



UCSF Action Research Center
for Health Equity
Department of Medicine

Bending Health Toward Justice

A Note from Our Director

Dear friends,

As we face challenges to our work— attempts at dismantling our communities, attacks on equity language, policy reversals, systemic barriers that seem insurmountable—our resolve remains intact.

We continue to work toward our goal of achieving health equity, far and wide. Each step we take moves us closer to the world we're building together.

To that end, I am thrilled to announce our new ARC podcast: Research to Action. We welcome you to listen to our series intro and our first two episodes. Nynikka Palmer DrPH, MPH discusses peer navigation and the need for tailored strategies to reach under-served populations.



And in our second episode, Hilary Seligman MD, MAS, reflects on food as medicine interventions and the need for evidence-based arguments to drive policy change. Please listen and share.

For us, hope isn't an emotion we wait for. It's an action we practice daily. We pause when we must, speak out when we can, and support each other always—because the support keeps us moving toward our dream of health equity for all.

Some days require extraordinary kindness to our selves and each other. Other days, we recommit to our goals with renewed vigor. Today, we stand together, leaning on each other's strength, while we forge forward with our work.

Our long game remains unchanged: building a world where everyone thrives. This is our north star, our shared commitment. To get there, we choose hope. We choose unity. We choose resolve. We choose action.

In solidarity,

Margot Kushel, MD
Director, ARC for Health Equity

[Visit our Website](#)



ARC PODCAST



Research to Action



Be sure to listen to episode one, as [Nynikka Palmer, DrPH, MPH](#), shares her journey to address prostate cancer among African American men and considers how community experiences and patients' voices are integral to improving research, planning, and interventions. In episode two, [Hilary Seligman, MD, MAS](#), discusses food as medicine interventions and the long-term benefits of these interventions in preventing chronic diseases and improving overall health.

[Listen to Episodes 1 and 2](#)

Miss our introductory episode? Catch up with [Research to Action!](#)

ARC ACHIEVEMENTS

UCSF Chancellor Recognizes Rebecca Sudore, MD, with 2025 UCSF Founders Day Award

[Rebecca Sudore, MD](#), ARC Core Faculty member and Professor of Medicine, received a Chancellor's Award for Public Service!

Through the award, UCSF salutes the exemplary service of faculty, staff, and learners to the university and our community at large as they work to advance health worldwide.

Dr. Sudore is revered for her steadfast support of helping patients who have trouble understanding lengthy medical forms. Her goal is to empower every person to have a voice in their health care, no matter their native language or education level.



[Learn more about Dr. Sudore's work](#) and hear how she promotes health worldwide starting with better medical forms.

UCSF Department of Medicine Recognizes Alicia Fernández, MD, and Leslie Suen, MD, MAS, with 2025 ZSFG Department of Medicine Faculty Awards

ARC Executive Committee member, Core faculty member, and Professor of Medicine [Alicia Fernández, MD](#), earned the Mentoring Award in recognition of her commitment to shaping the next generation of healthcare professionals while advancing health equity in medical education and



patient care. Dr. Fernández has created and led numerous programs—including SF-BUILD for college students, UCSF PROFPATH for medical students, and the RISE and FUEGO programs for faculty development—that built sustainable pathways for developing diverse healthcare leaders at all career stages.

ARC Mentored faculty member and Assistant Professor in Residence, [Leslie Suen, MD, MAS](#), earned the Outstanding Early Career Investigator Award in recognition of her exceptional research productivity. The award cited Dr. Suen’s groundbreaking work during the COVID-19 pandemic that proved instrumental in maintaining expanded access to methadone treatment, showcasing her ability to translate research into meaningful policy change.

A well-deserved round of congratulations to Dr. Suen and Dr. Fernández!



Morgan Philbin, PhD, MHS, Earns 2024 Annual RFS Award in Science



[Morgan Philbin, PhD, MHS](#), ARC Core Faculty member and Associate Professor of Medicine, is a recipient of this annual award that recognizes outstanding contributions by women and underrepresented minorities across Mary Ann Liebert, Inc. peer-reviewed journals.

Dr. Philbin’s paper, “Long-Acting Injectable Antiretrovirals for HIV Treatment: A Multi-Site Qualitative Study of Clinic-Level Barriers to Implementation in the United States,” earned recognition from the Editors-in-Chief and editorial board members across the more than 90 Mary Ann Liebert, Inc. journals and received the award in the AIDS Patient Care and STDs category.

Read [the award-winning article here](#).

FACULTY ANNOUNCEMENTS

ARC Welcomes Brittany Bryant as a Mentored Faculty Member!

[Brittany Bryant, DSW, LCSW](#), is an Assistant Professor and Watson Scholar in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the University of California, San Francisco. She is a licensed clinical social worker with a Doctorate in Clinical Social Work from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and a Master of Social Work from the University of South Carolina.

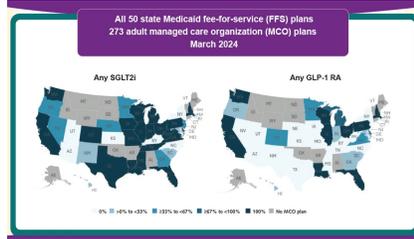
Dr. Bryant’s NIH K23 award focuses on understanding the impact of discrimination on substance use among Black youth involved in the legal system. Her work includes the cultural adaptation of integrated substance use and mental health interventions for minoritized youth. In addition, she leads a Low Barrier Technology grant aimed at modernizing the evidence-based HIV prevention intervention SIHLE. This project involves co-developing a mobile app version of SIHLE in collaboration with Black girls, Black maternal figures, and sexual health providers.



Read [Dr. Bryant's latest editorial](#).

FEATURED PUBLICATIONS: GAPS IN THE SAFETY NET

As we see continued threats to the social safety net, including Medicaid and Medicare, ARC Faculty are providing actionable evidence to support health equity.



In a recent paper in the [Annals of Internal Medicine](#), ARC Associated Faculty members and Associate Professors [Anil Makam, MD, MAS](#), and [Oanh Nguyen, MD, MAS](#), reported that many Medicaid enrollees face restricted availability of type 2 diabetes medications that reduce cardiovascular disease and death, with significant variation across states. While these restrictions likely reflect attempts to control costs, the lack of access to recommended first-line treatments may perpetuate health inequities, and the authors recommend formulary plan coverage as a potential mitigator.



ARC Mentored Faculty and Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine, [Melanie Molina, MD, MAS](#), reports in a [JAMA Open Network](#) paper that less than one-third of surveyed emergency departments screen for adverse social determinants of health like housing instability and food insecurity and about 20% do not have response policies in place. Dr. Molina and co-authors point out the missed opportunity to reach and address patient needs and the importance of ensuring emergency departments have appropriate resources and infrastructure.

ARC OPPORTUNITIES & EVENTS



PRISM Health Symposium Promoting Research in Social Media and Health

10th Annual PRISM Health Symposium

Join PRISM Co-chairs Dr. Urmimala Sarkar and Dr. John Patrick-Allem at the 2025 PRISM Health Symposium!

This all-day event provides an invaluable opportunity to collaborate with other researchers and industry stakeholders. Learn about the newest research and advance the field together in a community of peers.

Pre-registration is required as spaces are limited and there will be no on-site registration. Register for early-bird pricing until **September 30th!**

Thursday, December 3, 2025
Mission Bay Conference Center, San Francisco, CA

Click here to view last year's [PRISM 2024 Highlights](#).

[Register here for PRISM 2025](#)

FEATURED PUBLICATIONS

Makam AN, Bailey L, Anderson N...**Nguyen OK**. Availability of Cardioprotective Medications for Type 2 Diabetes in the Medicaid Program. *Ann Intern Med*. 2025 Apr 22. [PubMed Citation](#).

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Philbin MM, Dhatt Z, Jacques T... White JS. Retailer perceptions of California's statewide sales restriction on flavoured tobacco: lessons from qualitative interviews with tobacco retailers across four diverse jurisdictions. *Tob Control*. 2025 Apr 9:tc-2024-059084. [PubMed Citation](#).

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Palar K, Cox C. Modeling The Value Of 'Food Is Medicine': Challenges And Opportunities For Scaling Up Medically Tailored Meals. *Health Aff (Millwood)*. 2025 Apr;44(4):443-448. [PubMed Citation](#).

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Shanks CB, Park MS, Yaroch AL... **Seligman HK**. Health Outcomes of Produce Prescription Programs Associated with Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program Funding. *Annu Rev Nutr*. 2025 May 12. [PubMed Citation](#).

Rosen JG, Olding M, Joshi N... **Knight KR**. "It's something we're connected to": Acceptability and adoption of overdose detection technologies implemented in San Francisco permanent supportive housing. *J Subst Use Addict Treat*. 2025 Jun;173:209694. [PubMed Citation](#).

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[See all recent ARC-authored publications](#)

Connect with ARC

Join us as we dive into the collective work of ARC's core faculty, dedicated to raising the accessibility and quality of care for people everywhere.

As professionals committed to health equity, we meet people where they are. Join the ARC network on your preferred platforms.

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