



MCCTR News

Mississippi Center for Clinical and Translational Research

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Joey Granger, PhD

A Message from the Director

Spring is just around the corner. Often considered a time of growth and new beginnings, so too is MCCTR experiencing a time of growth and new beginnings.

In this issue of our newsletter, we provide information on how to apply for admission to our Community-Engaged Research Summer Institute and our Mentoring Academy.

We also introduce you to our Academy's new co-directors: Amol Janorkar, PhD and Denise Cornelius, PhD. Nominated by John Hall, PhD, director of our Professional Development

Core, Drs. Janorkar and Cornelius will provide invaluable leadership to those wanting to learn how to effectively mentor others.

With new studies on the horizon, our Community Advisory Board will be more active than ever. We owe each of them a debt of gratitude for their service, and introduce you to the members on Page 2.

Mark your calendar for May 4, when we are scheduled to have our meeting of the External Advisory Committee. Details to follow!

~Joey Granger, PhD, Director

Inside this issue:

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Applications Available for MCCTR's 2021 Community-Engaged Research Summer Institute

MCCTR's Community Engagement and Outreach Core is hosting its annual Community-Engaged Research Summer Institute during the week of June 13 - 18 at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg. A maximum of ten participants will be accepted to the Institute: junior faculty members from all major Mississippi universities are encouraged to apply.

The Community Engagement and Outreach Core, co-led by Drs. Holly Huye, Wendy White, and Caroline Compretta, designed this year's Institute to include presentations for planning and conducting community-engaged research related to racial and ethnic

health disparities that impact the lives of Mississippians. Participants will work individually and in groups on activities to develop a proposal for a community-engaged research project. Junior faculty members who complete the Institute are eligible to submit a proposal to MCCTR's Pilot Projects Program.

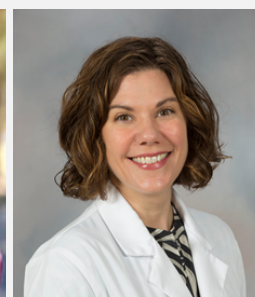
More information about the Institute and an application form can be accessed at <https://www.umc.edu/Research/Centers-and-Institutes/External-Designation-Centers/Mississippi-Center-for-Clinical-and-Translational-Research/Resources/Community-Engaged-Research-Summer-Institute-Overview.html>



Holly Huye, PhD



Wendy White, PhD



Caroline Compretta, PhD

Janorkar and Cornelius to Direct MCCTR's Mentoring Academy

MCCTR's Mentoring Academy is under new leadership. Taking the reins from Michael Ryan, PhD are Amol Janorkar, PhD and Denise Cornelius, PhD. Dr. Janorkar is Professor and Chair of UMMC's Department of Biomedical Materials Science. He leads a research group that focuses on cell-biomaterial interactions to direct cell morphology and ultimate cell function. The Janorkar Lab uses chemical and physical modification of biopolymer substrates to create three-dimensional, *in vitro* tissue models that achieve enhanced survival and biological function versus conventional cultures for liver, adipose, and bone tissue engineering. Recognizing his skills as a teacher and mentor, Dr. Janorkar was recently honored with UMMC's TEACH (Toward Educational Advancement in Care and Health) Prize and also was inducted into UMMC's Nelson Order of Teaching Excellence.

Dr. Cornelius is Assistant Professor and Director of Pre-clinical Research in UMMC's Department of Emergency Medicine. She leads a research group that focuses on two major areas. The first is related to understanding how immune system activation mechanistically promotes the pathogenesis of hypertension and intrauterine growth restriction during pregnancy. The second is related to understanding mechanisms that lead to the development of multi-organ injury during sepsis. Dr. Cornelius was recently honored with UMMC's Early Career Investigator Discovery Award and the UMMC GWIMS Rising Star Award.

The Mentoring Academy is designed to develop both the mentoring skills and grant writing skills of MCCTR funded investigators, young investigators, and faculty members who wish to serve as mentors for MCCTR investigators. The academy consists of eight sessions, each one-to-two hours in length, related to topics ranging from effective communication, aligning expectations, assessment of understanding, promoting diversity and inclusion, fostering independence of trainees, and promoting professional development. Eligible applicants include faculty members and young investigators from MCCTR's partnering universities.

The application deadline for the Mentoring Academy's next round of participants will be in October 2021. Applications can be found at the following link: <https://www.umm.edu/Research/Centers-and-Institutes/External-Designation-Centers/Mississippi-Center-for-Clinical-and-Translational-Research/Resources/Mentoring%20Academy/Mentoring-Academy-Home.html>



Amol Janorkar, PhD



Denise Cornelius, PhD

Community Advisory Board Integral to MCCTR's Success

The MCCTR Community Advisory Board has been an active participant in MCCTR initiatives for close to five years. According to Holly Huye, PhD, and co-leader of the MCCTR's Community Engagement and Outreach Core, "We are indebted to our Community Advisory Board for their counsel, their ties to communities within Mississippi, and the unique insights they provide MCCTR in general and the Community Engagement and Outreach Core in particular."

Not pictured are three additional members: Kimaka Bowens, with Black Nurses Rock; Cassandra Mobley, with the Mississippi Food Network; and Tamera Thigpen, a student at the University of Southern Mississippi.



Mireya Alexander



Monica Beeman



Tammy Bell



Jannell Edwards



Jackie Hawkins



Teresa Malone



Lydia West



Robin Wilkerson

Matt Kutcher, MD, a former participant in MCCTR's Investigator Development Program, received a five-year K award from NIH for his proposal, "Mitochondrial DNA in the Pathogenesis of Post-injury Coagulopathy."

https://www.umc.edu/news/News_Articles/2021/02/Kutcher-NIH-K-Award.html

Joey Granger, PhD received a \$2 million NIH award for the University of Mississippi Medical Center Cardiovascular-Renal Research Center's "Hypertension and Cardiorenal Diseases Research Training Program."

https://www.umc.edu/news/News_Articles/2020/12/Doublyperfect.html

Each year UMMC recognizes its researchers with medallions based on the cumulative amount of extramural funding received for investigators' original research. Several MCCTR faculty members received UMMC's Excellence in Research Awards:

- **Celso Gomez-Sanchez, MD** and **Michael Ryan, PhD** each received the Platinum Medallion, signifying receipt of at least more than \$5 million in external funding. Dr. Gomez-Sanchez directs MCCTR's Pilot Projects Program; Dr. Ryan directed MCCTR's Mentoring Academy.
- **Seth Lirette, PhD** received the Gold Medallion, signifying receipt of at least \$1 million in external funding. Dr. Lirette directs MCCTR's BERD Core.
- **Caroline Compretta, PhD** received the Silver Medallion, signifying receipt of at least \$500,000 in external funding. Dr. Compretta is a co-leader of MCCTR's Community Engagement and Outreach Core.
- **William Hillegass, MD, PhD** received the Bronze Medallion, signifying receipt of at least \$250,000 in external funding. Dr. Hillegass is a member of MCCTR's BERD Core and a site PI for the National COVID Cohort Collaborative.



Upcoming Funding Opportunities

Number: NOT-GM-21-021

Title: Urgent Competitive Revisions to IDeA and NARCH Programs to Address SARS-CoV-2 Surveillance Studies

Purpose: To support vaccine hesitancy research relevant to SARS-CoV-2. This Notice of Special Interest intends to provide funds for IDeA and Native American Research Centers for Health grantees to expand the scope of their active grants.

Deadline: April 30, 2021

More Information: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-GM-21-021.html>

Number: [Notice of Intent] NOT-GM-21-018

Title: Administrative Supplements for Research on Women's Health in the IDeA States

Purpose: The Office of Research on Women's Health and the National Institute of General Medical Sciences, along with Institutes and Centers of NIH announce the availability of administrative supplements to IDeA awards to expand research and research capacity in the IDeA states to address important issues of women's health across the lifespan. The proposed research must address at least one of the strategic goals of the 2019-2023 Trans-NIH Strategic Plan for Women's Health Research "Advancing Science for the Health of Women." Research on maternal and infant morbidity and mortality is of particular interest.

Deadline: April 19, 2021

More Information: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-GM-21-018.html>

MCCTR-affiliated Publications, December 1, 2020 - January 31, 2021

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Clark D 3rd, Puri R, Nissen SE. Coronary atherosclerotic plaque progression: contributing factors in statin-treated patients. *Expert Rev Cardiovasc Ther*. 2020 Dec;18(12):873-880. doi: 10.1080/14779072.2020.1833716. PMID: 33048622.

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Winscott JG, Hillegass WB. Everolimus eluting bioresorbable vascular scaffolds for infrapopliteal critical limb ischemia: Moving beyond grasping at metal straws. *Catheter Cardiovasc Interv*. 2021 Jan 1;97(1):150-151. doi: 10.1002/ccd.29451. PMID: 33460268.

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