2016 Year in Review
# 2016 Year in Review

## Table of Contents

1. Greetings from the CEO
2. The CICATS Team
3. CICATS Celebrated its Core Interest Groups (CIGs)
4. M1 Mentors Made an Impact
5-6. Inaugural Class of the Young Innovative Investigator Program (YIIP) Graduates
7. Introducing CICATS’ 2016 Young Innovative Investigator Program (YIIP) Scholars
8. CICATS Announced its 2016 Pre-K Career Development Award Scholars
9. CICATS Welcomed Two BUILD Scholars from UTEP (University of Texas, El Paso)
10. CICATS Hosted 2nd Annual National Health Disparities Elimination Summit at UConn
11. CICATS Supported Community Events in Hartford
12. The CICATS Biostatistics Center
14. CICATS Highlights
Greetings and Happy New Year,

In 2009, CICATS at UConn was conceived with a vision to address four important principles: Education, Innovation, Collaboration, and Integration. CICATS at UConn strives to educate and nurture established, emerging and future scientists; increase the number of innovative clinical and translational research projects and move discoveries into the community quickly and effectively; work collaboratively with regional and national stakeholders to eliminate health disparities; and forge new partnerships to create a platform for integration of services and initiatives between the University, community, and beyond.

With the start of the new year, we are excited to reach new heights in our work and accomplishments at CICATS. As Chief Executive Officer, I am pleased to report that our clinical and translational science institute is “bringing discoveries to life” in countless ways. Our accomplishments from 2016 are highlighted within this newsletter and include features on our Core Interest Groups and the advances they are making through key collaborations; our diversity programs and our continuing efforts to impact the biomedical pipelines; and our faculty development programs.

Please join us in our continued mission to identify and support innovative research, train and educate investigators and students for careers in clinical and translational science, provide funding opportunities for novel ideas, address and reduce health disparities for the betterment of our communities, and to provide a wealth of tools and services to investigators for the acquirement of follow-on funding and manuscript submissions.

We look forward to welcoming 2017 as a new and exceptionally productive year.

Best regards,

Cato T. Laurencin, M.D., Ph.D.
University Professor
Albert and Wilda Van Dusen Distinguished Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery
Professor of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering
Professor of Materials Science and Engineering
Professor of Biomedical Engineering
Director, Raymond and Beverly Sackler Center for Biomedical, Biological, Physical and Engineering Sciences
Director, Institute for Regenerative Engineering
Chief Executive Officer, Connecticut Institute for Clinical and Translational Science (CICATS)
Throughout the year, the staff members who comprise the Connecticut Institute for Clinical and Translational Science (CICATS) at the University of Connecticut work hard to keep CICATS’ programs and initiatives moving forward, advancing the mission of the department and the university. We salute our team members and colleagues and look forward to 2017.

CICATS LEADERSHIP

Cato T. Laurencin, MD, PhD, Chief Executive Officer
Victor M. Hesselbrock, PhD, Chief Scientific Officer
Linda K. Barry, MD, FACS, Assistant Director, Chief Operating Officer
James Grady, DrPH, Assistant Director, CICATS; Director, Biostatistics Center

BIOSTATISTICS, EPIDEMIOLOGY, AND RESEARCH DESIGN

Chia-Ling Kuo, PhD, Assistant Professor, Biostatistician
Helen Wu, PhD, Associate Professor, Epidemiologist
Rong Wu, MS, PhD, Research Associate II

INVESTIGATOR ADVOCATE

Wai Hong (Kevin) Lo, PhD, Investigator Advocate

CICATS TEAM

Lana T. Angelo, YIIP Program Coordinator
Linda Burian, MS, Regulatory Specialist
Eliza Folsom, Web and Marketing Associate
Kate Hayden, MPH, Research Facilitator and Community Outreach Coordinator
Trisha Pitter, MS, Business Services Manager
Debra Serra, MBA, Staff Accountant III
Cheryl Steciak, Administrative Program Assistant II
A Core Interest Group (CIG) is a self-organizing group of experts who promote multidisciplinary research among investigators with common research interests. CIG’s research is vital because it translates into opportunities for larger, groundbreaking research projects and improved health outcomes across the spectrum of health and science.

Earlier this year, CICATS held its first annual “Celebration of Excellence in Research” at UConn Health, and recognized the work and success its 17 CIGs achieved in 2015. The event was attended by more than 100 faculty, community leaders, students and government officials.

CICATS Director Dr. Cato T. Laurencin praised the work of the CIGs and the growth of their success they attained over the year.

Representative Douglas McCrory, deputy majority leader of the Connecticut Legislative Black & Puerto Rican Caucus, was impressed with the caliber of research that was being conducted by the CIGs as well as the translational aspect of it improving the well-being of communities. Rep. McCrory thanked CICATS and CIG investigators for their dedication in advancing research.

Core Interest Group Testimonials

Dr. Pramod K. Srivastava, director of the Personalized Immunotherapy CIG, stated: “CICATS has been an extraordinary and much-needed source of many kinds of resources for the Personalized Immunotherapy Program, which we are testing a new type of vaccine to treat human ovarian cancer. CICATS has provided us guidance, funds for critical studies, as well as exposure of our work in the wider community.”

To read more about Dr. Srivastava’s exciting work with the immunotherapy vaccine, please click here.

If you would like to form a CIG or learn more about them, please visit the Core Interest Groups website or contact Program Coordinator, Lana Angelo at langelo@uchc.edu.
The M1 Mentor Program is designed to foster the development of investigators who are dedicated to improving the academic mentorship process. CICATS’ M1 program specifically focuses on the recruitment and mentorship of underrepresented students within all stages of the academic pipeline, from high school through to junior faculty. As part of the M1 Award, CICATS also provides research funding and protected time for each of the mentors during their three year-term.

CICATS’ three M1 Mentors, Drs. Anne Delany, Elaine Choung-Hee Lee, and Syam Nukavarapu, are in the final year of their three-year M1 Mentor Award and they remain busy working with students and providing guidance as they navigate their classes and lab research.

Anne M. Delany, Ph.D.  Assistant Professor, Medicine; Director, Skeletal Biology and Regeneration Graduate Program

After mentoring two scholars from the first YIIP cohort (2014-2016), Dr. Delany continued her involvement with the second YIIP class and meets with two of the scholars regularly, providing feedback on their lab research projects and writing skills. Dr. Delany is also working with one YIIP scholar as she prepares for medical school interviews, and the other as she develops her journal club presentation. Dr. Delany is also assisting the scholars for their presentations at two national conferences in the spring.

Over the summer, Dr. Delany hosted an undergraduate student in her lab who was looking to gain more experience. The student learned many essential skills under Dr. Delany and indicated she would like to return again for the summer of 2017.

Elaine Choung-Hee Lee, Ph.D.  Assistant Professor, Kinesiology, UConn Storrs

In March 2016, Dr. Lee was awarded mentor of the year from the LSAMP (Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation) program at the University of Connecticut. To date, Dr. Lee has mentored 23 students from groups underrepresented in STEM fields, as well as 23 additional students. Her mentoring has resulted in nine manuscripts in progress with mentees as authors, and she brought seven students to their first national-level conference where two presented their research. During the spring semester of 2016, Dr. Lee mentored 18 undergraduate students in her lab, which included students that she recruited from underrepresented groups in STEM. Dr. Lee also dedicated time to working with both YIIP cohorts as the students prepared to take their MCATs (Medical College Admission Test®). She has also helped the YIIP Scholars develop their personal statements and on their medical school applications. Currently, Dr. Lee is working to enter the Hartford Public School system to promote STEM programs there.

Syam Nukavarapu, Ph.D.  Assistant Professor, Orthopaedic Surgery, Biomedical Engineering, Materials Science & Engineering

As a mentor to two YIIP scholars from the first cohort, Dr. Nukavarapu worked closely with the scholars, all of whom successfully earned their Master’s degree in Biomedical Science. With the second YIIP cohort in place, Dr. Nukavarapu is working with two scholars, preparing one for a Skeletal Biology and Regeneration (SBR) journal club presentation and talk, and he has started working with the second scholar on deciding the topic of his Journal Club presentation.

Earlier this fall, Dr. Nukavarapu attended the Biomedical Engineering Annual Meeting where he served as a reviewer in the Resume Review program. This program is an opportunity for undergraduate students from all backgrounds to receive guidance and help with their resumes, as well as prepare for industry and academia positions.

Through his involvement with the M1 program, Dr. Nukavarapu was presented with a mentorship award from the National Science Foundation (NSF), which will allow him to establish a summer school in Biomedical Science and Engineering (BSE) at UConn Health.
The Connecticut Institute for Clinical and Translational Science (CICATS) had a vision to create a program to increase opportunities for underrepresented college students who were interested in pursuing a degree or research. As a result, in 2013, under the combined leadership of Dr. Cato T. Laurencin, Chief Executive Officer of CICATS, and Dr. Linda Barry, Assistant Director and Chief Operating Officer of CICATS, the Young Innovative Investigator Program (YIIP) was conceived. This innovative program provides students with an opportunity to gain graduate-level, biomedical laboratory research experience, combined with mentorship, to become competitive candidates for MD, MD-PhD, and PhD programs.

Dr. Barry, YIIP Program Director, and UConn faculty members on the YIIP Advisory Committee, conceptualized the YIIP course curriculum and lab research experience. A framework was created to offer an opportunity to earn a Graduate Certificate of Research Experience in Biomedical Science in year one, and a Master of Science degree in Biomedical Science in year two. With the foundation for YIIP in place, a national call for applications commenced in March 2014, and 30 applications were received. After an intensive review and interview process, six highly-qualified women were selected for YIIP and would begin coursework in the fall semester of 2014.

During their two years in the UConn Graduate School, in addition to their research and coursework, the YIIP Scholars received career and academic guidance through bi-monthly seminars, MCAT preparation assistance, mentorship from both their lab mentors and CICATS M1 Mentors. Each of the scholars traveled to present their research findings at national meetings and conferences in their areas of interest—four of which garnered awards.

All six have completed two years of the program and received their Master’s degree in Biomedical Science from UConn in May 2016. Their commitment and dedication to YIIP, their lab mentors, research partners, and to each other, combined with their personal growth over the last two years, has been immeasurable. While the scholars will be continuing down different career paths, each graduated having gained immensely from their experiences, which will propel them into future careers in medicine and science.

On May 16, CICATS hosted a reception in honor of the YIIP Scholars to reflect upon their achievements and celebrate their success. A large crowd attended with leaders and faculty from UConn and UConn Health, representatives from the Connecticut General Assembly, elected officials from the City of Hartford, community-based organizations, foundations, and other community leaders.

Dr. Barry welcomed guests and gave an overview of YIIP, and Dr. Laurencin followed, providing remarks on his initial vision for YIIP and how it is addressing the dire need for underrepresented minority students to enter fields of research and medicine.

(continued on next page)
Dr. Mun Choi, Provost of the University of Connecticut; Dr. Bruce Liang, Dean of the UConn School of Medicine; and Dr. Andy Agwunobi, CEO of UConn Health, each addressed the guests in attendance on how important YIIP is to UConn, and congratulated Drs. Barry and Laurencin on the success of the program. Additionally, Thomas “TJ” Clarke, II, City of Hartford Council President and Special Initiatives Coordinator for the Office of Senator Chris Murphy, introduced a personal video message from Senator Chris Murphy to the YIIP Scholars, praising them for their achievements and crediting Drs. Barry and Laurencin for their leadership.

Each YIIP Scholar gave a brief presentation of their research in front of their scientific posters and indicated how the YIIP program opened doors to many opportunities they never anticipated. Wrapping up the event, Dr. Barry presented awards to the CICATS M1 Mentors, YIIP Lab Mentors, and the YIIP Advisory and Selection Committee, recognizing their combined impact on the growth of each scholar as they progressed through the program. Dr. Laurencin was also presented with a plaque, honoring his vision, leadership, and dedication to the creation and success of YIIP.

After concluding a competitive applications process and conducting final interviews with prospective students, four students will be comprising the next cohort of the Young Innovative Investigator Program starting Fall 2016.

To learn more about YIIP or the recent graduates, please contact YIIP Program Coordinator, Lana Angelo, or visit http://cicats.uconn.edu/yiip. To view more photos from the graduation and reception for the YIIP Scholars, we invite you to visit our Flickr page, https://www.flickr.com/photos/cicats/.
INTRODUCING CICATS’ 2016 YOUNG INNOVATIVE INVESTIGATOR PROGRAM (YIIP) SCHOLARS

CICATS announced its 2016 Young Innovative Investigator Program (YIIP) Scholars: Aundrya Montgomery, Shania Aponte-Paris, Aaliyah Riccardi, and Archibald Agyekum-Yamoah. As YIIP Scholars, these students will have the opportunity to pursue a Graduate Certificate of Research Experience in Biomedical Science from UConn. Starting year two, Scholars who meet the academic qualifications will have the opportunity to pursue a Master of Science degree in Biomedical Science from UConn.

YIIP is a full-time graduate program at UConn that provides a focused research experience for underrepresented minority college graduates dedicated to pursuing scientific careers in biological and biomedical science. YIIP provides the academic training and tools to Scholars to conduct research, succeed in an academic environment, and become competitive candidates for a M.D., M.D.-Ph.D., or Ph.D. program. CICATS created YIIP to develop the next generation of innovative biomedical scientists, in addition to addressing the dire need to increase the number of minority students entering the field of medicine and research.

Approximately 30 applications were received through a far-reaching competitive application process from students across the U.S., Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The selected YIIP Scholars distinguished themselves based on academic merit, research interest and career aspirations.

Prior to the start of orientation for YIIP, CICATS hosted a celebratory breakfast to welcome the new YIIP Scholars. Dr. Cato T. Laurencin, chief executive officer, CICATS, provided the welcome remarks and Dr. Linda Barry, chief operating officer, CICATS, and YIIP Program Director, introduced each Scholar and shared an overview of their background which made them compelling candidates. Each YIIP Scholar expressed their gratitude for acceptance to the program and what they hope to achieve. Guests included administrators, faculty and staff from across UConn and UConn Health.

CICATS would like to thank the YIIP Selection Committee members: Drs. Biree Andemariam, Linda Barry, Caroline Dealy, Kimberly Dodge-Kafka, Christopher Heinen, Victor Hesselbrock, Anne Kenny, Barbara Kream, Carol Pilbeam, Anthony Vella, and Granville Wrensford. We appreciate the M1 Mentors: Drs. Elaine Lee, Syam Nukavarapu, and Anne Delany for their continued dedication and commitment to the program.

CICATS congratulates its four Scholars and looks forward to their growth and success in the program.
Earlier this summer, CICATS announced its 2016 Pre-K Career Development Award Program Scholars. The cohort is comprised of 12 awardees who represent UConn Health, UConn, and Connecticut Children’s Medical Center.

Created in 2013, the CICATS Pre-K Career Development Award Program is a 2-year interactive training experience, designed to equip junior faculty with the knowledge and competencies to effectively apply for an NIH Research Career Development Award (K Award) as well as become leaders in clinical and translational science. The award provides 30% protected time to work on developing their NIH K application, as well as funding for travel to national conferences.

Jessica Clement, MD
Research Title: Smoking and Immune Deviation and the Impact on Bladder Cancer Outcomes

Carolyn Greene, PhD
Research Title: The Role of Parental Emotion Regulation in Evidence-Based Treatment for Children with PTSD

Michelle P. Judge, PhD, RD, CD-N
Research Title: Role of Long Chain Omega-3 Fatty Acids in Reducing Inflammatory Load, Psychoneurological Symptoms and Expression of Lipogenic Genes in Women Following Treatment for Early-Stage Breast Cancer

Ruth Lucas, PhD, RN
Research Title: Measuring Neonatal Sucking Microstructure During Breastfeeding in Clinical and Home Settings

Kevin J. Manning, PhD
Research Title: Neurobiological Influences on Impulsivity and Alcohol Misuse in Young and Older Adults

Mario F. Perez, MD, MPH
Research Title: Airway Inflammatory Profile of E-Cigarette Users

Stefan Pinter, PhD
Research Title: Escapee Regulation and Gene Dosage Therapy in Turner Syndrome

Carla Rash, PhD
Research Title: Developing Sustainable Contingency Management Interventions for Soup Kitchens and Homeless Facility Patrons

Diana Sobieraj, PhD
Research Title: Prediction of Early Mortality from Pulmonary Embolism (PE) in Patients with Active Cancer

Emily Wakefield, PsyD
Research Title: The Development of a Health-Related Stigma Scale for Adolescents with Chronic Pain and their Parents

Liping Xiao, MD, PhD, MSCTR
Research Title: Erythropoiesis and Bone Homeostasis in Sickle Cell Disease and Sickle Cell Trait Mice

Yuping Zhang, PhD
Research Title: Subtype Identification through Imaging Genetics for Alzheimer’s Disease
In 2014, the NIH granted 10 five-year BUILD (Building Infrastructure Leading to Diversity) awards to undergraduate institutions across the US. These funded institutions partnered with nearly 100 institutions—both pipeline and research-intensive—to broaden the pool of students participating in biomedical research training. The University of Texas El Paso (UTEP) was one of the 10 core institutions to receive a BUILD grant, and they have partnered with UConn and 11 additional participating institutions as locations for scholars to gain research experience.

Due to its success with programs such as the Young Innovative Investigator Program (YIIP) and the M1 Mentorship Program, CICATS was invited to oversee the execution of BUILD on behalf of the University of Connecticut.

From May through August, CICATS hosted two undergraduate students from UTEP, Bianca Montano and Luis Reza. Bianca, a junior, and Luis, a sophomore, lived on the UConn Storrs campus with other summer students, and commuted to the campus of UConn Health. While at UConn, the BUILD Scholars attended weekly CICATS Summer Seminar Series lectures on topics such as research ethics and translational research, and gained lab experience while working with CICATS faculty including Dr. Syam Nukavarapu, Dr. Cato Laurencin, Dr. Lakshmi Nair, and Dr. Caroline Dealy. Based on their summer research experience, the students explained their lab studies in a poster presentation session at the Cell and Genome Science Building at UConn Health. Bianca presented on “Biocompatibility Evaluation of Electrospun Gelatin Nanofiber Scaffolds in Calvarial Defect Mouse Model,” while Luis presented on “Impaired Regenerative Response to Digit Tip Amputation in Epidermal Growth Factor Receptor (EGFR)-Deficient Mice.”
The 2nd Annual National Health Disparities Elimination Summit was held on Saturday, October 29, 2016 in Keller Auditorium on the campus of UConn Health in Farmington, Conn. Close to 200 attendees heard from speakers who presented on health disparity topics afflicting communities nationwide including asthma, environmental justice, gun violence in urban communities, and environmental racism.

The day-long program was divided into three sessions to show the impact of how environments are creating and exacerbating health disparities: Physical Environments: Where We Live and Work; Healthcare Environments – Acknowledging the Impact and Value of Diversity: Providers, Patients & Communities; and Social Environments – Addressing Social Structural Issues Impacting Health Outcomes through Policy and Community Engagement.

The distinguished cadre of speakers and their presentations cultivated an engaged audience whose questions and commentary stimulated productive discussions and debate.

To read more about the 2nd Annual National Health Disparities Elimination Summit, please click here to be directed to an article from UConn Today. The Summit website can also provide a wealth of information about the event, including the agenda and list of speakers.

To view the full gallery of photos from the Summit, please click here to visit our Flickr page.

Nancy Wyman, Lieutenant Governor for the State of Connecticut, provided welcome remarks to the Summit attendees.

Keynote speaker, Mustafa Santiago Ali, assistant associate administrator and senior advisor to the administrator for Environmental Justice and Community Revitalization for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), started the summit with an engaging presentation on “Environmental Justice: Moving Vulnerable Communities from Surviving to Thriving.”
CICATS joined the Urban League of Greater Hartford Young Professionals (ULGHYP) for its 1st Annual S.T.E.A.M (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) Career Expo. Held at the Parker Memorial Community Center in Hartford, Conn., the expo, which included multiple tables of interactive science experiments, video-assisted surgery tools, computer modeling, and athletic challenges, entertained kids and adults alike while providing opportunities to explore careers in the S.T.E.A.M fields.

The expo was the brainchild of ULGHYP President, Janice Castle, who wanted to engage students in grades 6-12 from Hartford’s North End community and provide them with an interactive opportunity to learn about the many career fields within S.T.E.A.M.

“Our S.T.E.A.M Expo was part of a national initiative by the National Urban League Young Professionals to promote S.T.E.A.M education to underserved youth,” said Castle. “The idea for the expo came from the realization that while we tell students about the subjects of Science, Technology, et al, we don’t often give them the opportunity to visualize, actually touch and feel what that could mean for their future. I was amazed watching the students interact with all the professionals. There were many light bulb moments.”

Dr. Syam Nukavarapu, assistant professor, Orthopaedic Surgery and Chemical, Materials & Biomolecular Engineering, UConn Health, and members of his lab worked at a “Science” table. At their table, they walked kids through an experiment showing how alginate, which is derived from seaweed, is used in foods and recently, biomedical implants such as tissue-engineered grafts and bio-bandages. Dr. Nukavarapu saw firsthand the excitement the students experienced and said, “Kids were so excited to see alginate bead/string formation in front of their eyes. They may not understand the magic (or science) behind it, however the expo left them wondering how cool Biomedical Sciences and Engineering fields are. I feel events like this really help them to get interested in S.T.E.A.M-related areas.”

The University of Connecticut was widely represented at the career expo, with students and faculty from the UConn School of Medicine, UConn Department of Kinesiology and the UConn School of Dental Medicine, as well as CICATS staff and scholars from CICATS’ Young Innovative Investigator Program (YIIP).

Please click here to view photos from the expo on our Flickr page.

CICATS teamed with The Urban League of Greater Hartford for a second community outreach event, the Annual Back to School Backpack Giveaway and Family Day.

YIIP Scholar, Aundrya Montgomery, manned a table on behalf of CICATS, and promoted CICATS’ programs and handed out pens.

(Left to right): YIIP Scholar Aundrya Montgomery with Adrienne Cochrane, JD, president and CEO of the Urban League of Greater Hartford. Aundrya at the CICATS table. Aundrya poses with Janice Castle, president, Urban League of Greater Hartford Young Professionals. A group of kids at the event. Chew-Chew, one of the mascots for the Hartford Yard Goats, stopped for a photo with Aundrya.

Return to Table of Contents
If you are writing a grant application or manuscript, it is likely you will need a biostatistician as part of your plan. Under the direction of Dr. James Grady, the CICATS Biostatistics Center offers consultations and expertise on a wide range of statistical areas to researchers as they launch new and ongoing clinical and translation projects. Furthermore, the Center promotes mentoring and career development of emerging biostatisticians. Since inception, the Biostatistics Center has assisted with more than 70 grant applications which have resulted in numerous funded projects. The Center’s biostatisticians also contribute regularly to abstracts and presentations, and have co-authored more than 35 manuscripts with UConn investigators since 2011.

The CICATS Biostatistics Center offers the following services to investigators:

- Advice on study design, conduct sample size estimates and power analysis, develop the statistical plan for your NIH grant
- Assistance with preparing manuscripts for publication: expert statistical advice and analysis
- Analysis of existing data sets, usually on a fee-for-service basis

Advanced PhD students with training in statistics epidemiology are often available to work on publishable projects where their contributions lead to co-authorships on peer-reviewed journals. Several faculty have dedicated time to support residents and medical students conducting research projects to complete their curriculums.

In addition, the CICATS Biostatistics Center offers an educational seminar series and collaborative events to the research community. If you would like to be notified of when these occur, please register to be a CICATS member.

To request services from the CICATS Biostatistics Center, contact Dr. James Grady at jgrady@uchc.edu or 860-679-2653 (or his assistant, Cheryl Steciak, csteciak@uchc.edu, 860-679-7039).

THE CICATS BIOSTATISTICS TEAM

- **James Grady, DrPH**
  Specialization: Longitudinal Studies and Correlated Data; General Linear Mixed Models; Meta-Analysis; Clinical Trials Design and Analysis
  jgrady@uchc.edu; 860-679-2653

- **Chia-Ling Kuo, Ph.D.**
  Specialization: Statistical Genetics; Bioinformatics; Biostatistical design and analysis; Methods in Epidemiology
  kuo@uchc.edu; 860-679-2897

- **Helen Wu, Ph.D.**
  Specialization: Clinical Epidemiology; Social Epidemiology; Clinical Research in Health Disparities and Addictions; Intensive Longitudinal Data Collection and Analysis
  zwu@uchc.edu; 860-679-3423

- **Rong Wu, M.S., Ph.D.**
  Specialization: Statistical Programming and Analysis; Basic Science Research Data Analysis
  rwu@uchc.edu; 860-679-3076
Did you know that the academic home office of The Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities (JREHD) is based at UConn Health? CICATS CEO, Dr. Cato T. Laurencin, serves as Editor-in-Chief. The journal, published by Springer, is the first of its kind and it is the official journal of the W. Montague Cobb/NMA Health Institute, whose mission is to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities.

Notably, the journal was accepted in January 2016 for inclusion and indexing in MEDLINE, the U.S. National Library of Medicine database of indexed citations and abstracts. It was also recently announced that the JREHD will be publishing on a bi-monthly basis starting in January 2017, indicating the significance of this topic and frequency of submissions.

10 most downloaded papers published in 2016 in the Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities:

1,673 Downloads: Racial Differences in Chronic Pain and Quality of Life among Adolescents and Young Adults with Moderate or Severe Hemophilia, John M. McLaughlin et al.

733 Downloads: Anatomy of Good Prenatal Care: Perspectives of Low Income African-American Women on Barriers and Facilitators to Prenatal Care, Mary C. Mazul et al.

690 Downloads: A National Assessment of Medication Adherence to Statins by the Racial Composition of Neighborhoods, Andrew M. Davis et al.


657 Downloads: The Top 100 Cited Papers in Health Care Disparities: a Bibliometric Analysis, Karan Arul et al.

576 Downloads: Association Between Stressful Life Events and Depression; Intersection of Race and Gender, Servin Assari et al.


460 Downloads: Racial Differences in Age-Related Variations of Testosterone Levels Among US Males: Potential Implications for Prostate Cancer and Personalized Medication, Hui Hu et al.

440 Downloads: Does Social Context Matter? Income Inequality, Racialized Identity, and Health Among Canada’s Aboriginal Peoples Using a Multilevel Approach, Nicholas D. Spence et al.

Return to Table of Contents
CICATS HIGHLIGHTS

A selection of highlights and notable achievements by CICATS staff from 2016 are shared below.

Chief Executive Officer of CICATS, Dr. Cato T. Laurencin was honored at the White House on May 19, 2016 by President Barack Obama, where he was formally presented with the National Medal of Technology and Innovation, the nation’s highest honor for technological achievement. Click here to view the awards ceremony.

The Connecticut Medal of Technology was awarded to Dr. Cato Laurencin at the 41st Annual Meeting & Dinner of the Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering for “his internationally-recognized work developing revolutionary technologies using his combined background in medicine and engineering.

Dr. Cato Laurencin was awarded the 2016 Founders Award from the Society For Biomaterials (SFB) by incoming SFB President, Lisa Kuhn. The Founders Award is presented annually, and “is based on long-term, landmark contributions to the discipline of biomaterials.”

Chief Executive Officer Dr. Cato T. Laurencin was elected a Foreign Fellow by the Indian National Academy of Engineering (INAE) for his outstanding accomplishments bridging engineering and medicine. It is the second time Laurencin has been honored by India, as he was elected a Foreign Fellow by the Indian National Academy of Sciences in 2015. Laurencin is now the first American-born scientist to be elected to both of these academies of India.

Assistant Director and Chief Operating Officer Dr. Linda K. Barry was interviewed on multiple news programs in 2016 including 900AM WURD Philadelphia “The MOJO with Stephanie Renee,” AM1690 WVON Chicago “The Perri Small Show,” and FOX 61 Connecticut’s “The Stan Simpson Show,” where she discussed issues of health disparities and increasing the diversity pipeline for students interested in the fields of medicine and research. She also joined NPR’s “Here and Now” midday news and feature program to call attention to the issues of health disparities and CICATS is increasing the diversity pipeline for students interested in the fields of medicine and research. In October, Dr. Barry also previewed the 2016 National Health Disparities Elimination Summit by appearing again on 900AM WURD Philadelphia’s “The MOJO” with Stephanie Renee and FOX 61 Connecticut’s “The Stan Simpson Show.”

The 3rd Annual Women in Surgery Lectureship sponsored by the UConn Medical School Department of Surgery was held in Keller Auditorium at UConn Health. For the 2016 lecture series, Barbara Lee Bass, MD, FACS served as guest lecturer. Following the lecture, Dr. Linda Barry, assistant director and chief operating officer, hosted Dr. Bass and a small group of medical students for a ‘lunch and learn’ sponsored by CICATS. After an introduction from Dr. Bruce Liang, Dean of the UConn School of Medicine, the students asked Dr. Bass questions about her career and advice on their ascension to surgeons and physicians.

The State of Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) awarded Dr. Linda Barry with the Edythe J. Gaines Award for Inclusive Education as part of its second annual Leaders and Legends Awards Ceremony held at the Connecticut State Capitol.

Dr. James Grady is a member of NIH External Scientific Committee: National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) External Scientific Committee (ESC) for the Multidisciplinary and Collaborative Research Consortium to Reduce Oral Health Disparities in Children, and attended the first meeting held in San Francisco on June 7, 2016.

Dr. James Grady participated in two invited panel presentations: “How to communicate with Biostatisticians?” at Translation 2016 Conference, hosted by the Association of Clinical and Translational Science; and “Developing Comprehensive Biostatistics Cores for the Next Generation” at the Annual Conference for the Association for Clinical and Translational Statisticians.

To review grants for secondary data, Dr. James Grady appeared on two special emphasis panels for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR).

Dr. Syam Nukavarapu, M1 Mentor, had his work accepted as a cover page article in Tissue Engineering, a leading journal in biomaterials and tissue engineering. His work reported a novel engineered matrix system that supports large-area bone regeneration, “Oxygen Tension Controlled (OTC) matrices.”

Kate Hayden, MPH, CICATS research facilitator and community outreach coordinator, was named to the Hartford Business Journal 40 Under Forty 2016. This annual award recognizes outstanding young professionals in the Greater Hartford area who are excelling in their industries through leadership roles.

Return to Table of Contents
To learn more about the Connecticut Institute for Clinical and Translational Science (CICATS) or if you would like to become involved with one of our programs, please contact us at cicats@uchc.edu.