

EVCP Expresso ? January 2018

January 2, 2018

Dear Colleagues:

The arrival of a new year is always a reminder of how much things can change in twelve months. I'm hoping that the dawn of 2018 brings some resolute reflection for all of us on the need to become even more active and engaged in the many things that need addressing in the world.

In this edition of *Expresso*, I'd like to highlight a couple of matters where people are making a difference. In the case of our Diversity and Inclusion Staff Certificate Program, we've had tremendous interest in participation, and we've seen the first graduates go back to their jobs, spreading the word about this important aspect of our values.

In a matter of vital interest to researchers, I'm taking a look at how UCSF is ready to implement some changes in NIH rules on IRBs in multi-site studies. It sounds complicated ? and it is! ? but many folks have been working hard behind the scenes to make sure things run smoothly for our scientists.

With that introduction, this month's topics are:

- Spreading Diversity: Certificate Program marks first anniversary
- Single IRB Mandate: Managing NIH changes to IRB rules
- Stay in the Giving Spirit: Kindness is everything

Please feel free to share your thoughts with me about this month's *Expresso* at ExecutiveViceChancellor@ucsf.edu [1].

By the way, the year is off to a rousing start and full of activity ? especially at Parnassus. To name only a few upcoming events, on January 8, we have an Immunology Seminar/PICI with Dr. Thomas Gajewski [2], a leader in cancer immunotherapy from the University of Chicago, as well as the inaugural Quarterly Symposium Highlighting Parnassus Cancer Research in the HDFCCC [3]. On January 11, the first Parnassus RIPS (Research in Progress Series) [4] begins, and lastly, a revamped Faculty Lunch Seminar Series at Parnassus [5] kicks off on January 22.

Best wishes to all of you for a peaceful and fulfilling new year!

Dan

Spreading Diversity: Certificate Program marks first anniversary

Last year, I was proud to write about the inaugural cohort ^[6] of twenty-one people who completed a four-month-long Diversity and Inclusion Staff Certificate Program offered here at UCSF. Now that those graduates have brought their new knowledge and insight to their daily roles, I was keen to learn about the degree to which they have been able to bring change to their respective areas. That, after all, is one of the primary goals for the program.

“A lot of folks want to find a way to take this information back to their core teams,” says LaMisha Hill, PhD, director of the Multicultural Resource Center and the leader of the certificate program.

Vice Chancellor of Diversity and Outreach Renee Navarro explains that the program is part of a “multi-pronged approach” aimed at shifting the culture of our massive organization to be more inclusive and more respectful of diversity. The program stems from a 2013 climate survey showing that many staff felt they were not being treated with respect and lacked opportunities for professional development. Staff members are our largest constituency at UCSF and are critical to our success as well as a cohesive workplace climate, but the survey reflected a perception of exclusion. Providing this in-depth diversity training for staff builds skills to help foster inclusion and respect and is a way for us to improve the climate at UCSF for all.

Karen Sanchez, a human resources generalist and visa specialist, was part of the first cohort and says the training has helped raise her awareness about unconscious bias and inform her daily interactions with people. She tells me, “One of the main things I learned was how to communicate better with our diverse staff, our diverse patients, and our diverse faculty. It helps me to more readily address people and engage in conversation.”

Karen explains that she works on a floor that was experiencing a particularly high volume of theft, and everyone was on edge. There was a high potential to default to harmful assumptions and profiling. One day, she said hello to an African-American woman who replied, “You’re the first person who acknowledged me without thinking I look suspicious. I work here. I may not have fancy clothing. I don’t have my hair pulled up. The women in that office made me feel uncomfortable.” Karen’s awareness led to her reaching out, which resulted in the two women having an enriching conversation about stereotypes.

The program is helping, but we still have quite a way to go.

Byron Decuire, a registered respiratory therapist at ZSFG, also participated in the program. At the graduation, he read a moving poem about his struggles as a black man ^[7], which I published in *Expresso*. But, Byron says his struggles have continued: “It seems like being black is harder and harder to be.”

In his workplace, he said that “There’s a lot of acknowledgement that racism is rampant and problematic. The awareness work that I’ve done has been all voluntary. It’s difficult to do on top of a full time job, to have a major impact, or any impact.”

Byron conveys that it’s been powerful to hear white people in positions of authority admit their

privilege: "That is extraordinary." He now would like leadership to take what he sees as the next step. He envisions something like South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, a system of restorative justice in which people can openly tell their stories of how racism has affected them at work, without fear of repercussions. Each campus location would be staffed with one or two people who can hear complaints of bias in the workplace and take action.

In addition, he touched on the impact of hurtful language both from being on the receiving end of it, and of seeing people's reaction when they're labeled "racist." He feels that the term is too loaded, and it implies malign intent, so individuals react by denying it and then shutting down. Instead, he has learned to talk about "implicit bias," a perspective that everyone is (or should be) willing to admit.

Still, he sees people working toward change and remains hopeful, "I'm honored once again to have the discussion, and I hope in my lifetime that I'm able to claim some of the responsibility to change my hospital and department. Honor diversity. Love one another. Respect one another. In the hospital, everybody bleeds. Emotions have no color."

I appreciate Byron and Karen investing their time and efforts to complete the program and use it in their daily life for the benefit of others. I'll be taking their experiences and suggestions to heart and doing what I can to ensure that individuals like Byron and Karen don't shoulder the burden alone. I invite you to do the same.

back to top

Single IRB Mandate: Managing NIH changes to IRB rules

If you've collaborated with a researcher at another institution and need Institutional Review Board (IRB) sign-off, you know what it feels like to slog through the process. Don't get me wrong, IRB review is completely necessary, but it can slow down research activities, especially if more than one institution is involved. You also most likely know that the NIH is implementing a big change later this month that should have a positive impact on multi-site projects.

Under the new, well-intended plan [8], multi-site studies would use a single IRB to conduct the review. "Until now, if you had fifteen sites doing a trial, each institution's IRB would review it," explains Laurie Herraiz, the new director of the Human Research Protection Program (HRPP) and the person spearheading UCSF's response to the new policy. "The goal of this revised policy is to allow the research to start up more quickly."

Oddly, working towards making things easier is bringing on a lot of complexity to get to the finish line. But rest assured, UCSF's IRB is working with different research administrative units around the campus, including Research Management Services, the Office of Sponsored Research, the Privacy Office, and the Office of Legal Affairs, to undo the tangles.

The new regulations go into effect on January 25 and apply to projects that:

- are funded by an NIH grant, cooperative agreement or contract
- take place at two or more sites
- use the same protocol.

The NIH is aware that institutions vary widely in their capacity and infrastructure, so there is a great deal of flexibility around who can serve in this role. The Lead Site, a participating site, a non-participating site or a commercial IRB may all serve as the single IRB (sIRB). Please contact the IRB for a consultation prior to grant submission to discuss the selection of a sIRB and for guidance in completing the grant application.

The HRPP, with support from the EVCP office, has hired a consulting firm with expertise in sIRBs. The firm will assess the current sIRB program, help operationalize the new mandate, and determine what resources are needed to serve widely as an sIRB.

For more information, updates, and guidance materials, please check the IRB's website ^[9].

"Our goal is to make this as seamless as possible for the PIs," Laurie says. "We worked tirelessly over the holidays and continue our efforts to implement this change. This is a top priority. We want to make both the transition and the process as efficient as possible."

This reminds me of one of Pete Seeger's best sayings: "Any darn fool can make something complex; it takes a genius to make something simple." Laurie has her work cut out for her, but I am certain we're in good hands.

[back to top](#)

Stay in the Giving Spirit: Kindness is everything

I hope you found joy in the holiday season that just concluded. One of the things I love about that time of year is the spirit of generosity, and it got me thinking about how to keep that spirit going. As the "season of giving" wraps up, the challenge is to stay in a giving mindset throughout the new year.

That's not to say spend more money (although that's an option!). Let's think creatively about what we mean by giving. For instance, many of us are privileged in our positions here at UCSF; we should use our place of privilege to give someone else a chance, a leg up, a seat at the table. How about giving someone some time? Offer advice; take a junior colleague to lunch; pay forward that mentorship that helped you succeed when you were younger.

Maybe you'll have the chance to give a speech, or a lecture. Your thoughts and ideas make a wonderful gift!

The season of giving really starts with Thanksgiving, and while I wrote about gratitude ^[10] and recognition ^[11] in November, I'm urging each of us to keep giving thanks all year, as well.

Find inspiration in different places. I enjoy that Supertramp song from the '70s, "Give a Little Bit" ^[12], which speaks so beautifully and simply about giving time, life, and love. ("See the man with the lonely eyes. Oh, take his hand, you'll be surprised.")

Have some jokes ready, so you can give someone an unexpected smile. I was buying bagels at the farmer's market and the fellow at the register offered up some corny jokes, which those

of us in line couldn't help but laugh at. (What did the snail say while riding on the back of the tortoise? Wheeeeeeeee!)

Giving something engenders the good feeling of having helped someone, and is a powerful determinant of the spiritual principle of karma [13], but no matter the return, acts of kindness precipitate more kindness. The Random Acts of Kindness Foundation (I love that such a thing exists!) appeals to our scientific minds with this video, asserting that one kind act per day can help boost your serotonin, endorphins, and oxytocin [14]. So many seemingly inconsequential random acts come to mind: holding open the door for others; refraining from pushing the "door close" button on the elevator too quickly; noticing and helping visitors to our campuses find their way; saying "thank you" regularly to the people who clean our facilities, paying for the coffee/drink of the person in line behind you, especially if a student.?

Of course, you can also give money. I've come to appreciate websites like GiveWell.org [15], which rates charities, and DonorsChoose.org [16], where you can find a classroom to support. UCSF is also asking many people to give in support of UCSF: The Campaign [17], our \$5 billion fundraising effort, which I wrote about last month [18]. That's a good one to keep in mind.

Winston Churchill once said, "We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give."

[back to top](#)

Dan's Tip of the Month

My colleague and friend Steve Pantilat shared this poem by Carrie Newcomer with me:



Three Gratuities

Every night before I go to sleep
I say out loud
Three things that I'm grateful for,
All the significant, insignificant
Extraordinary, ordinary stuff of my life.

It's a small practice and humble,
And yet, I find I sleep better
Holding what lightens and softens my life

Ever so briefly at the end of the day.

Sunlight, and blueberries,
Good dogs and wool socks,
A fine rain,
A good friend,
Fresh basil and wild phlox,
My father's good health,
My daughter's new job,
The song that always makes me cry,
Always at the same part,
No matter how many times I hear it.

Decent coffee at the airport,
And your quiet breathing,
The stories you told me,
The frost patterns on the windows,
English horns and banjos,
Wood Thrush and June bugs,
The smooth glassy calm of the morning pond,
An old coat,
A new poem,
My library card,
And that my car keeps running
Despite all the miles.

And after three things,
More often than not,
I get on a roll and I just keep on going,
I keep naming and listing,
Until I lie grinning,
Blankets pulled up to my chin,
Awash with wonder
At the sweetness of it all.

[back to top](#)

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- [1] <mailto:ExecutiveViceChancellor@ucsf.edu>
- [2] http://calendar.ucsf.edu/event/tumor_and_host_factors_regulating_anti-tumor_immunity_and_immunotherapy
- [3] <http://cancer.ucsf.edu/events/2018/01/08/1st-quarterly-symposium-highlighting-pannassus-cancer-research-in-the-hdfccc.8610>
- [4] http://calendar.ucsf.edu/event/1st_joint_pannassus_rips_research_in_progress_series
- [5] http://calendar.ucsf.edu/event/kick_off_faculty_lunch_seminar_series_at_pannassus
- [6] <https://evcprovost.ucsf.edu/evcp-expresso/201701#certprgm>
- [7] <https://evcprovost.ucsf.edu/evcp-expresso/201701#poem>
- [8] <https://www.nih.gov/about-nih/who-we-are/nih-director/statements/single-irb-policy-streamline-reviews-multi-site-research>
- [9] <https://irb.ucsf.edu/>
- [10] <https://evcprovost.ucsf.edu/evcp-expresso/201711#gratitude>
- [11] <https://evcprovost.ucsf.edu/evcp-expresso/201711#recognition>
- [12] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WA7JY1OoxnU>
- [13] <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karma>
- [14] <https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/the-science-of-kindness>
- [15] <https://www.givewell.org/>
- [16] <https://www.donorschoose.org/donors/search.html>
- [17] <https://campaign.ucsf.edu/>
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