



PhD Epidemiology and Translational Science Program News

UCSF / Department of Epidemiology + Biostatistics / Winter 2015

Welcome PhD Program Cohort for 2014-15!



As of September, 2014, UCSF Dept. of Epidemiology and Biostatistics is proud to present the fifth cohort of students in the Epidemiology and Translational Science PhD Program. Seated: (l-r) Rajkumar Kalapatapu, MD, Joshua Demb, MPH, Megha Mehrotra, MPH, Natalie Engmann, MS, and Alyssa Mooney, MPH.

Introducing our new PhD students, they are:

■ Joshua Demb

My academic and professional careers have focused on learning about all aspects of cancer, and working towards combating disparities that exist among cancer populations. My background includes a strong foundation in epidemiologic and statistical methods and strong interest in access to care, patient-provider interactions and health information technology. I received my Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Michigan in Political Science and my MPH from Columbia University in Epidemiology. After my MPH, I spent a year doing standards of care gap analysis research for the MSK Cancer Alliance at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. As a first-year PhD student, I am driven to further develop my understanding of epidemiologic methods pertinent to conducting meaningful cancer epidemiology research. My current research focuses on recent developments in lung

cancer screening, specifically the impact of shared decision-making on the decision to undergo lung cancer screening in high-risk patients. It is my hope that this research serves as the foundation for a wider understanding of the decision support a provider offers a patient throughout the screening process.

■ Natalie Engmann

I received a Masters of Science in Reproductive and Sexual Health Research from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine in 2012, with a focus on breast cancer epidemiology. Prior to my Masters study, I worked at the Fogarty International Center of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) on the Medical Education Partnership Initiative (MEPI), a large interagency effort to scale up medical education and research training in sub-Saharan African universities. Subsequent to the Masters

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Dear Friends and Colleagues: Thanks to everyone who has helped make this a great year for the program. Our incoming students hit the ground running and our advanced cohorts are thriving, already engaging in scientific projects with their research groups. The student-faculty journal clubs have been a huge success and illustrated what a remarkable environment we have here at UCSF. First year PhD student and psychiatrist Dr. Raj Kalapatapu led with a set of papers describing the controversy regarding black box warnings for anti-depressants and suicide risk. It was wonderful to have Dr. Tom Newman on hand to give us an insider's insight into the debates and evidence at the time of the policy decisions. The following journal club - led by Heidi Moseson, Sarah Ackley, and Dr. George Rutherford - focused on a recent innovation integrating evidence on social networks (and the clustering of risk within a network) into Ebola modeling. The discussion ranged from the mathematical issues involved in modeling to the practical concerns about data quality and public health implications of the results.

This year has also been a busy year for the book club, launching with Rebecca Skloot's book, "The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks", followed by some light reading ("Epidemiology and the People's Health") in preparation for Dr. Nancy Krieger's January workshop. Apparently Dr. Krieger's book instigated a demand for longer texts, and next up is Randy Shilts' classic "And the Band Played On: Politics, People and the AIDS Epidemic".

The "tools" series this year focuses on strengthening the quality of epidemiologic research. Dr. Jan Vanden-

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PhD Student + Post-Doctoral Accomplishments: 2014-15

PhD Student AWARDS

Sarah Ackley (2013) was awarded the International Clinics on Infectious Disease Dynamics and Data Research Exchange Scholar Award, which provides funding for a 10-week trip to South Africa and Zimbabwe to study tsetse fly population dynamics and trypanosomiasis.

Alyssa Mooney (2014) is a UCSF Eugene Cota-Robles Fellow, 2014-15.

Joshua Demb (2014) was granted a Graduate Division Travel Award to help cover expenses to attend and present at the International Cancer Screening Network Conference, June 2-4, 2015.

Heidi Moseson (2012) received the Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award (NRSA) Individual Predoctoral Fellowship (F31) from the National Institute of Child Health & Human Development; Society for Family Planning Outstanding Young Researcher Award, 2014-2015; American Association of University Women, Silver Jubilee Award, 2014-2015; and UCSF Graduate Student Merit Fellowship, Academic Year 2014-2015

Kristen Aiemjoy (2013) was awarded the American Industrial Hygiene Association Northern California Section's 2014 Robert Legge Scholarship; and the Earle C. Anthony Social Sciences fellowship, Academic Year 2014-2015.

Caroline Tai (2013) was awarded the Earle C. Anthony Social Sciences fellowship for Academic Year 2014-2015.

Rajkumar Kalapatapu, MD (2014) was awarded a K-23 Grant from the NIH-NIDA titled: 'OT-based Cognitive Rehabilitation of Cocaine Abusers'; he was also honored as a distinguished fellow by the American Psychiatric Association, December, 2014.

Milo Santos, PhD (2011) Graduated in June, 2014, and was the recipient of the prestigious NIH 'Director's Early Independence Research Award' in October, 2014. (for more on Milo's accomplishment, see page 5).

PhD Student CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Kristin Hoefft (2010) is an invited speaker for a plenary panel at Investing in Prevention: Advancing Oral Health Conference by Campaign for Dental Health / Pew Charitable Trusts on May 15, 2015, in Washington, DC. She presented part of her dissertation research (a poster titled Contra Caries Education Improves Oral Hygiene Behavior for Spanish-Speaking Parents) at the American Association for Dental Research on March 20, 2014, in Charlotte, NC, and also at the UC Berkeley-UCSF Global Children's OralHealth and Nutrition Symposium on April 22, 2014, in Berkeley, CA.

Milo Santos (2011) gave an oral presentation at the National Transgender Health Summit on the HIV Treatment Cascade among transgender women in San Francisco. He also gave an oral presentation at Infectious Disease Week (ID Week), on the predictors of HIV virologic suppression among San Francisco transgender women, and another oral presentation entitled "Alcohol, Club Drug Use and HIV risk among men who have sex with men" at the International Conference on Nightlife, Substance Use and Related Health Issues. Finally, he presented a poster entitled "Efficacy of Adapted Personalized Cognitive Counseling (PCC) for High-Risk, HIV-negative, Episodic Substance-Using Men who have sex with men" at the American Public Health Association's 140th Annual Meeting.

Cyrus Maher, PhD (2011) graduated in Winter 2014. He presented a talk titled "Protein-Protein Interactions, Evolution, and Disease: a Look at Patterns of Host-Side Selection in Response to a Range of Deadly Pathogens" at the Symposium for Molecular Biology and Evolution last June in Chicago, IL.

Heidi Moseson (2012) presented her research work on the List Experiment for measurement of abortion at the Psychosocial Workshop of the Population Association of America (PAA) in Boston in April 2014 and the Society for Epidemiologic Research (SER) Annual Meeting in June 2014.

Eugenie Poirot (2012) presented to the Global Malaria Programme at the World Health Organization on March 21, 2014, to discuss the work of the Malaria Elimination Initiative. She also attended a meeting in London, England on March 18-19, 2014, (hosted by UCSF and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine) to identify priority research areas to determine the use of primaquine for transmission-blocking in Africa.

Tu My To (2013) gave a poster presentation titled "The effect of Type II diabetes and low renal function on risk of cardiovascular disease in a cohort of older Mexican Americans" at the UCSF Health Disparities Symposium on October 17, 2014

Accomplishments 2014 - present:

Selected PhD Student Publications

Daozhou G, Amza A, Nassirou B, Kadri B, Sippl-Swezey N, Liu F, **Ackley SF**, Lietman TM, and Porco TC. Optimal Seasonal Timing of Oral Azithromycin for Malaria. *Am J Trop Med Hygiene*, 2014. 91; 5: 936-942.

Chen YH, McFarland W, Raymond HF. Risk Behaviors for HIV in Sexual Partnerships of San Francisco Injection Drug Users. *AIDS Care*. 2014; 26(5):554-8. PMID: 24093881

Wilson EC, **Chen YH**, Raad N, Raymond HF, Dowling T, McFarland W. Who are the Sexual Partners of Transgender Individuals? Differences in Demographic Characteristics and Risk Behaviours of San Francisco HIV Testing Clients with Transgender Sexual Partners Compared with Overall Testers. *Sex Health*. 2014 Sep;11(4):319-23. PMID: 25099989

Truong HM, Fatch R, Grasso M, Robertson T, Tao L, **Chen YH**, Curotto A, McFarland W, Grant RM, Reznick O, Raymond HF, Stewart WT. Gay and Bisexual Men Engage in Fewer Risky Sexual Behaviors while Traveling Internationally: a Cross-sectional Study in San Francisco. *Sex Transm Infect*. 2014 Oct 29. pii: sextrans-2014-051660. doi: 10.1136/sextrans-2014-051660. PMID: 25355773

Wilson EC, **Chen YH**, Arayasirikul S, Wenzel C, Raymond HF. Connecting the Dots: Examining Transgender Women's Utilization of Transition-Related Medical Care and Associations with Mental Health, Substance Use, and HIV. *J Urban Health*. 2015; 92(1):182-92. doi: 10.1007/s11524-014-9921-4. PMID: 25476958

Tehraniifar P, Reynolds D, Fan X, **Engmann NJ**, Flom J, Terry MB. Multiple Metabolic Risk Factors and Mammographic Breast Density. *Annals Epidemiol* 2014. 24: 479-483.

Hoelt KS, Guerra C, Gonzalez-Vargas MJ, Barker JC. Rural Latino Caregivers' Beliefs and Behaviors around their Children's Salt Consumption. *Appetite*. 2015. April (87). DOI: 10.1016/j.appet.2014.11.031 In Press.

Grant RM, Anderson PL, McMahan V, Liu A, Amico KR, **Mehrotra M**, Hosek S, Mosquera C, Casapia M, Montoya O, Buchbinder S, Veloso VG, Mayer K, Chariyalertsak S, Bekker LG, Kallas EG, Schechter M, Guanira J, Bushman L, Burns DN, Rooney JF, Glidden DV; iPrEx study team. Uptake of Pre-exposure Prophylaxis, Sexual Practices, and HIV Incidence in Men and Transgender Women

who Have Sex with Men: a Cohort Study. *Lancet Infect Dis*. 2014 Sep;14(9):820-9. doi: 10.1016/S1473-3099(14)70847-3. Epub 2014 Jul 22.

Liu A, Glidden DV, Anderson PL, Amico KR, McMahan V, **Mehrotra M**, Lama JR, MacRae J, Hinojosa JC, Montoya O, Veloso VG, Schechter M, Kallas EG, Chariyalertsak S, Bekker LG, Mayer K, Buchbinder S, Grant R; iPrEx Study team. Patterns and Correlates of PrEP Drug Detection among MSM and Transgender Women in the Global iPrEx Study. *J Acquir Immune Defic Syndr*. 2014 Dec 15;67(5):528-37. doi: 10.1097/QAI.0000000000000351.

Liegler T, Abdel-Mohsen M, Bentley LG, Atchison R, Schmidt T, Javier J, **Mehrotra M**, Eden C, Glidden DV, McMahan V, Anderson PL, Li P, Wong JK, Buchbinder S, Guanira JV, Grant RM; iPrEx Study Team. HIV-1 Drug Resistance in the iPrEx Preexposure Prophylaxis Trial. *J Infect Dis*. 2014 Oct 15;210(8):1217-27. doi: 10.1093/infdis/jiu233. Epub 2014 Apr 16.

Adithya Cattamanchi, **Cecily Miller**, Asa Tapley, Priscilla Haguma, Emmanuel Ochom, Sara Ackerman, J Lucian Davis, Achilles Katamba, Margaret A Handley. Health Worker Perspectives on Barriers to Delivery of Routine Tuberculosis Diagnostic Evaluation Services in Uganda: A qualitative Study to Guide Clinic-based Interventions. *BMC Health Services Research* (in press).

Elizabeth Fair, **Cecily Miller**, Salah-Eddine Ottmani, Gregory Fox, Phil Hopewell. Tuberculosis Contact Investigation in Low and Middle-income Countries: Standardized Definitions and Indicators. *Internatl J of Tubercul Lung Dis* (in press).

Lelia Harding Chaisson, Achilles Katamba, Priscilla Haguma, Emmanuel Ochom, Irene Ayakaka, Frank Mugabe, **Cecily Miller**, Eric Vittinghoff, J. Lucian Davis, Margaret A. Handley, Adithya Cattamanchi. Theory-informed Interventions to Improve the Quality of Tuberculosis Evaluation at Ugandan Health Centers: a Quasi-experimental study. (submitted *PLoS One*).

Moseson H, Gerdts C, Massaquoi M, Bawo L, et al. Implementing a Modified Method for Measuring Maternal & Neonatal Mortality at the Sub-National Level. 2014 Jun 24. *Internatl J Gynecol & Obstet* doi: 10.1016/j.ijgo.2014.05.007

Moseson H, Hamad R, Fernald L. Participation in a Micro-Credit Program is Associated with Improved Household Food Security and Reduced Childhood Anemia. 2014 Sep 1. *J Epidemiol Community Health*. doi: 10.1136/jech-2014-204071

Poirot E, Stergachis A, TerKuile F, Guerin PJ, Chen I, and Gosling R. Pharmacovigilance for Single Low-dose Primaquine; a Practical Approach 2014. *Malaria J* 2014, 13(Suppl 1):P72 doi:10.1186/1475-2875-13-S1-P72 (Poster)

Gerber JS, **Prasad PA**, Fiks AG, Localio AR, Bell LM, Keren R, Zaoutis TE. Durability of Benefits of an Outpatient Antimicrobial Stewardship Intervention After Discontinuation of Audit and Feedback. *JAMA*. 2014 Dec 17;312(23):2569-70. doi: 10.1001/jama.2014.14042. PMID: 25317759.

Fierro JL, **Prasad PA**, Localio AR, Grundmeier RW, Wasserman RC, Zaoutis TE, Gerber JS. Variability in the Diagnosis and Treatment of Group A Streptococcal Pharyngitis by Primary Care Pediatricians. *Infect Control Hosp Epidemiol*. 2014 Oct; 35 Suppl 3:S79-85. doi: 10.1086/677820. PMID: 25222902.

Mistry RD, Fischer JB, **Prasad PA**, Coffin SE, Alpern ER. Severe Complications in Influenza-like Illnesses. *Pediatrics*. 2014 Sep;134(3):e684-90. doi: 10.1542/peds.2014-0505. Epub 2014 Aug 4. PMID: 25092942.

Fischer JB, **Prasad PA**, Coffin SE, Alpern ER, Mistry RD. Canadian Acute Respiratory Illness and Flu Scale (CARIFS) for Clinical Detection of Influenza in Children. *Clin Pediatr (Phila)*. 2014 Oct;53(12):1174-80. doi:10.1177/0009922814542608. Epub 2014 Jul 8. PMID: 25009116.

Hunting Down the Ebola Virus in Liberia

October - December 2014 by: Heidi Moseson, MPH (Year 3 PhD student)



Ebola screening checkpoint on the road to Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County, Liberia.

Over the past six years, I've been lucky to spend much of my time in Liberia. Before grad school, I lived in Liberia working with the Ministry of Health and the Clinton Foundation. Since starting my PhD, I have continued to travel back to Liberia to work on research related to women's reproductive health – particularly around maternal mortality and abortion.

As the Ebola crisis unfolded over the summer, I – like most everyone – felt devastated and frightened and frustrated with what was happening. After many tough conversations with my husband and family, as well as with faculty here at UCSE, my husband and I decided to go back to Liberia to contribute to the response. We left in mid-October and returned in December. I was working for the government's Ebola response – referred to as the Incident Management System, or IMS. Half of my time was spent trying to coordinate the many domestic and international

actors on the ground: to track their actions, and ensure that we were covering all of the strategic pillars of the response, with minimal duplication and inconsistency. The other half of my time was spent with the Epi/Surveillance team within the Ministry of Health. We spent every day trying to track down daily case counts from each of the 15 counties, lab results from each of the labs, new patient admissions and discharges at each of the ETUs, dead body collection, and specific investigation of health care worker infections. Every day it was a struggle to get the data. Some days, a lack of phone cards for district health officers prevented reporting, or for several weeks, lab workers went on strike and refused to report Ebola test results in protest of not being paid. It was exciting to be a part of something

so urgent and important and tangible – it was truly a privilege. But it was also frustrating. Inefficiencies existed everywhere, and interventions often felt misinformed at best, and arrogant and destructive at worst.

The fear and anxiety around Ebola was at a peak when we left the US for Liberia. Arriving there felt anticlimactic in comparison. While Ebola was very real and present, the risk was low for non health care workers. Liberians and expats went about their lives, albeit with constant chlorine hand washing, ubiquitous temperature checks upon entering any building or home, and no shaking of hands or hugging. Many local adaptations arose to fill the vacuum – the elbow bump, or the hands over the heart and bow. Just something to acknowledge the other person's presence, and that you cared about them. Although it began to feel normal, it was much more isolating than we had expected.

When we arrived in Liberia, there were about 50-75 reported Ebola cases each day. By the time we left, that number was down to 5-10. Given this drastic change in the epidemiology of the virus, we witnessed a corresponding shift in the response strategy. There was a realization that we had only been dealing with the end stages of transmission (isolation and safe burial of cases). Instead, we needed to be focusing on active case finding -- going door-to-door, inquiring

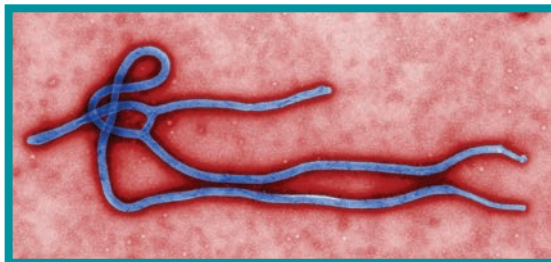


photo courtesy of: CDC/Cynthia Goldsmith

about contacts and symptoms with respect and tact, taking temperatures. Essentially, much more thorough and comprehensive contact tracing was needed, conducted in a way that fostered trust, patience, and respect.

I think Bruce Aylward from the WHO put it best when he said that, up until November, the virus has been chasing us. But now we had to turn the tables – we had to hunt the virus. Thus far, we are making progress. Let's hope that we can sustain it and kick Ebola out for good. And that will only be the beginning. Then the work will really begin, in rebuilding all that has been lost in Liberia's already fragile health system.

PhD Program Alumni: Where are they Now?

Epidemiology + Translational Science



Glenn-Milo Santos PhD ('14):

NIH Director's Early Independence Award, UCSF School of Nursing

Congratulations to our most recent PhD graduate, Milo Santos! Milo currently holds an assistant adjunct professorship in the Department of Community Health Systems in the School of Nursing at UCSF and continues his role as a research scientist with the San Francisco Department of Public Health. Milo was notified last October by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) that he was one of two UC San Francisco researchers to receive the prestigious "Early Independence Award". The award, established in 2011, provides an opportunity for exceptional junior scientists who have recently received a doctoral degree or finished medical residency to skip traditional postdoctoral training and move immediately into independent research positions. Milo will receive \$250,000 per year for five years to examine

whether naltrexone can prevent binge drinking among men who are at high risk of acquiring or transmitting HIV. The men will take the drug, which blocks the pleasurable feelings of intoxication, when they think they are going to be drinking. Milo summarizes that "Binge drinking is one of the drivers of sexual transmission of HIV. It's really highly prevalent for men who have sex with men. In San Francisco, three out of four men report binge drinking in the past 30 days." Milo's innovative intervention integrates a pharmacotherapy with a deep understanding of behavioral expectation and norms.

Elizabeth Rose Mayeda, PhD ('13):

UCSF Post-Doctoral Fellow, Epidemiology and Biostatistics

Elizabeth Rose is currently a postdoctoral fellow in the UCSF Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics working with Dr. Maria Glymour. Elizabeth Rose spent the fall as a visiting researcher at the Harvard School of Public Health, where she worked with Dr. Eric Tchetgen Tchetgen, a leading causal inference expert, on projects related to selective survival in dementia research. Selective survival is a major concern for researchers studying determinants of cognitive decline and dementia because there is substantial evidence that cognitive decline predicts mortality. However, it is difficult to anticipate the degree of survival bias in empirical studies. Elizabeth Rose and Dr. Tchetgen Tchetgen developed a flexible simulation platform to quantify the expected degree of bias in studies of determinants of cognitive decline under several causal scenarios and to evaluate the performance of various analytic approaches for accounting for survival bias.

As part of the MEthods in LOngitudinal Research in DEMentia (MELODEM) Initiative, Elizabeth Rose and Dr. Tchetgen Tchetgen are also collaborating on a paper that reviews statistical methods to address selective survival in dementia research: surprisingly, the field has not yet reached consensus on this fundamental question. Manuscripts based on this fruitful collaboration are currently in preparation for publication.



Pictured in the photo: Elizabeth Rose Mayeda (center), Eric Tchetgen Tchetgen, and Lan Lau, post-doctoral fellow working with Dr. Tchetgen Tchetgen and Elizabeth Rose's office mate for the fall.

Hannah Thompson, PhD ('14):

Research Scientist at UC-Berkeley, School of Public Health

Hannah currently works as a research scientist in the School of Public Health at UC Berkeley. Her research is involved with several state-wide and national studies which focus on improving the physical activity and nutrition environments for children at K-12 schools. She also teaches a Masters Thesis Research course in Public Health Nutrition and enjoys splitting her time between teaching and research. Hannah was excited to learn that two of her dissertation papers were accepted for publication (*Progress in Community Health Partnerships* and *Journal of School Health*) since graduating from the PhD Program in May, 2014.

2014 - 15 Program Seminars + Speakers

UCSF - Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics



Kathryn Ray (Year 2) presents during the Cornea Symposium in Chitwan, Nepal on "Early Treatment of Bacterial Keratitis".



Eugenie Poirot (Year 3) at 63rd annual American Society of Tropical Medicine & Hygiene presented results on a secondary analysis comparing the hemolytic potential of antimalarial drugs on G6PD deficient infants.



Kristen Aiemjoy (Year 2) out in the field with ad-hoc fly-trap built while conducting research in South Africa during the summer of 2014.



Sarah Ackley (Year 2) Pictured above, Sarah works on data collection at the Rekomitjie Research Station in the Zambezi Valley in Zimbabwe.

Date	Speaker	Title
02/04/15	Nancy Krieger, PhD (Harvard University)	Asking Questions that Matter for Disease Prevention and Treatment
02/18/15	Jan Vandenbroucke, PhD (Leiden University, the Netherlands)	Strengthening the Quality of Epidemiologic Research
03/02/15	Juliet Pulliam, PhD (University of Florida)	Infectious Disease Modeling Research
04/20/15 MH-1407 9am-1:00 pm	Tyler VanderWeele, PhD (Harvard University)	Assessing for Interaction in Causal Inference
05/18/15 MH-1400 2 - 5:00 pm	Sander Greenland, Dr.P.H. (UC Los Angeles)	Bias Analysis: How to Not Assume what you Don't Know

2015 DEB-ETS JOURNAL CLUB:

- 01/27** Presented by: Rajkumar Kalapatapu, MD (PhD Student) and Thomas Newman, MD
Lu Christine Y, Zhang Fang, Lakoma Matthew D, Madden Jeanne M, Rusinak Donna, Penfold Robert B et al. Changes in antidepressant use by young people and suicidal behavior after FDA warnings and media coverage: quasi-experimental study BMJ 2014; 348:g3596
- 02/09** Presented by: Heidi Moseson (PhD student), Sarah Ackley (PhD Student) and George Rutherford, MD
Samuel V. Scarpino, Atila Iamarino, Chad Wells, Dan Yamin, Martial Ndeffo- Mbah, Natasha S. Wenzel, Spencer J. Fox, Tolbert Nyenswah, Frederick L. Altice, Alison P. Galvani, Lauren Ancel Meyers, and Jeffrey P. Townsend. Epidemiological and viral genomic sequence analysis of the 2014 Ebola outbreak reveals clustered transmission. Clin Infect Dis. first published online December 15, 2014 doi:10.1093/cid/ciu1131
- 03/11** Presented by: Megha Mehrotra (PhD student) and Elizabeth Rose Mayeda, PhD
MH-2700 VanderWeele, T.J. and Robinson, W. (2014). On the causal interpretation of race in regressions adjusting for confounding and mediating variables. Epidemiology, 25:473-484.
2-3:00 pm
- 04/13** Presented by: Kristen Aiemjoy (PhD Student) and David Glidden, PhD
MH-2700 VanderWeele, T.J. and Knol, M.J., A tutorial on interaction. Epidemiologic Methods, in press.
12 -1:00 pm

2015 DEB-ETS BOOK CLUB:

- 12/3/14** The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks by Rebecca Skloot
- 01/28** Epidemiology and the People's Health by Nancy Krieger, PhD
- 05/15** And the Band Played on by Randy Shilts (MH: Time and Conf.Room TBD)

2015 SER Abstract Preparation Session:

- 01/15** Come with the draft of an abstract and SER workshop it with fellow Epi students, post-docs and faculty, prior to the submission deadline of February 2nd.

...and in our spare time...

some serious
FUN and
recreation



Desperately seeking snow: PhD student visit to Lake Tahoe cabin during Winter break.



Nothing like left-over sandwiches to spark an impromptu study group!



Heidi Moseson & George Rutherford illustrate the "elbow -bump"!

Students
pursue a closer
understanding
of demographic
transitions.



Cecily-Rose Miller and Christopher Dobosz married in August 2014.



Natalie Engmann and Ysbrant Marcelis tied the knot on August 9th, 2014, in St. Helena, CA.



Priya and her husband welcomed a baby boy last August! Here is Kiran at 7 months.



Introducing Jesse Thompson McMilton - Born in late September, 2014 to proud moms, Hannah and Meaghan.



PhD students showering "mom to be" Kristen Aiemjoy with a party, complete with a "delicious" diaper-cake and more...

Welcome PhD Program Cohort for 2014-15!

Introducing our new PhD students: *(continued from front page)*

■ Natalie Engmann *(continued)*

program, I worked at Columbia University managing and implementing several studies of environmental and metabolic risk factors for mammographic density and breast cancer, breast cancer tumor markers, and early determinants of breast cancer risk in a cohort of adolescent girls.

My research interests include breast density measurement and screening techniques, risk stratification in breast cancer screening, environmental exposures and windows of susceptibility, and lifecourse determinants of breast and other cancers. I make my home in San Francisco with my husband and a beagle and love to run, hike, cook, and take photographs in my free time.

■ Raj K. Kalapatapu, MD

My clinical background includes working with psychiatric patients of all ages and substance use disorders. My research focuses on the theme of cognitive rehabilitation for individuals with substance use disorders. My goal in the PhD program is to become a solid clinical trial researcher, learning how to design and analyze clinical trials. I would like to apply this knowledge to the field of cognitive rehabilitation.

■ Megha Mehrotra

I received my MPH from Berkeley in Infectious Disease, and have been working in HIV as a statistician on the iPrEx HIV Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis clinical trial with Dr. Bob Grant at the Gladstone Institutes for the past 5 years. During my doctoral training, I plan to continue to work with Dr. Grant using HIV and host genetic data to better understand HIV transmission patterns, estimate age of infection, and explore the effects of Truvada as Pre-exposure prophylaxis on host gene expression. I'm also very interested in causal inference and methods in general.



UC San Francisco welcomes new and returning graduate students to Dean Liz Watkins' annual picnic in the Fall. Shown here from L - R are: Maria Glymour, ScD (Associate Professor, PhD Program Director), Caroline Tai, MPH (Yr.2), Natalie Engmann, MS (Yr.1), Joshua Demb, MPH (Yr.1), Tu My To, MPH (Yr.2), Rajkumar Kalapatapu, MD (Yr.1), and Saunak Sen, PhD (Associate Professor, Biostatistics).

■ Alyssa Mooney

My interest in the social determinants of health began to develop while working in social service provision for incarcerated and recently-released men and boys, which illuminated how systems and policies around education, housing, and employment impact substance use, recidivism, and one's life trajectory. I then moved to a mud hut in rural Zambia, where I spent five years doing public health work with Peace Corps and USAID. These experiences led me to explore how social context influences HIV risk and prevention interventions, areas I investigated as an MPH student and research assistant with the Johns Hopkins University Center for Communication Campaigns, working on formative research and evaluation of HIV prevention campaigns in Tanzania. My goal is to conduct research that further elucidates the intricate web of social factors that contribute to HIV and other diseases, and how interventions can most effectively address them to improve health in varied contexts.

(Director's Letter - continued from front page)

broucke led with an excellent and somewhat controversial presentation. We then hosted Dr. Juliet Pulliam's introduction to infectious disease modeling, and later in the year we look forward to workshops with Dr. Sander Greenland (on bias analysis) and Dr. Tyler VanderWeele (interaction modeling).

We introduced some new courses this term, notably Dr. Mike Kelsh's enthusiastically received pharmacoepidemiology course. Many thanks also to Yea-Hung Chen, who organized an introductory course in the R statistical package. Look out for new and re-envisioned courses on the horizon next spring and fall, including a health disparities course led by Dr. Eliseo Perez-Stable. This course will integrate diverse perspectives on multilevel determinants of health, bringing together social epidemiologists, physicians, public health and health disparities researchers (among others). The tragic events over the past year, illustrating the extreme threats facing black men in America, prompted UCSF students across the campus to stage a "die-in" expressing outrage and frustration (white coats for black lives). Now we need to keep our focus on research and action to eliminate health disparities. The re-envisioned health disparities course is another step forward in this campus-wide effort. The course will offer a broad understanding of the drivers of disparities, the major empirical questions relating to health disparities and social determinants of health, and how recognition of these factors shapes health research and practice.

We have all settled into our new space in the Mission Hall building. In addition to prompting major investments in noise canceling headphones, the new building makes it much easier to attend lectures and meet with colleagues on campus. It is great to be so close to our Global Health colleagues, and I anticipate the new space will foster collaborations and shared activities going forward.

Thanks again to the many faculty, staff, post-doctoral fellows, and students who are contributing in countless ways to the excellence of our Epidemiology and Translational Science PhD program.

Maria Glymour, S.D.
Associate Professor and Director,
Epidemiology and Translational Science PhD Program