbro Children's Hospital, I attend on the pediatric infectious disease service and in the TB Clinic. As an investigator, I conduct epidemiologic and clinical research to improve outcomes for TB-affected children and adolescents. Most of my research takes place in Lima,



DR. SILVIA CHIANG,  
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR  
OF PEDIATRICS, BROWN  
UNIVERSITY

Peru, where, since 2012, I have worked closely with Partners In Health-Peru (Socios En Salud), a non-governmental organization that aims to improve the health of vulnerable populations through healthcare delivery and research.

As a junior investigator, I am working to develop expertise in adolescent TB. As part of my K01 International Research Scientist Development Award (IRSDA; 2017-2022), I am conducting a study called "Teens on TB Treatment: Can We Predict Adherence?" in Lima. This study uses in-depth interviews and data from a well-characterized prospective cohort to evaluate barriers and facilitators to treatment adherence in adolescents with drug-susceptible TB. This study currently is in the data analysis and reporting phase. Finally, I led an external review group for the World Health Organization (WHO) on adolescent TB care to inform the 2022 WHO Operational Handbook on Tuberculosis: Module 5: Management of Tuberculosis in Children and Adolescents.



SAMANTHA MALATESTA,  
PHD CANDIDATE,  
BOSTON UNIVERSITY

Samantha Malatesta is a biostatistics PhD candidate at Boston University School of Public Health. She works as a data analyst in Dr. Karen Jacobson's research group at Boston Medical Center. She provides analytic support for two ongoing studies in South Africa examining the complex relationships between tuberculosis and substance use. She enjoys working on projects with different team members and with collaborators abroad where she can contribute to substance use and infectious disease research. In her free time, she enjoys horseback riding and spending time outdoors.



DR. LEONARDO  
MARTINEZ, ASSISTANT  
PROFESSOR OF  
EPIDEMIOLOGY, BOSTON  
UNIVERSITY

My name is Leo Martinez and I'm an Assistant Professor in the Department of Epidemiology at Boston University's School of Public Health. My research uses epidemiological and quantitative approaches to study prenatal and early-life risk factors for pediatric tuberculosis, investigate tuberculosis transmission dynamics in settings with high prevalence of tuberculosis and HIV, and uncover the burden of tuberculosis in high-risk populations (e.g., incarcerated persons). My goal is to further our understanding of tuberculosis epidemiology and pathogenesis through the use of novel data in high-risk populations with the goal to ultimately influence health policy and implementation at the local, regional, and global level.

From all aspects, tuberculosis is amongst the most challenging diseases in health science and I'm a big believer that collaboration is essential to address the numerous intractable issues we face related to tuberculosis

control. TBIG offers an amazing forum for discussing these issues and potential solutions with a range of colleagues, experts, and friends from around the world.

## OPEN DOOR HEALTH



DR. PHILIP CHAN, CO-CORE DIRECTOR, CLINICAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES CORE (CFAR), ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, BROWN UNIVERSITY, CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER, OPEN DOOR HEALTH



DR. AMY NUNN, PROFESSOR OF BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES, PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE, BROWN UNIVERSITY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OPEN DOOR HEALTH

### **Access to primary care is a challenge across the United States and especially for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ+) community.**

In 2020, Dr. Amy Nunn, ScD, and Dr. Philip A. Chan, MD, started Open Door Health, a program of Rhode Island Public Health Institute (RIPHI) and the state's first LGBTQ+ focused health center. Open Door Health was the culmination of work for the last decade by Dr.'s Nunn and Chan which has focused on aspects of research and implementation of prevention and care for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

The goal at Open Door Health is to provide culturally-affirming and cutting edge medical care regardless of ability to pay with a focus on health issues that affect the LGBTQ+ community most.

Open Door Health offers primary care and gender-affirming care, as well as other services for sexual health, HIV care and treatment, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and diagnosis and management of other STIs.

The vision at Open Door Health is to provide important clinical services to the community, as well as integrate public health, research, and training/education. Research is a critical component of the organization with the goal of engaging in research that seeks to further the care and advocacy of clinical and public health issues related to sexual health and preventative care. The clinic is located off Broad Street in Providence which has among the highest health disparities in the state. As of April 2022, the clinic has provided clinical services to over 3,500 patients.



# WHAT IS THE COMMUNITY-ENGAGED RESEARCH COUNCIL (C-CERC)?



PAUL GOULET,  
CHAIR,  
PROV/BOS CFAR  
COMMUNITY  
ENGAGED  
RESEARCH COUNCIL  
(C-CERC)

Community-engaged research is a framework or approach for conducting research, not a methodology. A community-engaged research study may incorporate both qualitative and quantitative methods. This approach encourages recognition of the strengths of community institutions and individuals and encourages people and groups to build on those strengths. What characterizes community-engaged research is not the methods used, but the principles that guide the research and the relationships between researchers and the community.

Community engagement is increasingly becoming an integral part of research. The practice of community engagement serves to strengthen research and improve health outcomes. Community based research is necessary to remove the various social, cultural, and logistical barriers that confound the well-intentioned efforts of many public health programs. Community engagement is also important as it builds partnerships with the strengths of the community and research teams to ignite social change and improve health.

**The C-CERC mission is to provide leadership and support to the Providence/Boston CFAR community and broader local communities to support effective and responsive HIV-related science.** To do this, the Providence/Boston CFAR C-CERC continues to lead efforts to develop, enhance, and sustain bidirectional partnerships between Providence/Boston CFAR researchers and community organizations and members. These bi-directional partnerships serve to support meaningful involvement of communities in the design, implementation, and dissemination of research, and to support capacity building among CFAR researchers, and overall better science

Members of the C-CERC believe that when conducting community engaged research (CER) it is essential to include diverse communities to ensure that research ideas respond to the needs of community members, particularly women, individuals struggling with substance abuse, individuals with a history of incarceration, people living with HIV, men who have sex with men, and underserved/marginalized populations. To respond to these needs the C-CERC provides a list of services which include, troubleshooting research projects, connecting researchers with study participants, promote partnerships with community-based organizations and individuals, consent form language, development of recruitment flyers, data dissemination and research findings, letters of support for funding. Services provided by the C-CERC are tailored to each specific research project to ensure that there is meaningful community involvement from the inception of the research project to the completion of the project.

In order for CER to be successful, it is essential to include user friendly and culturally sensitive practices and measures, develop CER partnerships and coalitions that help mobilize resources and influence systems. C-CERC also collaborates with other CFARs to share best practices and enhance community engagement across the National CFAR Network.

Some of the current projects that CCERC is engaged in: HIV and Aging, HIV Testing in Dental Clinics, MA CEAL COVID Project, Cardiovascular Health and HIV, PrEP and Incarceration, Transgender Health (Documentary Video), Linkage and Retention in HIV Care In Rural Communities, LGBTQ Youth and Mindfulness, Needle Exchange Vending Machine Program (RI) Mentoring Committee for the N3C (National CFAR CAB Coalition).

To learn more about the C-CERC and how we can help with your project please go to: <https://cfar.med.brown.edu> and click on Community or email Paul at [pbgoulet@hotmail.com](mailto:pbgoulet@hotmail.com)

## FEATURED GRANTS

**DR. ALANA BRENNAN**, Boston University, received supplemental funding from NIDDK for her research on Evidence of the burden of diabetes, gaps in the diabetes cascade-of-care and the impact of care and treatment on diabetes outcomes in HIV-positive and HIV-negative patients in South Africa.

**DR. LISA QUINTILIANI**, Boston University, received P01 funding in the amount of \$421,543 from NIAAA for her research on Increasing Physical Activity Among Persons Living with HIV Engaged in Unhealthy Drinking.

**RACHEL YORLETS, MPH**, Brown University, received F31 funding in the amount of \$46,036 from NIMH for her research on the Effect of Migration on HIV Outcomes and HIV Care Utilization in South Africa.

## FALL 2021 CFAR DEVELOPMENTAL & SUPPLEMENTAL AWARDEES



BETH FUCHS, PhD  
BROWN UNIVERSITY

"Reduction of oropharyngeal candidiasis using Lactobacillus paracasei isolate 28.4 delivered via agellan gum"



MATTHEW MARA, DMD EdM  
BOSTON UNIVERSITY

"Understanding the Roles of Dental Schools in Ending the HIV Epidemic"



RALPH ROGERS, MD  
BROWN UNIVERSITY

"Immunogenicity of COVID-19 booster vaccine among persons living with HIV"

# PROVIDENCE/BOSTON CFAR

The Providence/Boston Center for AIDS Research (CFAR) is a joint research effort between Brown University/Lifespan and Boston University/Boston Medical Center.

The Providence/Boston Center for AIDS research is devoted to the pursuit of translational research to reduce the burden of HIV infection worldwide, with special focus on substance users, women, MSM, justice-involved persons, and at-risk youth. To achieve this goal, we are committed to fostering emerging HIV investigators both domestically and within resource-limited settings.

## ADMINISTRATIVE CORE TEAM

### **Susan Cu-Uvin, MD**

Director, Providence/Boston CFAR  
SCu-uvn@lifespan.org

### **Curt Beckwith, MD**

Associate Director, Providence/Boston CFAR  
CBeckwith@lifespan.org

### **Andrew Henderson, PhD**

Associate Director, Providence/Boston CFAR  
hender@bu.edu

### **E. Karina Santamaria, MPH**

Administrative Director,  
Providence/Boston CFAR  
karina\_santamaria@brown.edu

### **Kaylyn Bruciati, MHA**

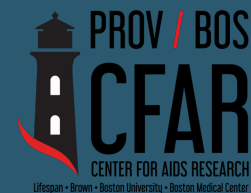
Program Coordinator (BOS),  
Providence/Boston CFAR  
kaylyn.bruciati@bmc.org

### **Rhonda DiCesare**

Program Coordinator (PVD),  
Providence/Boston CFAR  
rdicesare@lifespan.org

## REQUEST SERVICES

- [Developmental Core](#)
- [Clinical and Behavioral Sciences Core](#)
- [Biostatistics Core](#)
- [Basic Science Core](#)
- [Substance Use Research Core](#)
- [Community Engaged Research Council \(C-CERC\)](#)



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