

UCSF Fresno



2022–2023 Annual Report

Improving Health in the
San Joaquin Valley





Question.
discover.



Care.
heal.



Teach.
inspire.



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Engage.
enrich.



Message from Campus Leadership

The UCSF School of Medicine Fresno Regional Campus (UCSF Fresno) extends the reach and impact of the top-ranked UCSF School of Medicine to Fresno, the Valley, and Central California. UCSF Fresno's mission is to improve health in the region, state, and globally through teaching, patient care, research, and community partnerships. This includes our commitment to providing excellent medical education in the region and expanding access to a medical school degree for Valley students.

In California, a great need exists for both primary and specialty physicians, and in the San Joaquin Valley, the need is even more urgent. The path to becoming a practicing physician is a long and rigorous one, taking 11 years or more after high school, depending on the specialty. UCSF Fresno is involved at almost every step of the way – from our longstanding Doctors Academy programs for middle and high school students interested in medical careers, the new SJV-MedBridge pathway for community college students, the recently launched SJV PRIME+ a Baccalaureate-to-MD pathway in collaboration with UC Merced, our residency and fellowship training programs, and our robust continuing medical education portfolio.

As an anchor institution in Fresno and the Valley, UCSF Fresno is committed to developing an outstanding physician workforce that reflects Valley communities and improves patient care and access in the region and state.

It has long been established that two factors play an important role in determining where physicians practice: 1) where they grew up, and 2) where they complete their medical education. By offering Valley students opportunities to complete medical education and training in the San Joaquin Valley, we increase the likelihood they will stay here to practice where they are needed most.

UCSF Fresno, by far, is the greatest contributor to the physician workforce regionally. Roughly 50% of our graduates stay in the Central Valley to provide care, continue their education, and teach the next generation. Thanks to state funding and partnerships with UC Merced, Fresno State, and Valley community colleges, we are widening the path for local students with a calling to care to become physicians and serve the region that they call home.

Our goal is to recruit, train and retain highly skilled clinicians and patient advocates for the Valley. We are your UCSF Fresno. And we are pleased to share this annual report highlighting some of our many accomplishments over the past year.



Eyad Almasri, MD
Assistant Dean for Research



Kenny Banh, MD, FACEP
Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education



Roger Mortimer, MD
Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs



Stacy Sawtelle Vohra, MD, FACEP
Interim Designated Institutional Official



Steven Tringali, DO, FACP
Acting Director, Clinical Affairs



UCSF Fresno was established in 1975 as a graduate medical education campus of the UCSF School of Medicine, with support from the state Legislature and the Veteran’s Administration to address the severe shortage of physicians in California’s San Joaquin Valley. Today, we are the largest academic physician-training program in between San Francisco and Sacramento and LA.

Academic Affairs

More than 600 core and volunteer faculty at UCSF Fresno teach future physicians. Faculty and residents provide care to hundreds of thousands of patients at clinical partner sites each year. We are committed to the ongoing development of our faculty as teachers and clinicians through faculty development programs and continuing medical education which enhances quality care.

- The first Faculty Development Primer, organized by the Faculty Development Committee, was held Sept. 26–30, 2022. This new annual event provided opportunities for faculty at UCSF Fresno to enhance their teaching skills by participating in workshops.
- The annual Educational Symposium was held on March 3, 2023. This event featured keynote speaker Kimberly Coy, PhD, from Fresno State who spoke to Universal Design for Learning. Faculty, residents, students, and other participants presented posters about scholarly work on health professions education. The symposium concluded with a 3D printing lab and therapeutic rock painting activity in memory of Lori Weichenthal, MD, former associate dean, UCSF Fresno Graduate Medical Education.
- UCSF Fresno offered nine continuing medical education and community events with a combined participation of almost 2,000 people.

Graduate Medical Education

Residency training remains at the core of UCSF Fresno. Residents, under faculty supervision, provide vital patient care and are instrumental to medical student education. We train about 300 residents and fellows each year, and approximately 100 graduate from our training programs annually.

- UCSF Fresno filled all available positions in the 2022–2023 National Matching Resident Program:
 - 73 residency
 - 20 fellowship
 - four OMFS positions
- More than 100 residents and fellows completed training at UCSF Fresno in 2023. Sixty percent remained in California.





Research

Faculty and residents at UCSF Fresno engage in research pertinent to Valley health issues and secure clinical trials that bring new treatments to the Valley before they are widely available. Research, along with public service, is fundamental to our mission.

- 73 Active clinical trials
- 41 Public service projects
- 38 Open studies

Undergraduate Medical Education and Pathway Programs

UCSF Fresno trains hundreds of medical students each year, including students in the UCSF San Joaquin Valley Program in Medical Education (SJV PRIME). Students come to UCSF Fresno from UCSF and other campuses across the U.S. to complete clinical rotations. SJV PRIME students train at the Fresno regional campus for two and a half years, and complete their medical school education with us.

In addition, UCSF Fresno prepares middle, high school, and college students for careers in medicine through a variety of pathway programs under the guidance of the Office of Health Career Pathways.

- Students in UCSF SJV PRIME participated in the 2023 National Resident Matching Program Match. Three matched with UCSF Fresno residency programs. They were the first SJV PRIME students to receive medical degrees from the UCSF School of Medicine.
- SJV PRIME+, the eight-year Baccalaureate-to-MD (BS-to-MD) program, a partnership with UC Merced and the UCSF School of Medicine, admitted the first 15 students in the program.
- The first cohort of students in the San Joaquin Valley-MedBridge, part of the statewide California Medicine Scholars Program (CMSP), was admitted. SJV-MedBridge is a collaboration among UCSF Fresno, CMSP, Valley community colleges and other community partners to support students in community college who are interested in careers in medicine.
- In 2023, 100% of students graduating from the UCSF Fresno Doctors Academy programs at Sunnyside High School in Fresno and Caruthers High School were offered post-secondary admission, marking the 21st year in a row starting with the first graduating class in 2003.

Partners and Affiliates



UCSF Fresno Major Clinical Partners

Community Health System
 Clovis Community Medical Center
 Community Behavioral Health Center
 Community Cancer Institute
 Community Regional Medical Center
 Family HealthCare Network – Disease Management Center
 Family HealthCare Network Deran Koligian Ambulatory Care Center
 Family HealthCare Network – Surgical Services Center
 Fresno Heart & Surgical Hospital
 VA Central California Health Care System – Fresno Medical Center



UCSF and UCSF Fresno

UCSF Benioff Children’s Hospital
 UCSF Fresno Alzheimer & Memory Center
 UCSF Liver Transplant Program at Parnassus
 UCSF Medical Center
 UCSF Medical Center at Mount Zion

Community Health Partners

Community Health Partners (CHP) Gynecologic Oncology Specialists
 Community Health Partners (CHP) Medical Oncology Specialists
 Community Health Partners (CHP) Pediatric Specialists
 Community Health Partners (CHP) Specialty Surgery Associates

University Centers of Excellence

University Cardiovascular Center
 University Dermatology Associates
 University Diabetes & Endocrine Specialists
 University Gastroenterology & Hepatology Associates
 University Medicine Associates
 University Obstetrics & Gynecology Center
 University Orthopaedic Associates
 University Psychiatry Associates
 University Pulmonary Associates
 University Sleep and Pulmonary Associates
 University Women’s Specialty Center
 Valley Vascular Surgery Associates



Other Affiliated Health Care Institutions and Training Sites

Advanced Laparoscopic Surgical Associates
 Anther Pediatric and Adult Sleep Center
 Baz Allergy & Asthma Institute
 California Pacific Medical Center – Mission Bernal Campus (EM)
 California Poison Control System
 Cardiovascular Consultants Heart Center
 Central Valley Breast Care (Surgery)
 Central Valley Regional Center
 Chestnut Pediatrics (Peds)
 Children’s Health Center Behavioral Clinic (Peds)
 County of Fresno Department of Behavioral Health
 County of Fresno Department of Public Health
 County of Fresno Sheriff Coroner’s Office
 CPMC Mission Bernal Campus – Sutter Health

EPU Children’s Center
 Eye-Q Vision Care, Fresno
 Fresno Oral Maxillofacial Surgery & Dental Implant Center
 Fresno State Health and Psychological Services
 Fresno Surgical Hospital
 Fresno Unified School District
 Heritage Crossing Inpatient Hospice
 Hinds Hospice
 Kaiser Permanente Fresno Medical Center
 Kaizen Surgery Center (Ortho)
 Kaweah Delta Health Care District, Visalia
 Neurosurgical Associates Medical Group, Inc. (Ortho)
 New Sang, MD (Peds)
 Nirmal Brar, MD
 Optimal Hospice Care
 Orthopaedic Associates Medical Clinic, Inc.
 Peachwood Medical Group

Raintree Convalescent Hospital
 Saint Agnes Medical Center
 Sequoia Surgical Pavilion, Visalia
 Sierra Pacific Orthopedics & Spine Center
 Stanford Health Care – Valley Care (Surgery)
 Summit Surgical
 The Office of Tushar Patel, MD (Peds)
 Transitions Children’s Services
 Turning Point of Central California Rural Mental Health Clinics
 Valley Children’s Hospital
 Valley Health Team, Fresno
 Valley Surgical Specialists
 West Hills Medical Group (Peds)
 Women’s Specialty and Fertility Clinic
 Yosemite Medical Clinic at Yosemite National Park (EM)

Rural Training Sites

Camarena Health Centers, Madera
 Family Planning Associates
 Women’s Health – Fresno (Ob/Gyn)
 United Health Centers of the San Joaquin Valley, Parlier and Mendota Health Centers

Graduate Medical Education Training Programs

Residency Programs

- Emergency Medicine
- Family and Community Medicine
- Internal Medicine
- Obstetrics/Gynecology
- Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery*
- Orthopaedic Surgery
- Pediatrics
- Psychiatry
- Surgery

Physician Assistant Residency Programs

- Emergency Medicine
- Orthopaedic Surgery

Fellowship Programs

- Acute Care Surgery
- Advanced Cardiovascular Imaging
- Cardiovascular Disease
- Community Pediatrics
- Emergency Medicine Medical Education
- Emergency Ultrasound
- Gastroenterology
- Head and Neck Oncology and Microvascular Reconstruction*
- Hematology/Oncology
- Hepatology
- HIV
- Hospice and Palliative Medicine
- Hospital Medicine
- Infectious Diseases
- Interventional Cardiology
- Maternal Child Health
- Pulmonary Disease/Critical Care
- Sleep Medicine
- Wilderness Medicine

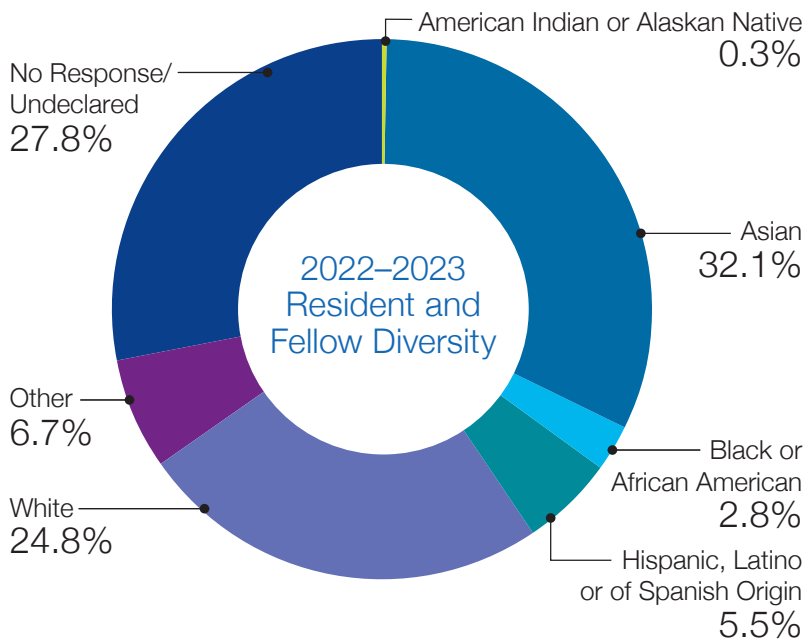
*School of Dentistry

2022–2023 Academic Year as of 8/1/22

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE RESIDENCY PROGRAMS	TRAINEES
Emergency Medicine	46
Family and Community Medicine	36
Internal Medicine - Categorical	69
Internal Medicine - Chief Residents	4
Obstetrics/Gynecology	16
Orthopaedic Surgery	20
Pediatrics	20
Psychiatry	25
Surgery	27
TOTAL	263

ACCREDITED FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMS	TRAINEES
Cardiovascular Disease	9
Gastroenterology	6
Hematology/Oncology	6
Hospice/Palliative Care	4
Infectious Diseases	4
Interventional Cardiology	1
Pulmonary Disease/Critical Care	7
Sleep Medicine	2
Surgical Critical Care/Acute Care Surgery	3
TOTAL	42

SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY RESIDENCY PROGRAMS	TRAINEES
Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (OMFS) – Preliminary	0
OMFS	16
TOTAL	16



*Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander 0%

NON-ACCREDITED PROGRAMS	TRAINEES
Advanced Cardiovascular Imaging Fellowship (IM)	1
Community Pediatrics Fellowship (PEDS)	0
Emergency Ultrasound Fellowship (EM)	0
Head & Neck Oncology and Microvascular Reconstruction (OMFS)	2
HIV Fellowship (FM)	0
Hospital Medicine Fellowship (IM)	0
Maternal Child Health Fellowship (FM)	0
Medical Education Fellowship (EM)	0
Pediatric Chief Residents (PEDS)	2
Wilderness Medicine Fellowship (EM)	1
TOTAL	6

TOTAL 2022-2023 GME TRAINEES	
Residents (SOM)	263
Residents (SOD)	16
Accredited Fellows	42
Non-Accredited Fellows	6
TOTAL	327



Undergraduate Medical Education and Pathway Programs

It was a milestone year for Undergraduate Medical Education and pathway programs at UCSF Fresno during 2022–2023:

- The first class of UCSF SJV PRIME students participated in the National Residency Matching Program Match Day in March and in May, they were the first SJV PRIME students to graduate with UCSF School of Medicine medical degrees. Half of the graduates matched with UCSF Fresno residency programs.
- SJV PRIME+, the eight-year Baccalaureate-to-MD program in partnership with UC Merced and UCSF, admitted its first class of 15 students – all from the San Joaquin Valley.
- The inaugural cohort in the San Joaquin Valley-MedBridge, the medical school pathway program for students at Valley community colleges in partnership with the California Medicine Scholars Program, was accepted.
- For the 21st year in a row, all graduating students in the UCSF Fresno Doctors Academy programs at Sunnyside High School and Caruthers High School received admission to post-secondary educational institutions.

Medical Student Education

Outstanding UCSF faculty at the Fresno regional campus combined with diverse patients, high acuity and a wide variety of pathologies make UCSF Fresno an ideal training ground for future physicians. UCSF Fresno has been training third- and fourth-year medical students along with non-UCSF medical students for decades. Medical student education began in the 1990s and Valley specific training started in 2005 with the Longitudinal Integrated Fresno Experience, a fully integrated six-month clinical clerkship for third-year medical students.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, over 400 medical students completed rotations at UCSF Fresno. The number of students rotating at UCSF Fresno is climbing once again. Recent data shows that over 200 third- and fourth-year students combined had completed rotations and core clerkships at UCSF Fresno during 2022–2023.

Two to three cohorts of students in the UCSF SJV PRIME train at UCSF Fresno at any given time. At present, students admitted to the program are at UCSF in San Francisco for the first 18 months and then come to UCSF Fresno for the remaining two and half years of medical school.



SJV PRIME+

The San Joaquin Valley Program in Medical Education+ (SJV PRIME+) is an educational pathway partnership among UC Merced, UCSF School of Medicine and UCSF Fresno. The eight-year Baccalaureate-to-MD program encompasses a four-year baccalaureate program at UC Merced leading to the UCSF medical school curriculum. All elements of the program, offered through UC Merced and UCSF Fresno, focus on preparing a physician workforce to address unmet health and access to health care needs in the San Joaquin Valley. High school students apply for freshman admission to UC Merced and complete a supplemental application to be considered for the Baccalaureate-to-MD pathway.

The first 15 students in the program were admitted this year, including two students from the UCSF Fresno Doctors Academy. One student from Sunnyside High School and one student from the rural Doctors Academy program at Caruthers High School were accepted.

SJV-MedBridge

San Joaquin Valley-MedBridge (SJV-MedBridge) in partnership with the California Medicine Scholars Program is a pre-medical outreach program that supports community college students interested in becoming physicians. Students in SJV-MedBridge gain access to valuable information including pre-medical workshops, advising services, guidance on transferring to a four-year university, mentorship and networking opportunities, clinical experiences and a support network. The program is open to current community college students at institutions in the San Joaquin Valley. The first cohort of students was admitted in spring 2023.



Doctors Academy

With a focus on addressing the increasing health professional shortage, the Doctors Academy program was established in 1999. The program began as a partnership between UCSF Fresno, Fresno Unified School District and the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools. The first graduating class from the Doctors Academy was in 2003 from Sunnyside High School. The first Caruthers High School graduating class followed in 2010. Middle school programming was introduced through the Junior Doctors Academy program and currently has four school sites that host the program, including Caruthers Elementary, Kings Canyon Middle School, Sequoia Middle School and Terronez Middle School. The UCSF Fresno Doctors Academy programs continue as a partnership with contracting schools. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds are highly encouraged to apply. Several Doctors Academy graduates are among the SJV PRIME students and two were accepted to the new SJV PRIME+.



Office of Health Career Pathways

To better coordinate and increase the success of existing pathway programs, in summer 2022, UCSF Fresno established an Office of Health Career Pathways within the Department of Undergraduate Medical Education. Emy Lopez Phillips, EdD, was appointed as the inaugural director. Dr. Lopez Phillips oversees the SJV-MedBridge and provides administrative oversight to all UCSF Fresno pathway programs:

- Doctors Academy
- Fresno County Health Youth Corps
- Pre-Medical Surgical Internship Program
- UCSF Fresno Academic Research Associates
- UCSF Aspiring Physician Program Fresno State
- Mini Med School
- Reaching Out to Aspiring Doctors
- SJV-MedBridge
- Summer Biomedical Internship

UCSF Fresno is making a medical degree more achievable for students from the San Joaquin Valley. Training physicians in the Valley for the Valley has been the goal all along. Building and sustaining pathways for students from the Valley to pursue medical degrees and offering them opportunities to pursue and complete residency in the region makes them more likely to stay here to practice.



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion



UCSF Fresno Celebrates Culture and Diversity

By Lucero Benitez, UCSF Fresno Communications, lucero.benitez@ucsf.edu

UCSF Fresno aims to create a culture of empathy and mutual respect that responds to and affirms the needs of the campus community. By promoting equitable access to education and opportunity and diligently nurturing success, we cultivate an environment in which diversity thrives.

Over the past year, from September 2022 through June 2023, UCSF Fresno celebrated a few of the many cultures that make up the campus community in a new way. UCSF Fresno Communications produced videos featuring faculty, residents and staff. The videos were shared on UCSF Fresno's social media channels including Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and X (formerly Twitter).

"Our campus was excited about the start of the heritage and cultural videos featuring faculty, trainees and staff this past year," said Andrea "Drea" Long, MD, director of UCSF Fresno Diversity and Outreach and faculty member in the Department of Surgery. "Our campus and surrounding community are rich in culture and diversity. We

want to celebrate that diversity and in fact, we can better address the unique health care needs of our patients when we reflect the identities of our regional community. This also leads us to a better understanding of the complex social determinants of health that contribute to health disparities and helps us identify ways we can change these disparities."

National Hispanic Heritage Month

National Hispanic Heritage Month, celebrated from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15, honors the histories, cultures, and contributions of American citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean and Central and South America.

During that month, we told the stories of Guillermo Moreno, MD, former OB/GYN resident; Tania Zavalza-Jimenez, MD, former Family and Community Medicine resident and now faculty member; Victor M. Vargas, MD, Pediatrics faculty; and Katherine M. Flores, MD, director of the UCSF Fresno Latino Center for Medical Education and Research.

They each proudly shared their love for their Hispanic roots, family, culture and ethnic food. The videos were produced in English and Spanish.

"I celebrate my heritage within my medical practice. I have the privilege of taking care of several Mexican families," Dr. Flores said. "I get joy out of taking care of my older patients who express their gratitude with a hug or even food. There is just nothing that can take the place of that gratitude that is culturally based and bound to who I am."

Black History Month

February is Black History Month, dedicated to honor the contributions that African Americans have made and to recognize the adversity they have encountered and overcome throughout U.S. history. In a video, Robert Hashemzadeh Gargari, MD, Emergency Medicine attending, talked about his upbringing in Charlottesville, Virginia, deciding to become a doctor and serving as inspiration for others.

"I'm happy with what I've become, and I want to continue bringing that

“...we can better address the unique health care needs of our patients when we reflect the identities of our regional community.”

Andrea “Drea” Long, MD
Director of UCSF Fresno
Diversity and Outreach



forward and to the people who are coming after me. I want to see more of our underrepresented people in medicine because there are a lot of people here who need their care,” Dr. Hashemzadeh Gargari said.

As part of Black History Month celebration, UCSF Fresno participates in the annual African American Student Leadership Conference in Fresno. Kasan Jones, Undergraduate Medical Education program manager, has worked the event for several years and said it is inspiring to see so many young African American students ask questions about UCSF Fresno. She enjoys educating them about the path to medical school.

Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

May is designated as Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, celebrating the achievements and contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) in the United States. It celebrates the rich, diverse culture that spans from countries such

as China, Japan, Korea, Indonesia, Laos, the Philippines, Singapore, Samoa, Thailand, Taiwan, Vietnam, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal, to name a few.

During that month, we told the stories of UCSF San Joaquin Valley Program In Medical Education (SJV PRIME) student John Cruz; doctors Trung Tim Nguyen, DO, MBA, Department of OB-GYN; Amy Mel-Yee Kwok, MD, Department of Surgery; Yan Cho, MD, Department of Surgery; Cynthia Tom, MD, Department of Surgery; and Associate Clinical Professor Candice Reyes, MD, with the Department of Internal Medicine.


Dr. Kwok believes that with all the diversity surrounding health care, part of her job is to make patients comfortable by giving them a sense of peace when she can relate to them. Celebrating Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month is important to her.

“It gives me a moment to step back and think about where I come from, what we all bring to the table every day as an Asian American female in the medical profession,” Dr. Kwok said. “I’m

proud of what we can contribute, and I look forward to more contributions.”

UCSF Fresno seeks to create a culture of empathy and mutual respect that responds to and affirms the needs of our campus community. In June, we acknowledged and celebrated Pride Month on social media to promote and support diversity in the campus community.

Over the coming year, under the guidance of Dr. Long, UCSF Fresno’s Committee for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) will continue to meet quarterly to collect resources, share information and promote partnerships to address community challenges. The committee’s mission is to enhance DEI and inclusion at UCSF Fresno; reflected in our Principles of Community.

 **Visit UCSF Fresno YouTube channel @ [ucsffresno](#) to view the videos produced in celebration of our cultures.**

Commencement Highlights, Awards and Graduate Profiles



UCSF Fresno Celebrates the Class of 2023, New Doctors for the Central Valley and California

By Brandy Ramos Niikaido, UCSF Fresno Communications, brandy.niikaido@ucsf.edu

It takes 11 years or more to produce a practicing physician after high school, depending on the specialty. On June 15, 2023, UCSF Fresno celebrated the completion of years of training for more than 100 graduates including medical residents and fellow physicians, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery dental residents, a Head and Neck Oncology and Microvascular Reconstruction fellow and two Emergency Medicine physician assistants.

“Commencement is the celebration of the culmination of years of training, hard work, commitment and dedication exhibited by our graduating residents and fellows,” said Stacy Sawtelle Vohra, MD, Designated Institutional Official and Emergency Medicine Residency Program Director at UCSF Fresno. “We applaud them as they enter the next phase of their careers and are thrilled that many are staying in the Valley to care, teach, heal and conduct clinical research that addresses Valley health issues.”

The San Joaquin Valley has one of the lowest number of doctors per 100,000 people in California. And about 30% of the physicians in the region are at or nearing retirement age. UCSF Fresno is the largest academic physician training program in the Valley and the biggest contributor adding physicians to the region’s workforce. For example, 83% of the residents who completed training in UCSF Fresno’s four-year

Psychiatry Residency Program in 2023 chose to stay in the Central Valley to provide much needed mental health care.

Residency is the required hands-on clinical training after medical school when clinicians fine tune skills under the guidance of attending faculty members prior to practicing independently. Fellowships are advanced training after residency and are instrumental to retaining residents who wish to continue their medical education in a particular sub-specialty.

“For some of the graduates who completed medical school during the COVID-19 pandemic, this was the first time celebrating a medical education graduation in person,” said Steven Tringali, DO, Acting Director, Clinical Affairs, and Internal Medicine Residency Program Director at UCSF Fresno. “We are grateful for the tremendous teamwork they have afforded one another, the compassionate care they provide to our patients, and the contributions they have made to our regional campus and community.”

As a regional campus of the UCSF School of Medicine, UCSF Fresno carries out its training and patient care through a network of affiliated partners including Community Health System, VA Central California Health Care, Family HealthCare Network, University Centers of Excellence and many other clinical sites.



2023 Commencement Highlights



83%
or **5 of the 6** graduating
Psychiatry residents stayed
in the Central Valley to
provide much needed
mental health care



52%
or **13 of the 21** graduating
Internal Medicine residents
including chief residents
stayed in the Central Valley
to provide primary care



The Advanced Cardiac
Imaging fellow stayed
at UCSF Fresno for
a Cardiovascular
Disease Fellowship



The Hepatology fellow
stayed at UCSF Fresno for a
Gastroenterology Fellowship



60% of UCSF Fresno
graduates remained in
California to provide care



Graduates from Community
Health Systems' General
Dentistry Residency program
also were recognized during
the commencement program

Awards Presented

Resident and Fellow Awards

Jeff Thomas, MD, Chief Quality and Medical Officer, Community Regional Medical Center, presented.

- **Outstanding First-Year Resident**
Nam Huynh, MD
Internal Medicine
- **Outstanding Resident or Fellow Teacher**
Tania Zavala Jimenez, MD
Family and Community Medicine
- **Outstanding Attending Teacher**
Robert Julian, DDS, MD
Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
- **Outstanding Non-Physician Teacher**
Francisco Ibarra, PharmD, BCCCP
Emergency Medicine Clinical Pharmacist (CRMC)

Borba Research Awards

Eyad Almasri, MD, Assistant Dean for Research at UCSF Fresno, presented.

- **Borba Faculty Research Award**
Geetha Sivasubramanian, MD
Internal Medicine
- **Borba Research Award**
Sujana Balla, MD
Internal Medicine
- **Borba Research Award**
Hunza Chaudhry, MD
Internal Medicine

Leon S. Peters Foundation Resident and Fellow of the Year Awards

David Peters, Vice President, Leon S. Peters Foundation, presented.

- **Leon S. Peters Resident of the Year**
Sarah Koser, MD, MPH
Emergency Medicine
- **Leon S. Peters Fellow of the Year**
Emmily Poole, MD
Internal Medicine

VA ICARE Award

Wessel Meyer, MD, Associate Chief of Staff for Education, VA Central California Health Care System, presented.

- **Rameen Atefi, DO**
Internal Medicine



Henry J. Kaiser Award for Excellence in Teaching

Steven Tringali, MD, FACP, Acting Director, Clinical Affairs, UCSF Fresno presented.

- **Ivance Pugoy, MD**
Internal Medicine

Steven N. Parks, MD, Leadership Award

John Moua, MD, Chief of the Department of Pediatrics and Member, Board of Governors, Fresno Madera Medical Society (FMMS) presented.

- **Avinash Sharma, MD**
Internal Medicine, Cardiology



Among the 2023 UCSF Fresno Graduates



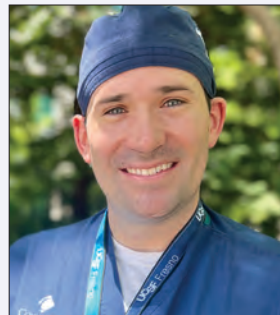
Monique Kaur Atwal, MD

Selma native Monique Kaur Atwal, MD, completed a four-year residency training program in Psychiatry at UCSF Fresno. After graduation, Dr. Atwal joined the Fresno County Department of Behavioral Health Transitional Age Youth Program and serves as volunteer Psychiatry faculty at UCSF Fresno. Dr. Atwal is a graduate from the UC San Joaquin Valley Program in Medical Education (SVJ PRIME) and UCSF Fresno Sunnyside High School Doctors Academy. She became a physician because she enjoys helping others and grew up in a community where access to health care was limited.



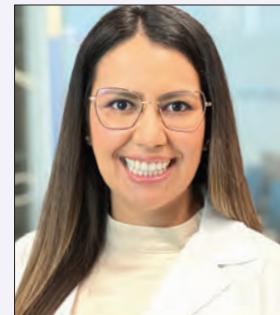
Brandon J. Croft, MD

Visalia native Brandon J. Croft, MD, completed a three-year residency training program in Internal Medicine at UCSF Fresno. He is continuing his education after graduation in the three-year UCSF Fresno Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine Fellowship. By the time he completes his graduate medical education, he will have spent six years training at UCSF Fresno, but Dr. Croft's first exposure to the UCSF School of Medicine regional campus in Fresno was 10 years ago in 2013. Prior to entering medical school, he worked in the UCSF Fresno Clinical Research Center and as a scribe with the UCSF Fresno Department of Emergency Medicine. Scribes are employed by Central California Faculty Medical Group and work with UCSF Fresno Emergency Medicine physicians to document patient information at Community Regional Medical Center. He also studied at UCSF Fresno from 2018 to 2020 as a student in the UC San Joaquin Valley Program in Medical Education (SVJ PRIME).



Dan Ward, MD

Dan Ward, MD, completed a four-year residency training program in Emergency Medicine at UCSF Fresno. After graduation, he is serving as an active-duty Emergency Medicine physician in the U.S. Air Force and is staying on at UCSF Fresno as per diem faculty. Dr. Ward was motivated to pursue a career in medicine as a child when he watched his mother receive care for a debilitating autoimmune condition. Dr. Ward was born and raised in Fresno. He attended Bullard High School and graduated Magna Cum Laude with a bachelor's in Chemistry from Fresno State as part of the Smittcamp Family Honors College. He also received associate degrees in Engineering, Mathematics and Health Information Technology from Fresno City College. He earned a medical degree from the UCSF School of Medicine.



Tania Zavalza Jimenez, MD

Tania Zavalza Jimenez, MD, completed a three-year residency training program at UCSF Fresno in Family and Community Medicine. After graduation, she joined the Family and Community Medicine Department as faculty. Born in Mexico, Dr. Zavalza Jimenez moved to San Francisco with her family and then relocated to Turlock. A desire to help people, especially the underserved and those who do not speak English, motivated her to become a physician. She also felt called to work with undocumented and migrant communities. Being undocumented herself at one point, made college and becoming a doctor more challenging, she said.



The **2023 UCSF Fresno Resident and Fellow Commencement Program** is available online at [@ucsfresno](#) on Issuu.

Fast Facts and History

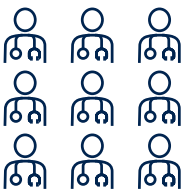
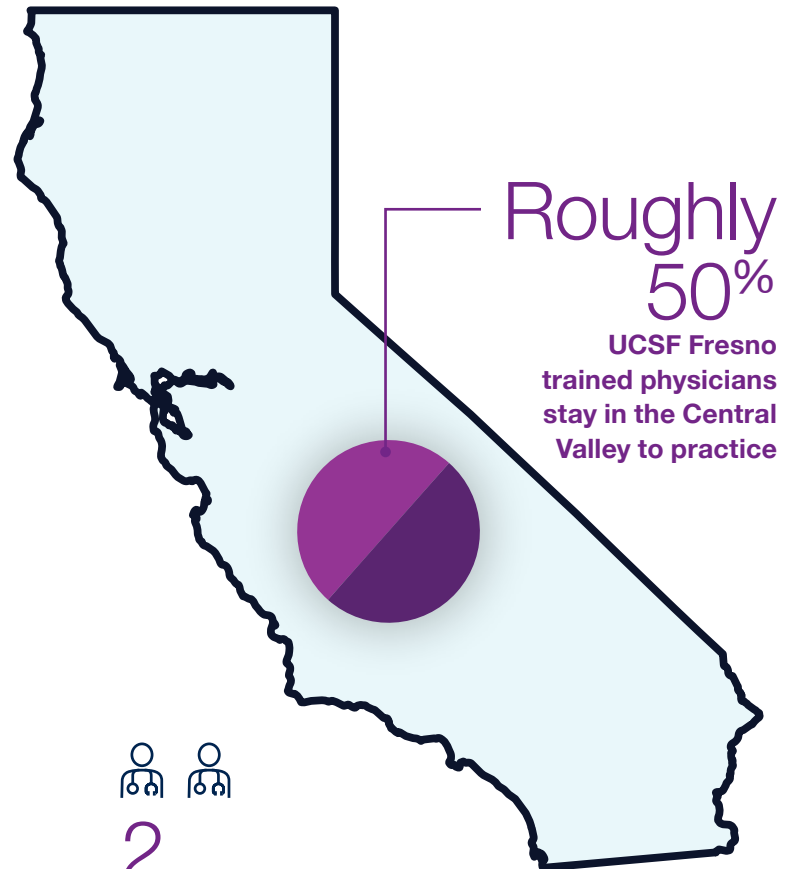
Fast Facts



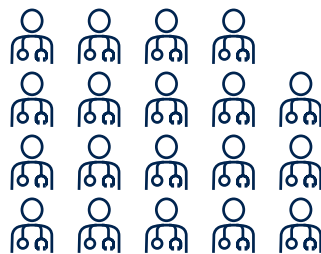
635+
UCSF core and
volunteer faculty
in Fresno



300+
Physicians trained
each year



9
Residency
specialties



19
Fellowship
sub-specialties



2
Physician Assistant
residencies

History at a Glance

1975

UCSF Fresno was established and originally housed at the VA Central California Health Care System.

2005

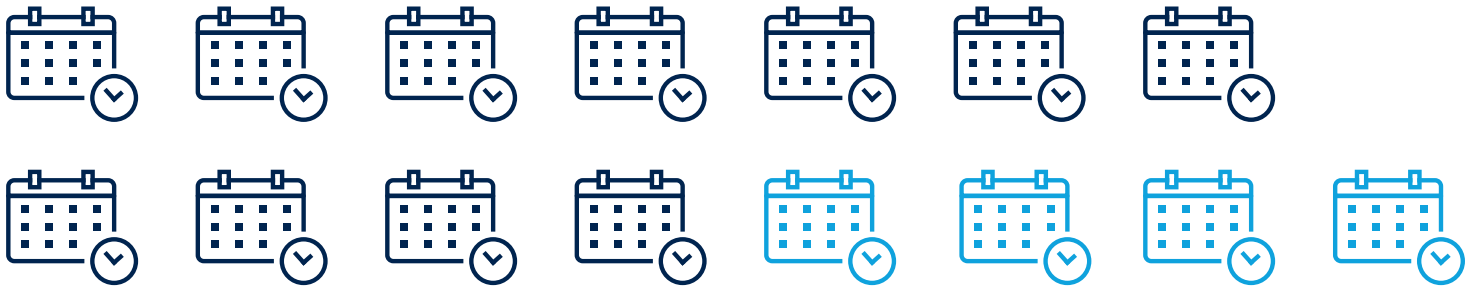
UCSF Fresno opened in downtown Fresno, consolidating all UCSF Fresno residency programs and administrative staff under one roof for the first time.

2018

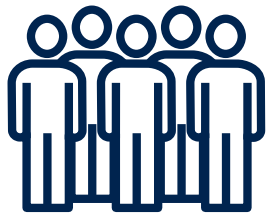
The Liaison Committee on Medical Education approved UCSF Fresno as a regional campus of the UCSF School of Medicine to lead the San Joaquin Valley Program in Medical Education (SJV PRIME).

2019

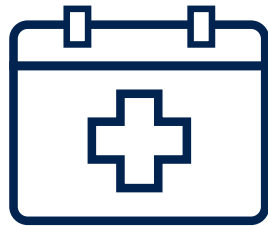
The first medical students in the UCSF SJV PRIME started instruction at the UCSF campus in San Francisco.



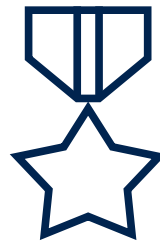
11–15 Years average time to train a physician (after high school)



3,500
Clinical skills
session participants



550k+
Patient visits annually
at clinical partner sites



30k+
Veterans cared
for at Fresno VA

2021

First students in UCSF SJV PRIME started clinical training at UCSF Fresno.

2023

First students in UCSF SJV PRIME participated in the Match. Three matched with UCSF Fresno for residency training. First cohort of SJV PRIME medical students graduated with UCSF School of Medicine degrees.

2025

UCSF Fresno will celebrate its 50th anniversary.

SJV PRIME+, eight-year Baccalaureate-to-MD pathway in partnership with UC Merced, UCSF School of Medicine and UCSF Fresno, admitted the first 15 students at UC Merced.

Philanthropy

Philanthropy Supports Faculty, Trainees, Students and Research at UCSF Fresno

By Kathleen Smith, Development and Alumni Relations, UCSF Fresno, kathleen.smith@ucsf.edu

UCSF Fresno is committed to improving health and access to quality health care in the San Joaquin Valley and Central California. Gifts from generous donors enable UCSF Fresno to support trainees and students on their academic journeys,

equip faculty with tools to deliver a cutting-edge education and fuel research that transforms health. Each of our donors is a valued member of the UCSF Fresno community, and their gifts make a lasting impact. We are grateful for their support.

Important philanthropic activity during the fiscal year

The Lori A. Weichenthal, MD, '94 Physician Wellness Fund

Created to help address physician burnout and depression as a tribute to the late Dr. Weichenthal, MD, FACEP, a leader in the fields of Emergency Medicine and Wilderness Medicine and a vanguard for physician wellness.

The James W. and Amy Davis Endowed Chair in Trauma Fund

The James W. and Amy Davis Endowed Chair in Trauma Fund was fully funded at over \$1 million and will provide annual support to the UCSF Fresno Department of Surgery in perpetuity.

Clinical Skills Lab and Simulation Center Gift

A generous gift to the Clinical Skills Lab and Simulation Center allowed us to make exciting enhancements to the Center's new simulated operating room.

SJV PRIME Day

SJV PRIME scholarship supporters were inspired during UCSF Fresno's inaugural "SJV PRIME Day" on May 9, 2023, as they met their scholars among the 42 students enrolled in SJV PRIME.

Dean's Excellence Fund

Major gifts to the Dean's Excellence Fund allowed us to address UCSF Fresno's most pressing educational, research and patient care priorities.

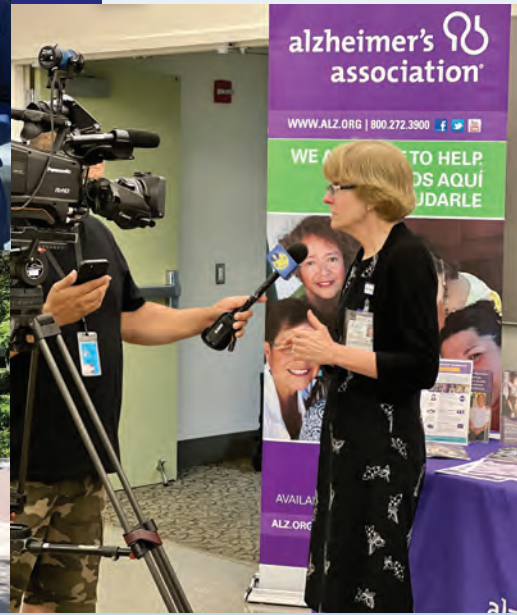


If you are interested in making a gift in support of UCSF Fresno, please visit fresno.ucsf.edu/give or contact Kathleen Smith, assistant director of Development at kathleen.smith@ucsf.edu or (559) 499-6426.



In the News

Media often turn to faculty physicians and residents at UCSF Fresno for their expertise on health and medical issues. Over the past year, UCSF Fresno experts have been interviewed by local, state, and national outlets.



Media topics

- Blood donations
- California Medicine Scholars Program
- Colorectal Cancer awareness
- Commencement
- COVID-19 Equity Project
- COVID-19 testing, treatments and vaccines
- Dementia
- Doctors Academy
- Doctor desert/physician shortage
- Fentanyl
- Flu season
- Heat
- Hidradenitis suppurativa (HS)
- Holiday health
- Interim Chief of Emergency Medicine receives award and saves life of fellow honoree
- Mobile Heal mobile clinics (e.g., for rural and unsheltered communities and new health screenings added)
- Mosquito season
- Monkeypox (MPX) vaccinations
- Respiratory viruses
- SJV PRIME and SJV PRIME+
- Vaccines for children

Between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023, UCSF Fresno was mentioned 942 times in print, broadcast and online media outlets, reaching an estimated audience of 1.7 billion with a publicity value of \$22 million.



942
mentions in print,
broadcast and
online media outlets



1.7 billion
estimated audience
members reached



\$22 million
in publicity value

UCSF Fresno Infectious Diseases Specialist Treats MPX Patients Under CDC Research Protocol

By Barbara Anderson, UCSF Fresno Communications, barbara.anderson@ucsf.edu

Before the first case of MPX (monkeypox) had been identified in Fresno County in summer 2022, a UCSF Fresno infectious diseases specialist had obtained “compassionate use” approval through a federal research protocol to treat patients with a drug the United States has stockpiled for smallpox.

“We got the medication in stock here. And the first patient in Fresno who was diagnosed, we got the patient in the very next day and started on treatment,” says Geetha Sivasubramanian, MD, FIDSA, director of the Infectious Diseases Fellowship Program at UCSF Fresno.

MPX is in the same family of orthopoxviruses as smallpox and after MPX cases began being reported in the U.S. in May 2022, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) expanded access to tecovirimat or TPOXX, a drug that had been approved for the treatment of smallpox in 2019. Smallpox, a highly contagious and devastating disease, has been eradicated worldwide, but the U.S. has stores of TPOXX available at the U.S. Strategic National Stockpile in the event of a smallpox emergency.

A vaccine to prevent MPX for people who are at high risk of exposure to the virus was available in Fresno County at UCSF Fresno Mobile Health and Learning (Mobile Heal), but the vaccine is not a treatment for the infection. TPOXX is currently the only treatment option for MPX. It is not a cure but appears to shorten the length of illness, which typically causes a painful blistering rash.

MPX often is a mild illness, but some patients have required hospitalization, particularly those whose painful rash-like lesions are in sensitive areas, such as the genitals; and patients who are immunocompromised. The virus is not a sexually transmitted infection but is spread primarily through close, skin-to-skin contact. It also can be spread by contact with contaminated clothing or bedding; and droplets can be inhaled.

Dr. Sivasubramanian had been preparing an educational talk on MPX in early July, when interim Fresno County Public Health Officer Rais Vohra, MD, a UCSF Fresno emergency physician, contacted UCSF Fresno Infection Control about obtaining authorization to administer TPOXX. Dr. Sivasubramanian agreed to lead the project and staff at the UCSF Fresno Clinical Research Center, and the Community Medical Centers Institutional Review Board, which approves research projects, worked quickly to finish the paperwork necessary for CDC approval, she says.

Through the research protocol, UCSF Fresno receives a stock of TPOXX directly from the CDC. TPOXX treatment is a 14-day regimen of pills. Prior to CDC approval, the CDC had to be contacted every time a patient presented with MPX for the medication to be shipped. Now, when Dr. Sivasubramanian receives a call for a patient, she responds the same day to provide TPOXX treatment.

“The CDC wanted local champions who can take care of dispensing TPOXX for them, rather than them being involved with each patient,” Dr. Sivasubramanian says. “This is faster access for these patients who are in pain.”

“Kudos to Dr. Sivasubramanian and the UCSF Fresno Infection Control Team,” Dr. Vohra says. “They are just great partners for the Fresno County Department of Public Health and just stepped up as the investigator in the area.”

UCSF Fresno is not conducting a clinical trial of TPOXX but results of the study



protocol (how quickly patients' symptoms resolve, reports of side effects – headaches, nausea, vomiting) are sent to the CDC. This adds to a body of evidence the CDC and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration are collecting from approved providers. That data can be used to evaluate the drug for mainstream use, Dr. Vohra says. "And it is definitely helping our patients now," he says.

The willingness of Dr. Sivasubramanian and the CMC Institutional Review Board to apply for approval to be a TPOXX provider is an example of UCSF Fresno's commitment to public service, Dr. Vohra says. "It is just a great, shining example of how really impactful leadership shown by our faculty and teams are to helping the community."

"This is faster access for these patients who are in pain."

Geetha Sivasubramanian, MD, FIDSA
Director of the UCSF
Fresno Infectious Disease
Fellowship Program



UCSF Fresno Sickle Cell Clinic Provides Patients with Timely Preventative Care

By Lucero Benitez, UCSF Fresno Communications, lucero.benitez@ucsf.edu

In 2020, UCSF Fresno opened a comprehensive adult sickle cell disease care clinic at the Community Cancer Institute in Clovis to provide comprehensive care, including screening for complications of the blood disease, and coordination of care with other specialties such as genetics, counseling, pain management, orthopaedics, surgery and obstetrics/gynecology.

Mohammed Sani Bukari, MD, associate clinical professor and a UCSF Fresno oncologist who is board certified in Hematology, Oncology, Internal Medicine and Pediatrics, wrote the grant proposal for the only operating sickle cell disease clinic for adults in the greater Fresno area.

“Having this clinic in the Central Valley is important because it reduces the time that families and patients have to travel to neighboring counties or cities to get comprehensive care and it allows patients to get care closer to home,” said Dr. Bukari. It also serves as a transitioning of care clinic for children receiving care in Valley Children’s Hospital hemoglobinopathies and sickle cell clinic.

Sickle cell disease is an inherited blood disorder that causes red blood cells to become misshapen (sickle cell) and undergo premature breakdown. The misshaped blood cells block blood flow through the vessels leading to tissue death or acute pain episodes. The shortened lifespan of red blood cells causes anemia and associated symptoms like fatigue and weakness.

Other symptoms of sickle cell include increased risk of infection, strokes, kidney, lungs and liver failures leading to shortened life spans of affected individuals compared to the general population.

Available treatments include medications, blood transfusions, bone marrow transplant and evolving novel therapies like gene therapy.

Now, in its third year of operation, Dr. Bukari runs the clinic along with physician assistant Stephanie Harris Mercado, DMSc, MBA, PA-C, who has a doctorate in medical science with an emphasis in sickle cell disease.

The clinic provides same day pain management at an ambulatory infusion center in the Community Cancer Institute, helping reduce the utilization of the emergency department for acute mild to moderate pain episodes.

Calvin Mays, 50, is one of those patients. He is grateful to be alive because he has surpassed the life expectancy of an adult male with the disease. He was diagnosed with sickle cell at the age of 12 when he began having excruciating back pain. He remembers the only way to deal with it was by going to the emergency room.

In 2018, he moved from Illinois to Fresno to be close to family, and the emergency hospital visits continued.

In July 2022, he experienced excruciating knee and elbow pain that sent him to the emergency department. It turned into a one month stay at the hospital. He was bedridden for more than two weeks until he began to regain his strength under the care of Drs. Bukari and Harris Mercado.

“They figured out everything and worked with me. At first it seemed like nothing was working, but they kept at it, and I started getting better. All my organs were shutting down and then everything turned around,” Mays said.

Now, Mays is living a better lifestyle and receives preventative care at the sickle cell clinic every three to four months.

According to Dr. Bukari, getting treatment from a comprehensive center has several advantages including seeing physicians who provide care for sickle cell patients daily, access to all associated sub-specialist care affiliated with the clinic and focused treatment for patients.

As the only sickle cell disease clinic for adults in the region, UCSF Fresno cooperates with the children’s sickle cell disease clinic at Valley Children’s Hospital to help teens transition from the pediatric clinic to the adult clinic. “Our clinic is still growing, and we are hoping that all patients who are transitioning from Valley Children’s Hospital who remain in the Central Valley will become our patients and those patients moving into the Valley will also have the opportunity to get comprehensive care from our clinic.”

The clinic is also part of Networking California for Sickle Cell Care, Pacific Sickle Cell regional collaborative network and is in the process of joining national alliance of sickle cell clinics.



UCSF Fresno Orthopaedic Surgical Oncologist Among Select Group in Nation Providing Specialty Care

By Barbara Anderson, UCSF Fresno Communications, barbara.anderson@ucsf.edu

Spencer Woolwine, MD, a UCSF Fresno orthopaedic surgical oncologist, is one of a select group of physicians in the nation with expertise in diagnosing and treating tumors of the bones and muscles.

Before he was recruited and hired by Central California Faculty Medical Group (CCFMG), the organization that is responsible for recruiting and hiring UCSF faculty members at the Fresno regional campus, patients in the San Joaquin Valley with bone cancer had to leave the region for care.

Dr. Woolwine is a 2019 graduate of the UCSF Fresno Orthopaedic Surgery Residency Program and a UCSF assistant clinical professor at UCSF Fresno. He completed a one-year musculoskeletal oncology fellowship at Emory University School of Medicine in Atlanta, Georgia, in 2022. All along, he knew he would be returning to Fresno to provide specialty care.

"I liked the Fresno/Clovis area, but also there was a need for somebody who had an interest like I do in musculoskeletal oncology. And I wanted to really help the families of the Central Valley."

Dr. Woolwine began seeing bone cancer patients at University Orthopaedic Associates (UOA) in Clovis in September 2022. UOA is one of CCFMG's University Centers of Excellence which are the practice locations (doctors' offices) managed by CCFMG for UCSF faculty physicians in Fresno and Clovis.

"When you send patients out from Fresno, they're driving three hours from any direction to get to that specialist," Dr. Woolwine said. "To tell a family that you have to go to San Francisco

for your medical care is one thing, but then you factor in the cost of gas, you factor in the cost of a hotel, and you run the risk of wiping out a family's savings in just one hospital stay."

There are a lot of patients in the Valley with oncologic orthopaedic problems, said Uzair Chaudhary, MD, a UCSF professor of clinical medicine at UCSF Fresno who is a board-certified hematologist/medical oncologist and who is medical director of the Community Cancer Institute and Clinical Trial Program. "Before Dr. Woolwine, we did not have an orthopaedic surgical oncologist to take care of these patients, and many of the patients would leave town to get care in the Bay Area or in Southern California," he said. "Dr. Woolwine has specialized training in taking care of oncological issues and has trained at some of the highest volume surgical centers in the United States. We hope that with Dr. Woolwine's expertise, patients will not have to leave town and we will be able to take care of them right here in the Central Valley."

Since opening practice at University Orthopaedic Associates, Dr. Woolwine has treated toddlers to octogenarians. Musculoskeletal cancers can develop in bone throughout the body and affect patients of all ages.

Primary bone cancer – a malignant tumor that develops from the cells of the bone – is rare, accounting for about 0.5% of cancers in the United States, according to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. But primary bone cancer accounts for about 5% of all cancers in children. Dr. Woolwine treats osteosarcoma, seen most often in children and adolescents; chondrosarcoma that



develops in cartilage cells and seen most often in adults; and Ewing's sarcoma, found in bones or soft tissue around bones that typically is seen in children and young adults.

Dr. Woolwine's practice includes treatment of metastatic bone disease – cancer that originated in another area of the body, such as the breast, lung, thyroid, kidney or prostate and that has spread to bone.

"Dr. Woolwine's expertise is greatly needed for our oncology patients in the Central Valley," said Constance Stoehr, MD, a UCSF associate clinical professor at the Community Cancer Institute and at the regional campus in Fresno, and who is board certified in Internal Medicine and Medical Oncology. "Many breast cancer patients will suffer from bone involvement that may require orthopaedic intervention. I'm glad that Dr. Woolwine has joined UCSF Fresno and can help improve the quality of life of these patients."

Dr. Woolwine also has a passion for teaching. He gets energy from teaching residents in the UCSF Fresno Orthopaedic Surgery Residency Program. "They keep you on your toes." And he says, "I feel that there is a huge duty for people to go back and teach, regardless of whatever it is they do, because we have to continue to pass on all this knowledge as people graduate through and advance in their own careers."



Parents Grateful for Care of Premie Daughter by UCSF Fresno PICU team

By Barbara Anderson, UCSF Fresno Communications, barbara.anderson@ucsf.edu

For three years, Jazmin and Phillip Walker had been trying to have a baby. Jazmin bought clothes and furniture for a girl, convinced she would have a daughter. She was elated and prepared for parenthood when she became pregnant, but the baby's birth would be a surprise. At just 24 weeks and four days gestation, Aurora Walker was born weighing one pound and five ounces.

Instead of taking her newborn daughter home within days of birth as they had envisioned, the Walkers would spend more than six months at Aurora's bedside at Community Regional Medical Center (CRMC) in downtown Fresno.

"She's had quite a journey," Jazmin said of the health hurdles her daughter has overcome. At six months, with Aurora weighing 11 pounds and nine ounces, she prepared to take her daughter home a week before Mother's Day. Holding the baby up for all to see in a bright pink onesie, she expressed gratitude to the UCSF Fresno Neonatal

Intensive Care (NICU) and Pediatric Intensive Care (PICU) physicians and teams of nurses, respiratory therapists and other staff at CRMC who cared for her preemie daughter.

"Everyone was always very attentive to come and check on her. Every morning, I knew the pulmonary team was coming in, the (UCSF Fresno) residents were coming in and the UCSF Fresno attending physician was coming in," Jazmin said.

Aurora's care was complicated and required a coordinated team effort led by UCSF Fresno neonatologists in the NICU and by UCSF Fresno pediatric intensivists after her transfer to the PICU. With lungs not fully developed, she had to be placed on a ventilator to help her breathe. She had cardiac problems secondary to her premature lungs. Feeding had to be done via a tube inserted at first through her mouth and later into the stomach.

Having the NICU and PICU in the same hospital allowed for a smooth transition as her care progressed. At one point, there was discussion of sending Aurora to San Francisco for her heart condition and that was terrifying, Jazmin said. "It was great being able to stay here and be able to just transfer to the other side of the hall versus having to go to a whole other area where we would have to figure out how we were going to live there and how we were going to be able to be supported there," she said. "And it was great to just stay here and with a team who already knew her and knew what was going on with her. It couldn't go any better than that honestly."

An entire team of physicians, respiratory therapists, nutritionists and pediatric sub-specialists worked together, said Victor Vargas, MD, pediatric intensivist and co-director of the PICU at CRMC. "All I can express is gratitude for too many people – for everybody who worked and who was able to get Aurora up to the age to be able to transfer



“She’s had quite a journey.”

Jazmin Walker
Mother of Aurora

to us and for all my team who spent every single hour caring for this kid.”

Aurora was tiny, but she was a fighter, said Diana Malancea, MD, a third-year UCSF Fresno pediatric resident who took care of the preemie in the NICU for a month at night and during the baby’s last month in the PICU. “She made it through a lot of the complications that a lot of babies don’t.”

At Aurora’s birth, Jazmin said she told her daughter to take charge – “she was the boss” – and Aurora took the message to heart. She had to be intubated four times for placement of breathing tubes and one of those times, she pulled out the tube. “She’s feisty,” Jazmin said. “She does what she wants.”

At CRMC’s PICU, a parent can stay in the patient’s room for as long as it does not interfere with the care. The Walkers rarely left their daughter’s bedside throughout her hospitalization, and Jazmin said the support of her father, in-laws and church community allowed them to be with Aurora.

UCSF Fresno pediatric residents and their attending pediatric intensivists welcome involvement of parents in care planning. “We’re always involving the family,” Dr. Malancea said. “That is the way we do medical care in pediatrics in general. We try to involve the family and make them part of the team. So, it doesn’t matter how many times we change (shifts), the family is always part of our team so then we have a constant in the picture,” she said.

The Walkers were grateful to be included in care decisions. Aurora’s lungs were so premature she needed mechanical help breathing and eventually she needed

a tracheostomy (a surgical opening through the neck into the windpipe) to be able to breathe on a ventilator long-term. The Walkers had hoped the surgery would not be necessary and were hesitant until the team explained that wearing a ventilator mask felt like a car blowing air on your face. “OK, we’re not going to do that to her, so we went ahead with the trach,” Jazmin said. “It was hard to see her unable to move and stuff like that, but now that we’ve gotten past the healing point and she’s thriving, she’s happy. She’s moving. She’s a baby again.”

Jazmin said the physicians and care team showed the family patience and kindness during the six months Aurora spent at the hospital. “They’re just a great group of individuals,” she said. “They’re the ones who kept her alive. They helped her thrive. And then they have taught us everything we need to know so we can be successful when we go home. I am very grateful.”

Awards, Achievements, Appointments and Milestones

Meg Autry, MD, was named interim Chief of the Department of OB-GYN at UCSF Fresno. Dr. Autry received the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ACOG) District IX Outstanding Service Award and a High Impact in Medical Student Teaching Award issued by UCSF.



Kenny Banh, MD, received the Special Project award from the Fresno Madera Medical Society for UCSF Fresno Mobile Heal COVID-19 Equity Project. **Dr. Banh** also received the Star of Community Achievement Award from the American Association of Medical Colleges Group on Regional Medical Campuses and he received the Heart of Service Award from City of Fresno Mayor Jerry Dyer at the 2023 State of the City Luncheon.

Kathryn Bilello, MD, was voted in as member of the Governance Board of Directors for the Pulmonary Board of the American Board of Internal Medicine.



Danielle Campagne, MD, and Steven Tringali, MD, were inducted into the UCSF Haile T. Debas Academy of Medical Educators.

Danielle Campagne, MD, was named Interim Chief of the Department of Emergency Medicine at UCSF Fresno. Dr. Campagne received the Distinguished Alumni Award from the Fresno State Alumni Association. At the event, Dr. Campagne and colleagues saved the life of another honoree who experienced a medical emergency. The Fresno County Board of Supervisors honored her by designating April 22, 2023, as **Dr. Danielle Campagne Day**.

Congratulations to **Paul Do, MD; Lin Li, MD; Courtenay Pettigrew, MD; Joe Sanford, MD; Eric Schmitt, MD; Krishna Siruguppa, MD; Geoff Stroh, MD; Jessie Werner, MD; and David Yi, DO**, for receiving Excellence in Teaching Awards from the UCSF School of Medicine Academy of Medical Educators.



Teresa Daniele, MD, was voted in as the President for the Northern California Chapter of the American College of Cardiology.

Christopher Downer, MD, and Brian Morgan, MD, received the Outstanding Faculty Award in Medical Student Teaching issued by UCSF.

Pamela Emeney, MD, received the Society for Academic Specialists in General Obstetrics and Gynecology Faculty Award.

Jana Freeman, MD, received an Excellence in Teaching Award from the Association of Professors of Gynecology and Obstetrics and an Outstanding Faculty Award in Medical Student Teaching issued by UCSF.

Avak Howsepian, MD, retired after 25 years seeing veteran patients at the Fresno VA. He intends to remain a vital part of teaching and supervising residents.



After nearly four decades of seeing pediatric neurology patients in clinics and hospitals in the San Joaquin Valley, **Harrol T. Hutchison, MD**, retired from clinical practice.

Robert Julian, MD, celebrated 20 years with UCSF Fresno Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery program.

Volunteer faculty member **Fengalaly Lee, MD**, was selected as one of the honorees for Marjorie Mason Center's Top 10 Professional Women.



In 2022, **Robert Libke, MD**, was recognized with a Milestones Award for 45 years of service to UCSF Fresno.



Andrea "Drea" Long, MD, was recognized among the Fresno Area's 40 Under 40.

Scholarly Activity



Seema Policepatil, MD, was selected for and completed the Teaching Scholars Program, a year-long faculty development program that develops educational leaders at UCSF.

Monica Raible, MD, was honored with the Council on Resident Education in Obstetrics and Gynecology National Faculty Award for Excellence in Resident Education. Dr. Raible also received an Outstanding Faculty Award in Medical Student Teaching and a High Impact in Medical Student Teaching Award, both issued by UCSF.



Marina Roytman, MD, was voted in as the President for the Fresno Madera Medical Society for a one-year term that started in January 2023.

Susanne Spano, MD, received the Paul S. Auerbach, MD, Award from the Wilderness Medicine Society.

Fred Wu, PA-C, received the SEMPA Diplomat Award. This award is the highest award given by the Society.

Staff

Serena Loya, MS HAIL, was elected as a member of the Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine council group and was nominated for Treasurer.

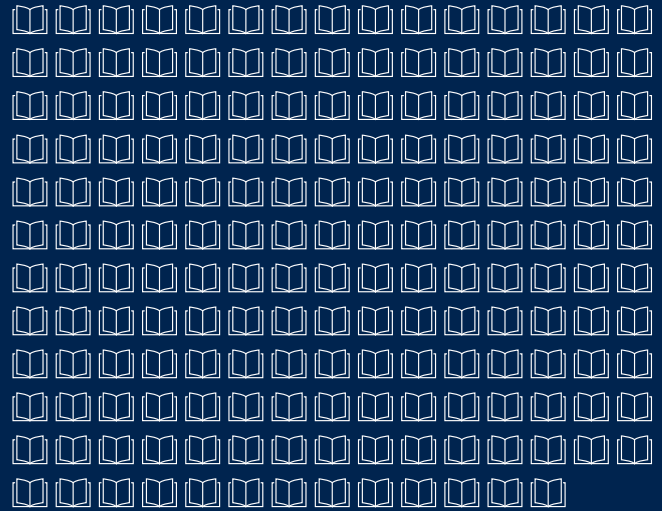
Clinical research coordinator, **Jannet Castaneda Sanchez,** received the Monica McLemore CRC Certification Scholarship from UCSF Fresno's Workforce Development team to cover the cost of becoming Society of Clinical Research Associates-certified.



Congratulations and best wishes to **Francis Fung,** Senior Graphic Designer, on his retirement after nearly 22 years with UCSF Fresno.

Ariana Zaghmouri, Emergency Medicine residency program coordinator, was awarded the Jaclyne Witte Boyden Staff Award from the Haile T. Debas Academy of Medical Educators at UCSF. This award recognizes exceptional staff members for outstanding contributions across all health professions schools at UCSF.

178 FACULTY PUBLICATIONS



9 CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY EVENTS



73 ACTIVE CLINICAL TRIALS

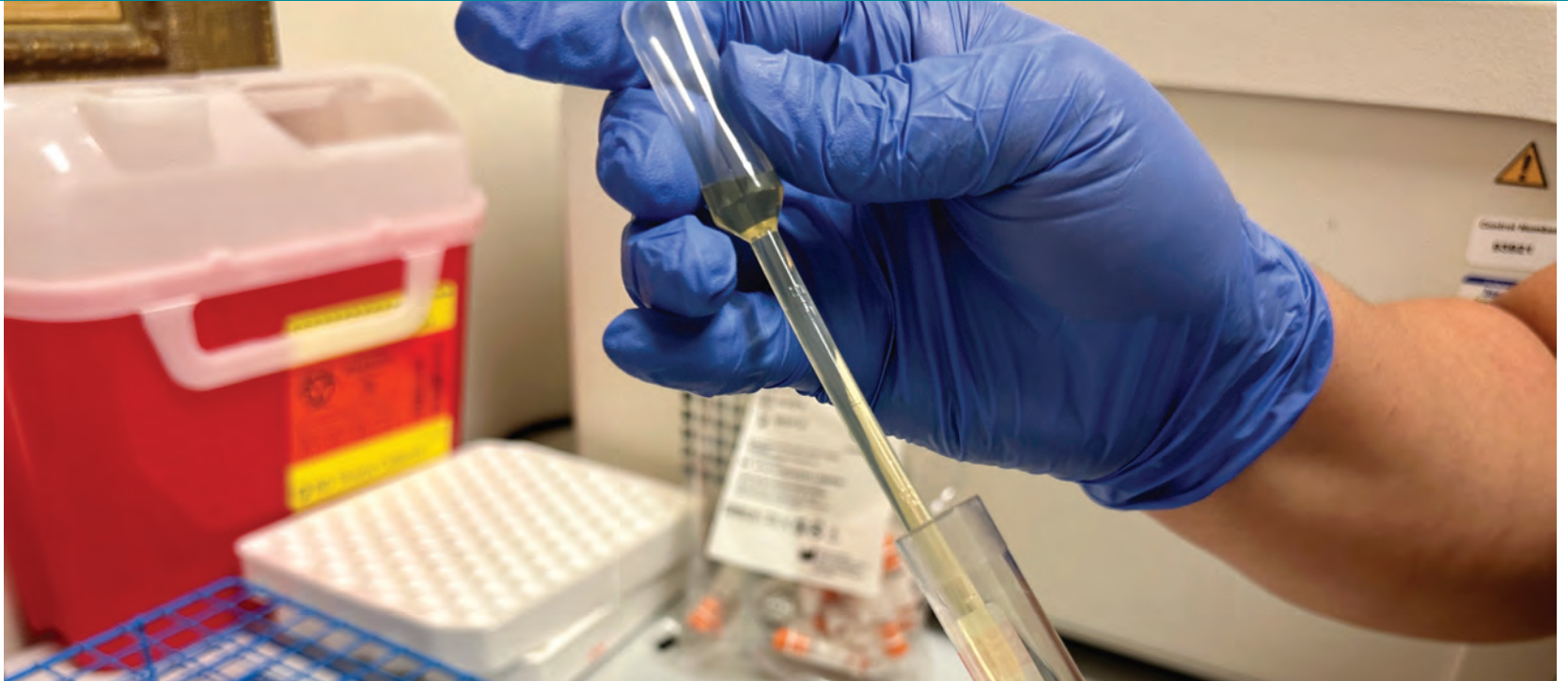


41 PUBLIC SERVICE PROJECTS



38 OPEN STUDIES





UCSF Fresno Clinical Research Center Ramps Up, Ready to Oversee More Multi-Disciplinary Clinical Trials and Studies

By Lucero Benitez, UCSF Fresno Communications, lucero.benitez@ucsf.edu

Research is vital to UCSF Fresno's mission to improve health in the San Joaquin Valley and Central California. Faculty investigators at UCSF Fresno conduct government, industry and private-sponsored outpatient (and inpatient) research. UCSF Fresno's priorities include investigating health conditions relevant to the region and securing clinical trials that bring new treatments to the area before they are available more broadly.

The UCSF Fresno Clinical Research Center (CRC) consolidates research at UCSF Fresno into one centralized location on the UCSF School of Medicine regional campus in downtown Fresno. The CRC opened in 2013. It has grown significantly and now encompasses 11 full-time clinical staff including research coordinators, a regulatory specialist, phlebotomists,

an on-site dedicated pharmacist and two pharmacy technicians.

Eyad Almasri, MD, assistant dean for Research at UCSF Fresno and core faculty in the Department of Medicine, the Division of Pulmonary Critical Care and Sleep Medicine, oversees the coordination of research at UCSF Fresno and says the center is crucial for faculty.

"Medication storage, grant applications, shoring up resources, blood draws, different sample collections, research-related procedures and tests like EKG, pulmonary function testing, it all takes place in this center," Dr. Almasri said.

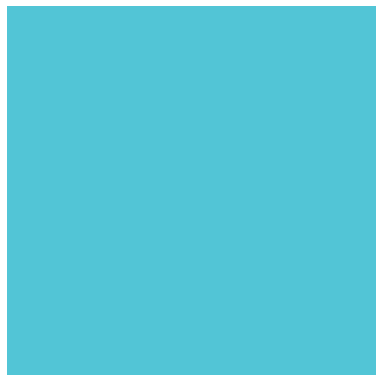
Also available are two fully equipped patient exam rooms with EKG machines and blood pressure monitors, a phlebotomy and blood processing room with refrigerated centrifuge, an investigational drug pharmacy with the

ability to store room-temperature and refrigerated investigational products, a secure file room for storage of confidential subject charts, a specimen storage room with -20 and -80 degree freezers, a consultation room for one-on-one interviews and a conference room for research meetings.

The equipment and staff at the center are available to support all UCSF Fresno departments, faculty and students who are conducting research.

Infectious Diseases physician Geetha Sivasubramanian, MD, is actively involved in several research projects at UCSF Fresno and says the work she does is dependent on the research center.

"It's phenomenal to have something so accessible. I can come in here in the middle of my work or my rounds



without driving several miles out,” said Dr. Sivasubramanian. “Not all training programs have a research center right in the middle of their campus so it’s unique that UCSF Fresno has it available to trainees which means they can come in here and work with the coordinators and staff on their research projects. I don’t think that’s readily available for folks across the country.”

Dr. Almasri said the center is important to faculty and trainees to conduct research but also because it is constantly being considered as a potential study site for multinational studies that are conducted throughout the world. “Having this independent space that is not tied directly to clinical care allows us to coordinate with other sister institutions like UC Merced and Fresno State and other institutions in the San Joaquin Valley.”

“Not all training programs have a research center right in the middle of their campus so it’s unique that UCSF Fresno has it available to trainees...”

Geetha Sivasubramanian, MD, FIDSA
Director of the UCSF Fresno Infectious Disease Fellowship Program

Every day there are research studies being conducted including research visits, new studies being considered, new studies being launched, and follow-up after a study.

There are currently 73 active clinical trials, 41 public service projects and 38 open studies. Current studies include research projects involving cirrhosis, end-stage liver disease, Mycobacterium avium complex, AC lung infection, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, interstitial lung disease, RSV (respiratory syncytial virus), sepsis,

pulmonary hypertension, community acquired pneumonia, Valley fever, bacteremia, OB-GYN environmental study, COVID and other viral infections.

“I have been here for the last fourteen years, and I have seen this research institution grow gradually. It started as a very small research enterprise with a few coordinators and a couple assistants, and now we have a full staff. I have seen the growth of this institution firsthand, and I’m excited for its future,” Dr. Almasri said.

Continuing Medical Education and Community Events

By Summer Connery, UCSF Fresno Continuing Medical Education, summer.connery@ucsf.edu

As the largest academic medical education institution in the San Joaquin Valley, UCSF Fresno continues to be a leading provider of Continuing Education programs locally and across the country. UCSF Fresno strives to host new and relevant continuing medical and dental education conferences and events each year to elevate clinician knowledge and share best practices with the goal of enhancing health care and patient outcomes in the region.

UCSF Fresno also holds community events aimed at engaging and educating community members about health and medical issues and empowering participants to improve their own health with information and free screenings.

In addition, through a partnership with central San Joaquin Valley dentists, UCSF Fresno also offers Continuing Dental Education (CDE) courses approved by the Dental Board of California and the Academy of General Dentistry. Courses are offered virtually each month.

UCSF Fresno offered 22 continuing medical education (CME) and community events between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023. Three of these were new educational events, hosted in a hybrid format (in-person and online via Zoom webinar).

Over 2,000 people attended the CME, CDE and community events, including online global participants for some events.

UCSF Fresno Continuing Education and Community Events 2022–2023

EVENT	DATE	FORMAT	DEPARTMENT	ATTENDEES
UCHMC Symposium	9/8–9/9/2022	Hybrid	Internal Medicine (IM)	86
Air Pollution	9/17/2022	Hybrid	IM	211
Mini Med School (Community Event)	Thursdays 10/6–10/27/2022	Virtual	Emergency Medicine (EM)	700
Liver Expo (Community Event)	10/2/2022	Hybrid	IM	228
Health Equity	11/9/2022	Hybrid	Family and Community Medicine (FCM)/ Diversity Committee	70
Women’s Heart Fair (Community Event)	2/25/2023	Hybrid	IM	217
Multidisciplinary Update	3/17–3/18/2023	Hybrid	IM	158
Health Disparities Summit	3/24/2023	Hybrid	Surgery	117
Wilderness Medicine	5/2–5/4/2023	In-Person	EM	65
Cardiology in the Valley	5/13/2023	Hybrid	IM	100
Continuing Dental Education Programs	Monthly	Virtual	Dentistry	375
TOTALS				2327



Seventh Annual University of California Hematologic Malignancies Consortium (UCHMC) Symposium

September 9, 2022
The UCHMC is a collaboration between academic physicians conducting clinical research at the five UC Cancer Centers and UCSF Fresno that facilitates the creation, development, and implementation of high-quality investigator-initiated clinical trials.
PROGRAM DIRECTOR: Haifaa Abdulhaq, MD, UCSF Fresno Department of Internal Medicine, director of Hematology

Fifth Annual Air Pollution and Climate Change Symposium

September 17, 2022
This event featured local and visiting speakers focused on the challenges of air pollution in California and efforts to find solutions.
COURSE DIRECTORS: J. Joseph Vempilly, MBBS, MD, MRCP (UK), and Daya Upadhyay, MD, UCSF Fresno Department of Internal Medicine

11th Annual Mini Med School

Consecutive Thursdays from October 6–27, 2022
The theme was Power of Prevention. More than 700 participants from around the world attended this free series of community lectures.
PROGRAM DIRECTOR: Sukhjit Dhillon, MD, UCSF Fresno Department of Emergency Medicine



Fourth Annual UCSF Fresno Liver Expo

October 22, 2022
This community event focused on Liver Health and the COVID-19 Pandemic, Treatment of Nonalcoholic Fatty Liver Disease, and Liver Transplant in Fatty Liver Disease.
PROGRAM DIRECTOR: Marina Roytman, MD, UCSF Fresno Department of Medicine, director of the UCSF Fresno Liver Program



At Risk in the Central Valley: Voices from the Black and Hmong Communities, the second installment of the UCSF Fresno Health Equity Symposium Series

November 4, 2022
Members of the Black and Hmong communities came to UCSF Fresno to share experiences and recommendations with physicians for better patient outcomes.
PROGRAM DIRECTORS: Julie Nicole, MD (She/Her/Hers), UCSF Fresno Department of OB-GYN, Andrea Long, MD, FACS (She/Her/Hers), UCSF Fresno Department of Surgery, and John Moua, MD (He/Him/His), chief, UCSF Fresno Department of Pediatrics

Ninth Annual Women's Heart Fair

February 25, 2023
This event is held annually to increase awareness and improve heart health among women of all ages. The event featured heart health lectures, a healthy food demonstration, and a meditative sound bath.
PROGRAM DIRECTOR: Teresa Daniele, MD, FACC, chief of Cardiology



2023 Multidisciplinary Updates in Internal Medicine

March 17–18, 2023
Topics presented in this installment included knowledge and proficiency on COVID-19 in 2023, Endocrine and Metabolic Disorders and Rheumatology/Pulmonary Disease. The latest information and advances in diagnostic and treatment strategies allows practicing clinicians to improve their awareness of best practices and evidence-based medicine.
PROGRAM DIRECTORS: Vipul Jain, MD; then interim chief, UCSF Fresno Department of Medicine; Roger Mortimer, MD, UCSF Fresno Department of Family and Community Medicine; and Hila Azulay, MD

Health Disparities Summit

March 24, 2023
This symposium was created by the UCSF Fresno Department of Surgery and the Intentional Recruitment Coalition to improve care for disadvantaged populations in the San Joaquin Valley who may be negatively impacted by language barriers, socioeconomic status, cultural divisions, and more.
PROGRAM DIRECTOR: Kamell Eckroth-Bernard, MD, FACS, UCSF Fresno Department of Surgery

2023 High Sierra Wilderness and Travel Medicine Conference: Medicine of the Extremes

May 2–4, 2023, at Pines Resort at Bass Lake.
Sponsored by the UCSF Fresno Department of Emergency Medicine. This conference was for clinicians, first responders and outdoor enthusiasts. Lectures included Ultrasound in Austere Environments, Psychedelics in the Field, Tropical Infections, Wildfire Extractions and more.
PROGRAM DIRECTOR: Janak Acharya, MD, UCSF Fresno Department of Emergency Medicine

18th Annual Cardiology in the Valley Symposium

May 13, 2023
Topics included evolving concepts in cardiovascular disease – Pathogenesis and Management, including Microvascular Dysfunction, Vulnerable Atherosclerotic Plaques, Diastolic Dysfunction, and New Aspects of Lipid Management.
PROGRAM DIRECTOR: John Ambrose, MD, UCSF Fresno Department of Medicine

Local, State and Global Community

UCSF Fresno Physicians Make Health Care More Accessible, Equitable for Vulnerable Populations

By Barbara Anderson, UCSF Fresno Communications, barbara.anderson@ucsf.edu



A mission of UCSF Fresno is to improve health in the San Joaquin Valley and faculty at the regional campus of the UCSF School of Medicine are helping to achieve this goal by partnering with government and community organizations to take health care directly to vulnerable populations.

In the 2022–2023 academic year, UCSF Fresno physicians brought health screenings and health care to hundreds of rural and urban underserved residents of the Valley. By advancing health equity and accessibility through outreach, they are preventing disease and improving overall health.

Collaborating with city and county leaders, public health officials and community-based organizations, UCSF Fresno physicians are building bridges to vulnerable and underserved populations. As educators, they are integrating medical residents and students into the outreach,

providing opportunities for learning cultural humility and an understanding of the importance of meeting people where they are – in life, as well as where they live.

UCSF Fresno outreach includes cardiology and vascular surgery physicians holding screenings and testing and care for people in rural cardiovascular deserts; surgeons giving wound care for unsheltered residents in Fresno’s urban core; UCSF Fresno Mobile Health and Learning (Mobile Heal) providing health screenings, testing and care to Fresno’s unsheltered and bringing health services to agricultural workers on rural farms, at packing plants and equipment barns.

The following stories take a closer look at some of UCSF Fresno outreach programs in 2022–2023.

Cardiovascular Outreach

Leigh Ann O'Banion, MD, a UCSF Fresno vascular surgeon, and Teresa Daniele, MD, a UCSF Fresno cardiologist and division chief of Cardiology, have developed an innovative outreach program to bring cardiovascular education, screenings, testing and care to rural Central San Joaquin Valley residents.

Rural patients have factors that put them at risk for peripheral artery and heart disease, such as diabetes, obesity and high blood pressure. These characteristics, along with high rates of poverty, limited access to health care and insurance, are obstacles to good health.

Screening for cardiovascular risk factors can help prevent disease, and testing for early signs of disease can improve health literacy and aid in early intervention. But rural residents are at a disadvantage – they have few sources of preventative care – and even scarcer opportunities for specialty follow-up care in what are called “vascular or cardiovascular deserts.”

“Teresa and I have learned so much in doing outreach in these communities, not only understanding that they need cardiovascular care, but just how disadvantaged as a whole they are.”

Leigh Ann O'Banion, MD
UCSF Fresno Surgeon



Drs. Daniele and O'Banion teamed last year to develop a cardiovascular health outreach “toolkit” with funding help from Central California Faculty Medical Group and Abbott, a global health care company that manufactures medical devices for cardiovascular conditions. And their rural outreach model is drawing attention outside the Central Valley.

“What Leigh Ann (Dr. O'Banion) is doing is not very common,” said Clara Gomez-Sanchez, MD, a UCSF assistant professor of Surgery and vascular surgeon in San Francisco. “There have been some (heart health) outreach things like this before, but not for vascular care; vascular screening has not been a part of that,” she says. “This is something Leigh Ann (O'Banion) is making from scratch.”

For cardiovascular outreach to be meaningful, Drs. O'Banion and Daniele said it must go beyond free screenings and testing but include enrollment in health insurance and connection to a primary care provider. Health education is particularly important for patients; and there must be continuing cardiovascular medical education for rural primary care physicians to foster their interest in cardiovascular screenings and testing.

Partnering with community organizations has been instrumental in reaching patients and tailoring outreach services. Community organizations know where the outreach event should be held to reach the most residents with the most needs. One of their events, for example, was held at a food bank on a day when the food insecure came to receive groceries.

At their first outreach event at the Raisin Day festival in Dinuba in September 2022, a majority of the patients (51.1%) were Hispanic, as compared to 36% statewide in vascular deserts and 37.1% in non-deserts. Of all the patients screened, 45.5% were at 200% below poverty level as compared to 39.6% in statewide “vascular deserts” and compared to 35.2% in non-deserts, according to a report by UC Davis. Drs. O'Banion and Daniele are partnering with UC Davis to map out rural Central Valley communities in highest need of cardiovascular care.

“Teresa and I have learned so much in doing outreach in these communities, not only understanding that they need cardiovascular care, but just how disadvantaged as a whole they are,” Dr. O'Banion said.

“UCSF Fresno has really been a great partner to help us with vaccines in the community and educate the population.”

Trinidad Solis, MD
Deputy Health Officer
for Fresno County



Rural and Agricultural Outreach

At the first Fresno County Department of Public Health’s Rural Mobile Health Program in February 2023, agricultural workers lined up inside the equipment barn at Terranova Ranch in southwest Fresno County.

Staff with UCSF Fresno Mobile HeaL took blood pressures, screened for diabetes and gave flu and COVID-19 shots. More than 200 people were screened that day at the launch of the initiative to make health care more accessible and equitable for people living in rural areas of Fresno County.

An \$8 million allocation of federal American Rescue Plan Act funds, approved by the Fresno County Board of Supervisors, allowed the county to contract for two years with UCSF Fresno Mobile HeaL, Saint Agnes Medical Center, Fresno State’s Mobile Health Unit and others for medical services at no cost to agricultural workers and rural residents. The county also is contracting for Community Health Workers (CHWs) to assist in providing health education in a culturally and linguistically sensitive manner and to help link

individuals without a primary care home to a nearby physician or clinic.

Partnering with the Fresno County Department of Public Health is a good match for UCSF Fresno, which has been taking health services into communities since 2018. Kenny Banh, MD, an emergency physician and UCSF Fresno assistant dean for Undergraduate Medical Education, started Mobile HeaL five years ago to provide care outside hospital and clinic walls. From its beginnings, Mobile HeaL has provided vaccinations, urgent care and health screenings to patients while providing learning opportunities for medical and pre-health students under the guidance of residents and faculty physicians.

“We are very happy to partner with Fresno County to provide mobile health care services to agricultural workers in our rural communities,” said Dr. Banh, UCSF Fresno Mobile HeaL director. “The No. 1 driver of business in the San Joaquin Valley is agriculture and we should be providing health care services to our essential food and ag workers. We can’t operate our Valley without them.”

A UC Merced Farmworker Health Study highlighted the state of farmworker health. Of 1,200 farmworkers surveyed for the study, 49% reported being without health insurance. Only 43% of the farmworkers reported having visited a doctor’s office or clinic in the past year, and between one-third and one-half reported having at least one chronic health condition (diabetes 20% and hypertension 19%).

Agricultural workers forego seeing a doctor for many reasons, including lack of insurance, unreliable or no transportation to get to a clinic, and potential language barriers. By providing health screenings and refilling necessary prescriptions for agricultural workers, UCSF Fresno is working to be a bridge – an intermediary – until a federally qualified health center, a rural health clinic or a primary care physician’s office can be found to take over and provide continuing care.

“UCSF Fresno has really been a great partner to help us with vaccines in the community and educate the population,” said Trinidad Solis, MD, the deputy health officer for Fresno County.



Unsheltered Outreach

People who are unsheltered are a vulnerable population with health needs that can be difficult to fulfill in conventional health settings, such as clinics and hospitals. UCSF Fresno Mobile HeaL was awarded a \$1.375 million grant from the City of Fresno in April 2023 to take health services to the homeless and unsheltered in the city.

The grant, the last of federal COVID-19 relief funds to the city, allows UCSF Fresno Mobile HeaL to go beyond no-cost COVID-19 testing and vaccination and to provide free preventative services to keep people healthy.

“It allows us to prepare the population for the potential new or for future COVID variations, and pandemics. And it allows us to just keep people healthy, because healthier populations can tolerate infections and have better outcomes,” said Kenny Banh, MD, Mobile HeaL director and UCSF Fresno assistant dean for Undergraduate Medical Education.

From a public health standpoint, caring for the unsheltered can be

difficult because of unmet social needs, such as a lack of transportation and stable housing. And for some, substance use, and mental health disorders can deter their ability to go to clinics or keep appointments.

UCSF Fresno Mobile HeaL brings medical services to the unsheltered, operating at various locations within the city, often at sites where the city provides free showers and at city cooling centers open in the summer. It also has clinics at transitional housing sites where families and children are housed. And it has had a long-standing commitment at Poverello House in downtown Fresno.

“We’re trying to group services together instead of us by ourselves setting up in the middle of somewhere and trying to recruit patients. They basically have already gathered the patients for us,” Dr. Banh said.

The mobile clinics have been well received. Between April 24, 2023, and June 30, 2023, Mobile HeaL had more than 500 patient visits.

Mobile HeaL provides screenings for diabetes and high blood pressure,

“Separate from the unsheltered having a lot of medical needs, they are very resource intensive, very expensive and usually have poor outcomes. We are trying to reduce the load on the police, on ambulance, on health care.”

Kenny Banh, MD
UCSF Fresno Mobile HeaL Director

wound care and other medical assessments at the mobile clinics. Refill prescriptions and prescriptions for new medications can also be written. Mobile HeaL has on hand three basic medications – one for diabetes, another for high blood pressure and an antibiotic for soft-skin infections and sexually transmitted diseases. Accessibility to a pharmacy can be an obstacle and having the three inexpensive medications available eliminates that barrier to treatment.

Taking care directly to the unsheltered can result in a healthier population – and mobile care can reduce costs to the health care system by fewer calls for ambulance services and repeat hospitalizations. “Separate from the unsheltered having a lot of medical needs, they are very resource intensive, very expensive and usually have poor outcomes,” Dr. Banh said. “We are trying to reduce the load on the police, on ambulance, on health care.”



“I really, honestly, haven’t found how I am needed as a surgeon... and I’m OK with that... I wanted to be in this community in whatever capacity it needed me.”

Farah Karipineni, MD
UCSF Surgeon

Wound Care Outreach

On a chilly morning in October 2022, dozens of cold and hungry people were at Poverello House in Fresno for a safe place to rest, eat a hot meal, take a shower, do laundry, and for some, it was a chance to get free health screenings and to talk to Farah Karipineni, MD, a UCSF Fresno endocrine surgeon and faculty member in the UCSF Fresno Department of Surgery.

For the past two years, on every other Monday morning, Dr. Karipineni has come to the Poverello House, a refuge for people who are unsheltered, to volunteer at the UCSF Fresno Mobile Health and Learning (Mobile HeaL) clinic.

Dr. Karipineni takes blood pressure and checks blood sugar levels. And occasionally, she cleans and dresses wounds – mostly blisters on heels and oozing diabetic foot ulcers that can become infected if left untreated. “Their feet are their wheels,” she said of people who walk to Poverello House, many pushing baby strollers and shopping carts full of belongings.

Bandaging a blister is far removed from the delicate and complex surgeries Dr. Karipineni performs weekly at Community Regional Medical Center, but she is not acting as a surgeon here. “I really, honestly, haven’t found how I am needed as a surgeon... and I’m OK with that... I wanted to be in this community in whatever capacity it needed me.”

Dr. Karipineni invites UCSF Fresno surgery residents to join her at Poverello House and gives them dedicated time to be at the Mobile HeaL clinic. Residents who have joined her have found it rewarding, she said.

Dr. Karipineni’s volunteer service embodies UCSF Fresno’s commitment to improving health in the San Joaquin Valley and Central California through teaching, patient care, research and community partnerships. And the needs in the greater Fresno area are many. In 2022, there were 4,216 persons experiencing homelessness in Fresno and Madera counties and 2,338 were unsheltered, according to the latest Point in Time homelessness survey.

In Fresno County, 20.6% of residents experience poverty. And more than half of Black and Latino households are in relative poverty, according to the Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission.

Volunteering at Poverello House is only Dr. Karipineni’s latest commitment. She started as a volunteer four years ago at Live Again Fresno, a nonprofit that provides after school programs and other activities for children of families living in motels in the Parkway Drive area off Freeway 99 in south Fresno.

Live Again Fresno serves over 200 children, but more could be helped by volunteers for children ages five to 23 with additional financial support. Dr. Karipineni is now a member of the Live Again Fresno board of directors and is hoping to find ways to improve the nonprofit’s financial stability.



CAMARENA HEALTH



PHOTO COURTESY OF AHEC

Statewide Program at UCSF Fresno Secures Funding to Support and Encourage Students to Pursue Careers in Health Care

By Barbara Anderson, UCSF Fresno Communications, barbara.anderson@ucsf.edu

The California Statewide Area Health Education (AHEC) was awarded a \$1.98 million state grant in 2023 to develop health profession pathway programs. Located within and administered by the UCSF Fresno Department of Family and Community Medicine, the AHEC was established in 1972 to recruit, train and retain a health professions workforce dedicated to underserved communities.

UCSF Fresno's California AHEC was one of 20 organizations statewide to receive a grant from the Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI). Overall, HCAI awarded \$40.8 million in 2023 to be administered through the Health Professions Careers Opportunity Program, which focuses on students entering the fields of primary care, behavioral health, geriatrics, nursing and oral and allied health.

HCAI awarded the nearly \$2 million grant to AHEC to support and encourage students from underrepresented

regions and backgrounds to pursue health care careers.

As the home institution for the California AHEC, UCSF Fresno subcontracts with a network of 12 AHEC centers, serving 33 counties located in under resourced areas of the state. The centers provide population-based education and training for students and health professionals. Each center, in collaboration with a regional advisory board, develops programs to respond to specific health care workforce needs.

Health care workforce development is crucial in California, especially in the San Joaquin Valley, which has the second-lowest rate of primary care physicians per 100,000 population in the state.

Ivan Gomez, MD, who directs the California AHEC and serves as chief of the UCSF Fresno Department of Family and Community Medicine, said the HCAI grant will support the continuation of efforts to diversify the health care

workforce. "This is an acknowledgment of AHEC's 50-year successful track record and an opportunity to expand and extend our work."

Also in 2023, the AHEC held a first Annual Community Project Symposium that brought AHEC Scholars together throughout California to highlight the outreach and research they had conducted within their communities in four topic areas: community education, patient education, teaching students and clinic quality improvement.

All 12 AHEC centers in California participate in the AHEC Scholars Program in Community Health, which launched in 2018 for high-potential health professions students to experience primary care with an emphasis on community health and interdisciplinary practice in medically under resourced areas. The California AHEC has had over 300 students complete the AHEC Scholars program.

UCSF Fresno Welcomes First Global Emergency Medicine Education Fellow

By Barbara Anderson, UCSF Fresno Communications, barbara.anderson@ucsf.edu

Global health education has been an integral part of UCSF Fresno for more than a dozen years and the program continues to grow, including an approval of a Global Emergency Medicine Education Fellowship (GMEd) in 2022–2023.

The fellowship is a one-year advanced training program focused on teaching in countries where Emergency Medicine (EM) is a developing specialty, and is a collaboration between the UCSF Fresno Department of Emergency Medicine and EM:RAP, a monthly education podcast focused on Emergency Medicine, and a part of the Access and Innovation in Medical Education Collective.

The fellow, who arrived in July 2023, will have an appointment as a UCSF clinical instructor at the Fresno Regional Campus and will work in the emergency department at Community Regional Medical Center, while collaborating on global projects.

The UCSF Fresno global fellow will help to educate future teachers and help to develop or improve educational infrastructures in Emergency Medicine, said Ryan Ernst, MD, a UCSF assistant clinical professor of Emergency Medicine and the UCSF Fresno director of Global Health Education. “We will be helping to teach Emergency Medicine in countries where EM is a young specialty and there is not a robust opportunity for training and education in Emergency Medicine.”

UCSF Fresno residents are encouraged to participate in global activities and in the 2022–2023 academic year, Jesus

Martinez, a fourth-year UCSF Fresno Emergency Medicine resident, attended an EM conference in Guatemala City and met with residents there. Third-year resident Nikhil Ranadive, MD, presented a poster on climate change and its effects on health at the African Federation conference on Emergency Medicine in Ghana.

Dr. Ernst hosted four international Emergency Medicine physicians from Peru, Honduras, Philippines and Sri Lanka, and residents were invited to attend a welcome dinner/barbecue at his home where they were able to meet and interact with the guests.

For ongoing global projects, Dr. Ernst traveled independently in 2022–2023, including a return to Vietnam to teach EM physicians in Ho Chi Minh City – his first visit since the pandemic. He has been working with hospital/physician colleagues in Vietnam since 2015, and in November 2019 he gained acceptance from the Ministry

of Health to implement an 18-month Emergency Medicine diploma program.

He spent a week in Guatemala City, Guatemala, participating in orientation week for incoming Emergency Medicine interns in December 2022. In spring 2023, he returned to Kenya to teach with an Emergency Medicine diploma program that he has been affiliated with for some time.

And Dr. Ernst was part of a UCSF Fresno information gathering group that visited Cuba.

“These trips all serve as a foundation for the new fellowship,” Dr. Ernst said. “All of these relationships I have, I am utilizing for the UCSF Fresno fellowship.”

UCSF Fresno is committed to health equity and through global medicine endeavors, information and understanding is gained to help reduce the burden of disease in vulnerable populations worldwide and in local communities.





UCSF Fresno Expands Services to Promote Wellness and Campus Engagement

By Barbara Anderson, UCSF Fresno Communications, barbara.anderson@ucsf.edu

The UCSF Fresno Wellness and Community program expanded services in 2022–2023 to help support a more balanced approach to wellness for our regional campus community and added events to foster social wellbeing and engagement.

The goal of the Wellness and Community program is to promote the eight elements of wellness: emotional, social, financial, career, environmental, intellectual and spiritual wellness for all staff, learners, faculty and visitors on our campus.

In 2022–2023, with the hybrid return to work (on-site and telecommuting work schedules for staff in departments that can accommodate remote work) there were initiatives and activities implemented to promote engagement and a sense of cohesion on campus. This included creation of Anchor Days, where staff, learners and faculty are brought together on-site once a month.

“The previous year, we barely started back from COVID-19 restrictions, so we wanted to create something for cohesiveness and promote

everybody coming together,” said Pha Mouavangsou, Campus Life manager at UCSF Fresno. “We wanted everyone to have an opportunity to see faces that you interact with every day on email or over Zoom.”

Anchor Days began in December 2022 with an appreciation luncheon and distribution of polo-style shirts. Another Anchor Day was a UCSF Fresno “swag” day for people to wear their swag on campus and share their campus spirit on social media.



“Behind everything was getting people together again, getting people to engage with each other again.”

Pha Mouavangsou
UCSF Fresno Campus
Life manager

Events on campus also brought people together, including a summer Cornhole Competition and Taco Truck Day, a Zoo Boo night at the Chaffee Zoo in October and a step challenge competition in January.

UCSF Fresno Wellness and Community offered a new concierge service, LYLA, to help handle personal and household tasks, such as event planning, dog walking, babysitting – all freeing more time for staff, residents and faculty and medical students to focus on wellbeing and living a more balanced life.

Services continued in 2023, including an Early Alert Program on-campus, an opt-in bi-weekly confidential wellness check-in via a text messaging service provided by a third-party organization to UCSF Fresno staff, residents, fellows and faculty with tailored wellness support based on needs.

The Maker’s Lab in the Hildebrand Medical Library at UCSF Fresno provided a location for campus members to sign up for a rock painting class or to learn how to crochet. New UCSF Fresno clubs were formed, such as the UCSF Fresno Anti-Racist Journal Club, the UCSF Fresno Birding Club and the UCSF Fresno Baking Club. The Wellness and Community Program continued to offer virtual yoga among its campus community-gathering activities.

The Wellness and Community program completed renovation of lounges in the UCSF Fresno building to bring together medical students and residents. “We felt the old lounges were kind of stagnant and separated Undergraduate Medical Education and Graduate Medical Education,” Mouavangsou said.

The remodeling provides a quiet “relaxation” space and an “active” lounge for learners to decompress,

rest, relax or socialize. “We know everybody destresses differently,” Mouavangsou said. “Some need relaxation and some need activity, stimulation.” The quiet space includes massage chairs, an area for yoga, soft sofas and a napping pod. The active space has a Foosball and Ping Pong table, board and video games. The walls have soundproofing to avoid disruption in adjacent areas.

Altogether, from creating Anchor Days to baking clubs and renovating learner lounges, the Wellness and Community program brought people together on campus in 2022–2023.

“Behind everything was getting people together again, getting people to engage with each other again,” Mouavangsou said. “We wanted to get people to come back to campus and to want to be on campus because they had been away for so long. In 2022–2023, the whole idea was bringing everybody back. The whole point was engagement.”

In Memoriam

UCSF Fresno's success and growth are a direct result of the vision and dedication of the members of our campus community. Faculty, staff, residents, fellows, students, and alumni serve as our inspiration and impetus. Sadly, in 2023, UCSF Fresno lost key faculty members and campus leaders including Lori A. Weichenthal, MD, FACEP, and Gene W. Kallsen, MD. Together, they provided 74 years of combined service to UCSF Fresno.



Dr. Weichenthal, UCSF Fresno Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education and Clinical Affairs and UCSF Professor of Clinical Emergency Medicine, was one of only two women in the UCSF Fresno Department of Emergency Medicine when she began her residency in 1994. For the next 28 years, Dr. Weichenthal was held in the highest esteem as an innovator, leader and role model in the fields of Emergency Medicine and Wilderness Medicine and a vanguard for physician wellness. Her leadership included starting a Women in Academic Medicine group at UCSF Fresno to help address the disparities that exist between men and women in academic medicine. In 2018, to better understand the culture at UCSF Fresno around diversity and inclusion, Dr. Weichenthal founded a committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. With wellness being a special interest, Dr. Weichenthal developed a wellness curriculum for UCSF Fresno residents and extensively researched wellness in residency training, becoming a nationwide voice for the importance of physician wellness programs. The Lori A. Weichenthal, MD, '94 Physician Wellness Fund at UCSF Fresno was established in her honor to continue UCSF Fresno's long-standing commitment to physician and learner mental, physical and emotional health and wellness, and continuing efforts to address physician burnout.



Dr. Kallsen, former chief of the UCSF Fresno Department of Emergency Medicine and Professor Emeritus of Clinical Emergency Medicine joined UCSF Fresno as a resident in 1977, when Emergency Medicine was yet to be officially recognized as a specialty. Starting on the ground floor of Emergency Medicine, he became a pioneer and leader in the field, and is known as the "father" of emergency medical services in Fresno County. As chief of the UCSF Fresno Emergency Medicine Department for more than two decades, Dr. Kallsen helped to establish the four-year Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education-accredited residency into one of the most highly sought in the country. In addition, Dr. Kallsen served as UCSF Fresno Assistant Dean for Graduate Medical Education from 1996 to 2001 and as Assistant Dean to then Associate Dean Joan Voris, MD, from 2012 to 2013. Dr. Kallsen's legacy continues through the Gene W. Kallsen, MD, Endowed Chair in Emergency Medicine. The ongoing, dependable funding from this endowment helps us recruit and retain outstanding faculty members, attract the best and brightest residents and perform research that contributes to state-of-the-art treatment in the emergency room.

For more information on supporting funds in honor of Dr. Weichenthal and Dr. Kallsen and other giving opportunities at UCSF Fresno, please visit: fresno.ucsf.edu/give/

Spotted on Campus









155 North Fresno Street
Fresno, CA 93701

(559) 499-6400



fresno-info@ucsf.edu
www.fresno.ucsf.edu

UCSF Fresno