

# Current Happenings...

Volume 6, Issue 1

Fall 2015

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## Introducing Our 2015 Postdoctoral Tobacco Control Research Fellows

2015 brought our postdoc fellowship program to new heights! Our fellows from the past, present and future are empowering UCSF Center for Tobacco Control Research & Education (CTCRE) to expand its reach even farther. Their research endeavors continue to shine by way of giving back to the program through presentations, award winning recognition of their contributions to science and health, inspiring collaborative efforts at UCSF to establish new faculty positions, and support among our tobacco control and public health colleagues to propel our fellowship program into the future. Four dynamic women make up our 2015 cohort — more about them in the bios ahead!



**Andrea Burbank, MD** grew up in a mountainous region of Idaho and had a previous career as a wildland firefighter. Eventually she returned to school, attending medical school in a specialized rural and remote training program at the University of British Columbia, and graduated in 2013. Between medical school and residency Dr. Burbank decided to explore medical futures, with interests in technology and preventative medicine. In 2014, she worked at a digital health startup in Silicon Valley, and attended Stanford University's preventative medicine course "Health 4 All". She has been conducting research on physician/patient digital interactions about e-cigarettes. Dr. Burbank is very excited to join us and she is currently exploring ongoing research interests in the effects of nicotine on the peripheral vasculature and the use of nicotine in emotional self-regulation.



**Catherine Egbe, PhD** holds a PhD in Psychology from the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), South Africa; MEd in Guidance and Counseling and BSc(Ed) in Biology/Education; both from the University of Benin, Benin-City, Nigeria. For the past two years, she has held a Postdoctoral Research Fellowship position at UKZN working on the PRogramme for Improving Mental health CarE (PRIME), South Africa and Emerging Mental Health Systems in Low-and Middle-income countries (EMERALD) projects. She has special interests in Health Promotion, Tobacco Control and Health related Stigma. Her specific tobacco control research interests currently focus on the risk influences of smoking, reducing tobacco smoking uptake among the young, and targeting the new ways tobacco companies reinforce and continue tobacco use among smokers. Dr. Egbe is joining us from Durban, South Africa, where she has been residing since August 2010. However, the Delta State in Southern Nigeria is her homeland.



**Karma McKelvey, PhD** graduated in 2014 with a PhD in Public Health, specializing in epidemiology. She earned her MPH in Epidemiology & Biostatistics in 2011, and also completed graduate work in Anthropology and Sociology. She achieved a bachelor's degree in Anthropology and an AA in Drama. Prevention before treatment, holism before atomism, and an interest in addictions are central areas of focus in her work. Dr. McKelvey believes that directing addictions treatment/prevention toward specific substances or behaviors is not optimal and addictions research would be well served to consider addiction as a disease on a spectrum regardless of the substance or behavior one is addicted to. Her long-term goal is to →

**SAVE THE DATE: "It's About A Billion Lives" Symposium: Jan 22, 2016**

**8:00—12:30PM**

**Keynote Speaker: Matthew Myers, President, Tobacco-Free Kids**

design and build an evidence-based behavioral intervention laboratory that will be able to adapt effective interventions for target populations. During her fellowship she hopes to ascertain the requisite team and evidence to begin building this lab.



**Anne Berit Petersen, PhD, MPH, RN**, earned bachelor degrees in English Literature and Nursing, and in 2006, she completed two masters degrees in Public Health and Nursing with an emphasis in Health Promotion & Education and Maternal Child Health. She earned her PhD in 2015 from UCSF's School of Nursing. She has a strong commitment to the empowerment of nurses and health professionals, both here in the U.S. and globally, in the areas of tobacco-dependence prevention and treatment. Dr. Petersen has worked as a nurse educator in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Tanzania, and China, and has a strong interest in women's health and empowerment, including averting the emerging tobacco epidemic in low and middle-income countries. A newly formed collaboration between the UCSF School of Nursing and Hawassa University in Ethiopia provided her with the opportunity to conduct an exploratory study on secondhand smoke and cooking fire smoke exposure among women and children in Aleta Wondo, Ethiopia. During her fellowship, Dr. Petersen hopes to continue exploring the interface between secondhand tobacco smoke and cooking fire smoke exposure, as well as how tobacco control can be gender transformative. Her long-term goals are to build an academic career aimed at the global promotion of smoke-free homes.

### ***Congratulations to CTCRE Alumni, Amanda Fallin, PhD, RN!***

In 2014, Amanda Fallin, PhD, RN, left the CTCRE for a position as Assistant Professor at the University of Kentucky, in the College of Nursing. Since joining the faculty of University of Kentucky, Dr. Fallin was selected as a scholar in the National Institutes of Health (NIH) supported **Building Interdisciplinary Research Careers in Women's Health (BIRCWH)** K12 program. This two-year program provides salary support and funds toward research support, enabling Dr. Fallin to have a mentor-intensive research experience. The purpose of Dr. Fallin's community-engaged research project, *Smoking in Women's Substance Abuse Treatment Facilities: A Community Engaged Approach*, is to develop tailored strategies to promote 100% tobacco-free policies and tobacco treatment services in substance abuse disorders (SUD) treatment facilities. The community for this project will be a SUD treatment facility for women, the Chrysalis House. BIRCWH Scholars receive state-of-the-art training, collaborative opportunities and in-depth mentoring experiences that enable them to develop independent research programs in women's health. Dr. Fallin's primary mentor is Dr. Ellen Hahn. Drs. Nancy Schoenberg (College of Medicine), Kristin Ashford, Carrie Oser (College of Medicine) and Scott Sherman (New York University School of Medicine) will serve as advisors.

In 1999, the University of Kentucky College of Medicine was awarded a five-year NIH grant of \$2.5 million to develop and implement the BIRCWH training program. Awarded through the NIH Office of Research on Women's Health, the grant provided career development and mentoring opportunities for junior MD and PhD faculty members interested in establishing research careers related to Women's Health. Currently, the BIRCWH program at the University of Kentucky is in its thirteenth year of training. The program has grown to engage investigators across the UK campus interested in women's health research and has become exemplary in its mentoring and training of young faculty. Please join us in congratulating Dr. Amanda Fallin for this outstanding achievement in research!



### ***Matthew Myers from Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids Keynotes CTCRE Annual "It's About A Billion Lives" Symposium***

Matthew L. Myers, President of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, will keynote the 2016 "It's About A Billion Lives" Symposium on Friday, January 22, 2016. Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids is considered one of the leaders in the fight to reduce tobacco use and its deadly impact in the United States and around the world. Their mission is to save lives by advocating for public policies that prevent kids from smoking, help smokers quit and protect everyone from secondhand smoke. Myers helped establish the Campaign in 1996 and has been with the organization since its inception.

In 2008, the CTCRE initiated this annual Research Symposium, open to the entire faculty, the broader campus community, and the interested public. Our symposium has been a valuable mechanism to feature the interdisciplinary work of fellows and faculty and demonstrates the breadth and quality of tobacco research at UCSF. Over the years the list of keynote speakers includes leaders of organizations such as the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association, the WHO Tobacco Free Initiative, the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the FDA Center for Tobacco Products. Both former American Legacy Foundation (ALF) President, Dr. Cheryl Heaton (2013) and current ALF President, Robin Koval (2015) have graciously given keynote addresses, as well.

For more info: [www.tobaccofreekids.org](http://www.tobaccofreekids.org)

## Tobacco Faculty Members Recognized

**CTCRE Alumni Gideon St. Helen, PhD, joins UCSF Faculty in the Department of Medicine, at San Francisco General Hospital.**

We are delighted to announce that Dr. Gideon St. Helen, PhD, has joined the Division of Clinical Pharmacology as Assistant Professor of Medicine. Dr. St. Helen joined the CTCRE as a postdoc tobacco control research fellow in 2011, during which time he was invited to present his research at the annual CTCRE “It’s About A Billion Lives” Symposium in 2013. Following his fellowship, St. Helen continued with UCSF, working with mentor, Neal Benowitz, MD, at SFGH in Clinical Pharmacology. In January 2014, he was named Assistant Professor of Medicine. St. Helen describes his research program as focusing on the utility and evaluation of biological markers (biomarkers) of tobacco use and exposure for epidemiology, risk assessment, product regulation, and identification of susceptibility factors. St. Helen, a native of St. Lucia, completed his doctoral studies at the University of Georgia, with a discipline in Toxicology and Environmental Health Science.



## “MERCHANTS OF DOUBT”: CTCRE Director, Stan Glantz Speaks Out in Indy Film

If you missed Director Robert Kenner's new movie, *Merchants of Doubt*, which opened in March 2015, then check it out on DVD! The film draws a comparison between the public relations tactics used by the tobacco industry and the tactics currently used to deny the existence of climate change. “The pro-tobacco strategy also called for smearing critics and invoking noble ideals like personal freedom against inconvenient facts like nicotine addiction,” writes A. O. Scott of the NY Times. “Thanks to thousands of pages of documents leaked to Stanton Glantz, a doctor and anti-tobacco crusader, the scale and the details of the deception are well known”. “It starts out with Big Tobacco talking about how the tobacco companies invented modern science denial”, said Glantz, “then goes on to show how the fossil fuel companies and their allies used the same methods (and a lot of the same people) to create unjustified doubt about global warming”. Scott’s review also points out that “tactics included sending dubiously credentialed experts out into the world to disguise dishonesty as reasonable doubt. ‘We just don’t know.’ ‘The science is complicated.’ ‘We need more research.’ ” Sound familiar? “The movie is packed with information and, while dealing with a lot of heavy material, does it with a sense of humor” said Glantz. “I’ve done a lot of media work over the years and this is one of the best things I’ve ever helped with.” Kenner is well known for his 2008 documentary “Food, Inc.”, about greed, weak regulations and other vulgar realities in the agriculture business.

For more info: <https://www.facebook.com/merchantsofdoubtmovie>



## CTCRE Speaker Spotlight: Neal Benowitz, MD Launches the California Thirdhand Smoke Consortium with Visiting International Scholars, Noelia Ramirez, PhD and Professor Xavier Correig from Tarragona, Spain

In July, 2015, Neal Benowitz, MD, UCSF Professor of Medicine in Biopharmaceutical Sciences, ushered in the California Consortium on Thirdhand Smoke (THS) Exposure and Health Effects with a presentation on “Metabolomics: Toward a More Comprehensive Thirdhand Smoke Health Impact”. Noelia Ramirez, PhD and Professor Xavier Correig from Tarragona Spain shared their research from Metabolomics Platform, a joint research facility whose main goal is to provide metabolomics services to research groups from the two organizations at the heart of its collaborative, Universitat Rovira I Virgili (URV) and Spanish Biomedical Research Network in Diabetes and Associated Metabolic Disorders (CIBERDEM). The California Consortium is also a collaborative effort between investigators at UCSF, UC Riverside, USC and San Diego State University, supported by the California Tobacco Related Disease Prevention Program. Their long-term goals are to identify the health effects of exposure to THS, develop environmental indicators and biomarkers of exposure to THS, and to devise and disseminate evidence-based policies to prevent and remediate such exposures. These toxic substances may remain on surfaces or as gas emission in the environment, yielding new secondary pollutants. Toxic compounds so far identified in THS include many that have already been identified as cancer-causing agents. The outcomes of the Consortium’s research will be used to develop risk assessments as a basis for motivating and guiding policy development and implementation.



Noelia Ramirez, PhD



Prof. Xavier Correig

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**We're on the Web!**  
<http://tobacco.ucsf.edu>

For more information:

[http://www.apha.org/meetings/  
AnnualMeeting](http://www.apha.org/meetings/AnnualMeeting)

*Did you know? The programs and activities of the CTCRE are supported by private gifts as well as government and foundation funds. Many critical and innovative programs of the CTCRE are made possible in part by gifts from individuals and family foundations. If you or your organization would like to know more information about our program or make a donation, please email our Administrative Director, Karen Williams, at [karen.williams@ucsf.edu](mailto:karen.williams@ucsf.edu) Or call 415-476-4683.*

## Tobacco Fellowships Available Now - Apply Online!

The CTCRE is now accepting applications for its highly regarded postdoctoral training program, which begins in July, 2016. The deadline for receiving applications is Jan 20, 2016! The program offers extensive training in tobacco control supervised by experienced members of the CTCRE faculty. Please visit: <http://tobacco.ucsf.edu/fellowship>

## UCSF CTCRE Gets An Excellent NIH Review

“An emphasis on cross-discipline, creative thinking around tobacco issues is a core feature of the training” offered at CTCRE, according to the 2015 NIH Peer Review, following submission of the Center’s competing renewal grant application. “The mentor pool is exceptionally strong and offers fellows diverse options. The leadership of this training program ... appears to be superlative. It is evident that there is a significant level of institutional commitment to the program. ... Overall, this is an exceptional program.” CTCRE’s Postdoc Fellowship in Tobacco Control Research continues to provide diverse educational and research opportunities supported by 46 faculty in 11 departments and all 4 schools at UCSF, UC Berkeley and UC Merced!

## CTCRE Fellows at the 143rd APHA Conference

Our Fellows and Alumni will present at the Annual APHA Conference again this year! The event opens on Sat, Oct. 31, and continues through Wed, Nov. 4, 2015, at McCormick Place on Chicago’s Lake Shore Drive. Please stop by our booth (#852) to hear more about our fellows’ research in the area of tobacco control and health policy.



## Featured Publication: “Smoking Population in the USA and the EU is Softening not Hardening”

Smokeless tobacco and more recently e-cigarettes have been promoted as a harm reduction strategy for smokers who are “unable or unwilling to quit.” The strategy embraced by industry and some public health advocates, is based on the assumption that as smoking declines overall, only those who cannot quit will remain. The concept of harm reduction, first proposed in the 1970s, was based on the theory that as smoking prevalence declines, the remaining “hard core” smokers will be less likely or less able to quit smoking, a process called “hardening”. A new study by Margarete Kulik, PhD, postdoc tobacco control research fellow and Stan A. Glantz, PhD, Director of the CTCRE, supports the opposite of the initial presumption. Their study published online in Tobacco Control on June 24, 2015, found that the smoking population is actually softening. The findings are significant because electronic cigarettes are not harmless, said Dr. Kulik. A recent review of the science on e-cigarettes by UCSF researchers reported that e-cigarette emissions contain both nicotine and other toxins, such as formaldehyde, and are associated with significantly lower odds of quitting cigarettes and with high levels of dual use – smoking both e-cigarettes and regular cigarettes. The takeaway, Kulik said, is that the current policies have been working, including strong anti-tobacco media, smoke free laws and increased tobacco taxes. As a result, smoking prevalence has declined and the smoking population has become more likely to quit smoking altogether. Some say that harm reduction policies are not a black and white issue, and that evidence is not clear either way. Kulik says “that there is no real need to distribute e-cigarettes as part of a tobacco policy package because the population is softening.” “Tobacco control policies should continue to move the population down these softening curves rather than changing policies to promote new forms of nicotine delivery, especially ones like e-cigarettes that are very appealing to children.”

To view article: *Tob Control* doi:10.1136/tobaccocontrol-2015-052329



Margarete Kulik, PhD