April 10, 2023

**Grant Awards:**

Nearly 50 research teams submitted proposals for [1U4U Innovation Funding](#). With the support of Dr. Mike Good – Senior Vice President for Health Sciences, Dr. Mitzi Montoya – Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the Colleges, 29 projects were funded, which included five College of Nursing faculty:
Dr. Deanna Kepka, Simon Brewer, Dr. Echo Warner, Benjamin Haaland, and Naina Phadnis: Overcoming Vaccine Hesitancy and Preventing Cancer Through Adaptive Learning Artificial Intelligence and Refinement of Reminder Interventions and Campaigns, $15,000. Patient reminder and recall (RR) strategies have been proven successful in immunization uptake; however, the effectiveness of these strategies varies by geographic and sociodemographic factors. The current study will be among the first to use state-level vaccination registry data to systematically examine missed opportunities and identify spatial and temporal trends of human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination. The work will inform creation of an adaptive learning artificial intelligence for refinement of interactive RR strategies and interventions. Solutions arising from this study are scalable, and can be tailored for diverse reminder campaigns, responsive to evolving landscapes, and designed to deliver cost-effective solutions. Both innovative and transformative, this cross-campus collaboration will address complex healthcare problems using precision public health strategies, optimized for decreasing vaccine hesitancy and increasing uptake, and provide preliminary results for high-impact National Institutes of Health and National Cancer Institute funding proposals.

Dr. Lisa Taylor-Swanson, Dr. Ana Sanchez-Birkhead, Camille Moreno Isabel Dulfano, and Jeannette Villalta: Addressing a GAP in MENOpausal Latinas’ Healthcare: Adapting MENOGAP for Community Health Worker Delivery in Hispanic/Latinx Communities. $30,000. Building upon Ms. Villalta and Drs. Taylor-Swanson and Moreno’s ongoing work to create an integrative group medical visit intervention (MENOGAP) for peri/menopausal women, the purpose of the study is to adapt a provider-delivered MENOGAP to a community health worker-delivered intervention in Spanish for Latinas. This work is greatly needed because research on racial and ethnic disparities in healthcare access and utilization consistently identifies Hispanic/Latinx as one of the most disadvantaged ethnic groups. Concerning midlife women, Latinx women enter menopause earlier and have longer-lasting and more intense symptoms than white women. A 2022 study proposed that some health disparities experienced by Latinx women are likely attributable to structural racism in the United States. The team aims to reduce these disparities for Latinas in Utah, and with time, outside the state as well.

Zhaoxia Pu, Dr. Xiaoming Sheng, and Paul Brooks: Understand and Predict the Severe Drought Events in the Western United States and their Influence on Water Resources and Human Health. $30,000. The investigators aim to better understand and predict severe drought events in the western United States and their impacts on water resources and human health, especially in Northern Utah. Seeking collaborations from climate, hydrological, ecosystem, and health science, the team’s objectives are to 1) develop improved drought metrics based on the historical records and current conditions of the atmosphere, land, and plant available water for an effective drought prediction method; and 2) assess the drought impacts on human health, such as lung health of toxic dust caused by a drought in Great Salt Lake. The ultimate goal is to provide effective drought prediction methods for the Western United States and identify significant issues, thus making suggestions for essential decision-making.

Dr. Andrea Wallace was awarded a $50,000 Digital Health Initiative Inspiring Digital Health Innovations Seed Grant for work on electronic health record integration of the Going Home Toolkit, a patient-centered digital resource planner/application to assist with the social needs of patients during hospital to home transitions. To accomplish the work, Dr. Wallace will partner with the Digital Health Initiative team, the Therapeutic Games and Apps (GApp) Lab, and Ken Kawamoto.
Faculty Spotlight:

The NURS 3410 Acute Care Nursing Practicum teaching team – Dr. John Nerges, Anna Alder, Chris Sneddon, Dr. Will Hull, Kirsten Schmutz, Jesika England, and Brittany Petersen – innovatively supported student learning in the midst of last week’s epic snowstorm. In light of dangerous driving conditions, faculty made the difficult decision to cancel in-hospital clinical experiences. Under the leadership of Dr. John Nerges, the team launched a plan to recapture some lost clinical time. Each faculty member identified a topic on which they could quickly develop and present a 1-hour teaching session. During 3-hour Zoom sessions held on Tuesday and Wednesday, students met with their assigned faculty member for a 1-hour clinical conference. During the next two hours, students attended presentations of their choice from among the following topics: respiratory physiology, adult sepsis, pediatric sepsis, hypotension, cardiac care, and emergency nursing. Kudos to the teaching team for creating meaningful learning opportunities for their students on what easily could have been lost clinical days.

Dr. Sara Bybee was accepted to the Natural History Museum of Utah Science Communication Fellows Program. The program provides training to scientists and researchers to improve their science communication, especially in an informal science education setting. Fellows build their capacity for science communication by participating in four professional development workshops as well as three Natural History Museum of Utah public programs. The Science Communication Fellows Program operates in partnership with Portal to the Public, as a National Science Foundation funded program.

Congratulations to Anna Alder! Anna Alder and Patric Dean were married on March 17, 2023 in a small ceremony on the beautiful island of Maui.

Presentations:

Dr. Youjeong Kang hosted a virtual research seminar titled Utilization of Data Science in Nursing Research for the American University of Beirut Rafic Hariri School of Nursing. U Health will host the Evidence-Based Practice and Wellness Champions Poster Fair on April 10-13, 2023, and 26 teams of multidisciplinary faculty, staff, and students will present team-based improvement and wellness projects conducted throughout U Health. College of Nursing presenters are:

- Dr. Cheryl Armstrong: Implementing Wellness Initiatives to Enhance Professional and Personal Well-being of Nursing Academia Faculty and Staff
- Dr. Scott Christensen and Dr. Sue Chase-Cantarini: Newly Licensed Nurses’ Transition to Practice during Pandemic after Participating in Nurse Apprentice Program
- Bernadette Kiraly and Dr. Frances Johnson: Building Trust, Fostering Growth: The Power of Core Values and Psychological Safety

Dr. Lisa Taylor-Swanson, Elisabeth Osgood-Campbell, and Wen Tu presented a poster titled Women’s Interest in the Development of an Integrative Group Medical Visit for the Menopausal Transition at the 2023 Integrative Medicine & Health Symposium in Chicago, IL.
Dr. Deanna Kepka delivered a podium presentation titled *Improving HPV Vaccination Rates in the Mountain West* at the Huntsman Cancer Institute Research Retreat: Discovery, Innovation, and Celebration.

**Event:**

The Gamma Rho (University of Utah) and Nu Nu (Weber State University) chapters of Sigma, and the Weber State University Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC), in collaboration with the Cold War Medal Foundation and the Golden Spike Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, hosted Major General (Retired) Dr. Mari Eder, author of *The Girls Who Stepped Out of Line*, on April 3, 2023, at the College of Nursing. Dr. Eder shared stories of 15 inspiring and heroic civilian and military women whose actions during World War II paved the way for women to expand their roles – today and for future generations. Major General (Retired) Eder presented the Utah Cold War Victory Medal to Colonel (Retired) Dr. John Nerges, and Colonel (retired) Dean Marla De Jong. Mandi Keddington, Kelly Mansfield, Dr. Frances Johnson, Dr. Cheryl Armstrong, Dr. Rebekah Perkins, and Dr. Julie Gee were members of the Gamma Rho Planning Committee.

**Professional Service:**

Dr. Lisa Taylor-Swanson was appointed to the Cochrane Complementary Medicine Research Quality and Integrity Working Group.

The Academic Consortium for Integrative Medicine & Health (ACIMH) hosted the 2023 Integrative Medicine & Health Symposium: Advancing Together: Meaningful Connection and Strategic Collaboration that was held in Chicago, IL. Dr. Lisa Taylor-Swanson served on the Scientific Review Committee. ACIMH is the international home for academic health centers and health systems with programs in integrative medicine and health.

Dr. Deanna Kepka was invited to serve on St. Jude's HPV Cancer Prevention Program's Rural HPV Vaccination Think Tank.

Dr. Deanna Kepka was a member of the planning committee for the Huntsman Cancer Institute Research Retreat: Discovery, Innovation, and Celebration that was held on April 4, 2023.

**Publication:**


**In the Media:**

The Society for Women’s Health Research offered a travel award to Dr. Deanna Kepka, enabling her to travel to Washington, DC and help create the #SWHRtalksHPV Video Series. The 10 video series was produced so that experts could share facts about HPV immunization, and help parents and guardians learn about the HPV vaccine and cancer prevention.
Dr. Deanna Kepka was highlighted in the Huntsman Cancer Institute Research Highlights for March 2023 for receiving a Merck Investigator Studies Program (MISP) grant to study many domains of vaccine hesitancy and confidence in the Mountain West. Dr. Kepka also will use the Utah Statewide Immunization Information System to develop and examine an intervention to build confidence in vaccines with children and young adults enrolled in Utah’s Vaccines for Children Program.