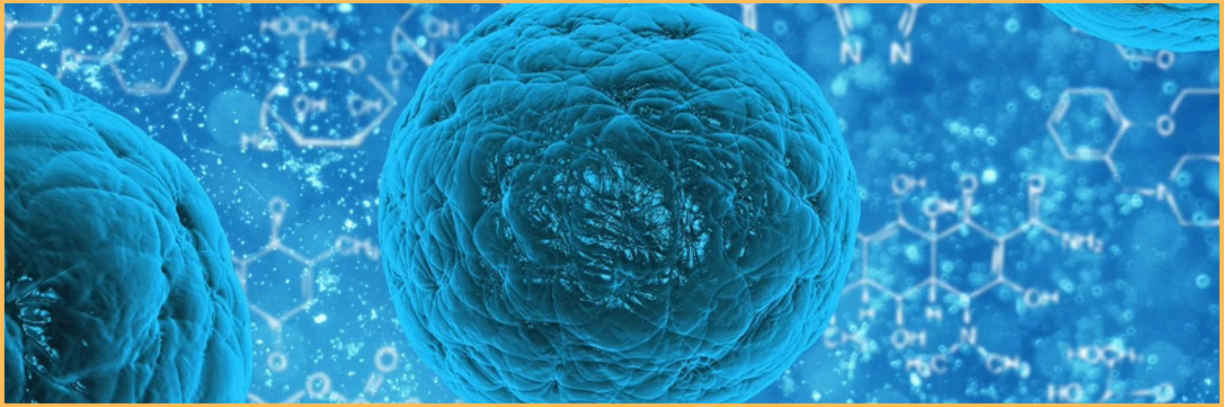


Stem Cells @ UCR

STEM CELL CENTER NEWSLETTER



UCR's CIRM Training Program Pipeline - Training At All Levels!

- [TRANSCEND](#) trains **Ph.D. students** (3 yrs) and **Postdoctoral** trainees (2 yrs). The program offers the trainees annual stipends and funds for research/travel.
- [CIRM Bridges Program](#) (Affiliated with CSUSB and CSUCI) offers internships to **undergraduates** and **masters students** for 1-year in UCR labs.
- [RAMP](#) is a 3-year program developed to train **undergraduates** and inspire diverse students toward careers in regenerative medicine. It offers partial tuition and stipends for trainees.
- [STRIDE](#) trains local **high school students** in underserved communities for a 5-week summer internship in UCR stem cell labs and offers trainees a stipend for completing the training.

What's Inside:

[IESCC Annual Symposium](#)

[Program Activities](#)

[Recent Publications](#)

[Congrats and Awards](#)

[New Trainees](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

UCR Hosted the Inland Empire Stem Cell Consortium's Annual Symposium - 2024



On November 22nd, 2024, the Annual Symposium for the Inland Empire Stem Cell Consortium was hosted by UCR in the HUB. Researchers and students from Western University, UCI, Loma Linda University, CSUSB, City of Hope, UCR, and the California University of Science and Medicine came together to share a day of learning, networking, discovering of new products at a vendor show, and discussing their latest stem cell research projects through podium and poster presentations.

The symposium also included an excellent keynote presentation from Dr. Clive Svendsen (bottom left), Executive Director of the Board of Governors Regenerative Medicine Institute at Cedars Sinai, titled: “Using Stem Cell to Model and Treat Human Disease.”

Congratulations to the poster presentation winners!

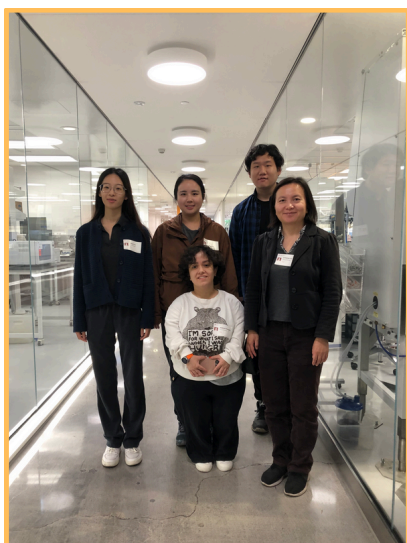
Lu Jin - 1st Place tied (Jin Nam's Lab - UCR)

Diana Browning - 1st Place tied - (Angelo Cardoso's Lab - COH)

Jon Wong - 2nd Place (Prue Talbot's Lab - UCR)



A Look Back At Stem Cell Program Activities



UCR Students and Postdocs Visit Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) Facilities

Organized by Dr. Huinan Liu (Professor and Associate Dean for Student Academic Affairs in Bournes College of Engineering), small groups of students and postdocs visited two local GMP Facilities in southern California.

The first facilities tour was with **Viral Vector's GMP site through AVID Bioservices** in Costa Mesa, CA, and the second facilities tour was with **Cedars-Sinai Biomanufacturing Center** in West Hollywood, CA. These site tours provide an inside look to otherwise closed off facilities. They highlight the high end equipment, high level standard operating procedures, and provided an opportunity for students and postdocs to observe how GMP facilities are set up and maintained.



Career Development Workshop Series

Fall 2024:

- **How to get a faculty position in academia** - Guest Speakers: Dr. Atena Zahedi (Assistant Professor, UCI) and Dr. Megan Norris (Assistant Professor, UCR)

Winter 2025:

- **What is it like to work in industry? Consulting and Industry Careers** - Guest Speakers: Dr. Careen Khachatoorian (Consulting, Toxicologist at TCR Companies) and Dr. Shane Sakamaki-Ching (PharmTech, Senior Manager at Kite Pharma)
- **How to get a job in industry: Positioning yourself as a competitive candidate** - Guest Speaker: Dr. Barbara Davis (BioTech, Associate Director of R&D Irvine Scientific/FujiFilm)

Soon to come:

- How to negotiate a new faculty position and set up a lab
- Alternative positions in academia
- International Students/Postdocs - How to navigate getting a job



Recent Publications

Wetteland C, Xu C, Wang SM, Zhang C, Ang EJ, Azevedo CG, Liu HH. **Engineering the Ratios of Nanoparticles Dispersed in Triphasic Nanocomposites for Biomedical Applications.** ACS Appl Mater Interfaces. 2025 Jan 15;17(2):3852-3865. [doi: 10.1021/acsami.4c14712](https://doi.org/10.1021/acsami.4c14712).

Chai X, Lin J, Xu C, Sun D, Liu HH. **Engineering Triphasic Nanocomposite Coatings on Pretreated Mg Substrates for Biomedical Applications.** ACS Appl Mater Interfaces. 2024 Oct 9;16(40):54716-54730. [doi: 10.1021/acsami.4c13811](https://doi.org/10.1021/acsami.4c13811).

Phandthong R, Wong M, Song A, Martinez T, Talbot P. **Does Vaping Increase The Likelihood Of SARS-Cov-2 Infection? Paradoxically Yes And No.** Am J Physiol Lung Cell Mol Physiol. 2024 Feb 1;326(2):L175-L189. [doi: 10.1152/ajplung.00300.2022](https://doi.org/10.1152/ajplung.00300.2022).

Shabnam Etemadi, Prue Talbot, **Menthol, a consumer product additive, adversely affects human embryonic stem cells via activation of TRPM8 and TRPA1 channels.** Stem Cells Translational Medicine, Volume 14, Issue 3, March 2025, szae099. <https://doi.org/10.1093/stcltm/szae099>

Aihik Banerjee, Parnian Jabbari, Manuela Martins-Green, Iman Noshadi, **A choline bio-ionic liquid-functionalized gelatin methacryloyl hydrogel for chronic wound healing.** European Polymer Journal, Volume 228, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eurpolymj.2025.113787>.

Aihik Banerjee, Mohammad Khavani, Kevin Dalsania, Prince David Okoro, Mohammad R.K. Mofrad, Iman Noshadi. **Mechanistic understanding of enhancing bioactivity via bio-ionic liquid functionalization of biomaterials.** Applied Materials Today, Volume 41, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.apmt.2024.102444>.

Vinicius Canale, Declan McCole. **Loss Of Intestinal Epithelial Ptpn2 Selectively Impairs Goblet Cell Differentiation During Type I Immunity Response.** Inflammatory Bowel Diseases, Volume 31, Issue Supplement_1, February 2025, Pages S44–S45, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ibd/izae282.103>

Lu Jin, Youyi Tai, Jin Nam. **Piezoelectric Silk Fibroin Nanofibers: Structural Optimization To Enhance Piezoelectricity And Biostability For Neural Tissue Engineering.** Nano Energy, Volume 132, 2024, 110367, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nanoen.2024.110367>.

Lin L, Zhao J, Kubota N, Li Z, Lam YL, Nguyen LP, Yang L, Pokharel SP, Blue SM, Yee BA, Chen R, Yeo GW, Chen CW, Chen L, Zheng S. **Epistatic interactions between NMD and TRP53 control progenitor cell maintenance and brain size.** Neuron. 2024 Jul 3;112(13):2157-2176.e12. DOI: [10.1016/j.neuron.2024.04.006](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuron.2024.04.006)

Naoto Kubota, Liang Chen, Sika Zheng. **Shiba: A Versatile Computational Method For Systematic Identification Of Differential RNA Splicing Across Platforms.** Nucleic Acids Research, Volume 53, Issue 4, 28 February 2025, gkaf098. <https://doi.org/10.1093/nar/gkaf098>

Congratulations To These Recent Graduates!

Isabella Bagdasarian, PhD - Mentor: Josh Morgan (BCOE)

Youyi Tai, PhD - Mentor: Jin Nam (BCOE)

Ariana Hardy, PhD - Mentor: Nicole zur Nieden (CNAS)

Edgar Rolon, MS - Mentor: Prue Talbot (CNAS)

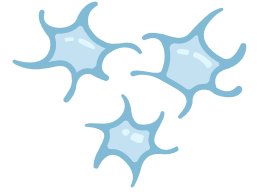
Arash Tahmasbi, MS - Mentor: Prue Talbot (CNAS)

Awards

- **Best Stem Cell Publication Award - UCR Stem Cell Center**
 - **1st Place - Shabnam Etemadi** - Etemadi, S et al. (2025) Menthol, a consumer product additive, adversely affects human embryonic stem cells via activation of TRPM8 and TRPA1 channels. [Link](#)
 - **2nd Place - Vinicius Canale** - Canale V et al. (2023) PTPN2 Is a Critical Regulator of Ileal Paneth Cell Viability and Function in Mice. [Link](#)
 - **Best Impact Award from the American Journal of Physiology-Lung Cellular and Molecular Physiology**
 - **George Phandthong et al., 2024** - Does Vaping Increase The Likelihood Of SARS-Cov-2 Infection? Paradoxically Yes And No. [Link](#)
 - **UCR Stem Cell Center Travel Awards**
 - Lu Jin: 2024 Biomedical Engineering Society Annual Meeting on October 23-26, 2024 in Baltimore, Maryland
 - Shabnam Etemadi: 2024 Engineering Development and Disease in Organoids in San Diego
 - Youyi Tai: 2024 Biomedical Engineering Society Annual Meeting Between October 23th - 26th in Baltimore, Maryland
-

Meet Our Newest CIRM-TRANSCEND Program Trainees

Rebecca Ruggiero-Ruff – Postdoc in Meera Nair’s Lab (SOM)
Project Title: **Determining how Innate Immune Cells Influence Adipose Stromal Cells in Obesity**



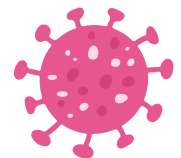
Manas Kinra – Postdoc in Eddie Zagha’s Lab (CNAS)
Project Title: **Development of Cisplatin-Loaded Poly(Glycerol Sebacate) Implantable Microdots for Targeted Treatment of Glioblastoma Using Stem Cell-Derived Organoid Models**



Shiyang He – Postdoc in Jernej Murn’s Lab (CNAS)
Project Title: **Understanding Cell Quiescence in Stem Cells: A Multi-Transcriptomic Approach**



Yash Chaudhary – Postdoc in Sonali Chaturvedi’s Lab (CNAS)
Project Title: **Investigating Immediate Early 2-Induced Cytotoxicity in Cytomegalovirus-Infected Cerebral Organoids**



Upcoming Events



UCR’s Spring Stem Cell Seminar Series

Mondays from 12pm - 1pm - Join us on Zoom!

Link: [Meeting ID: 984 4606 8137 | Passcode: 829547](#)



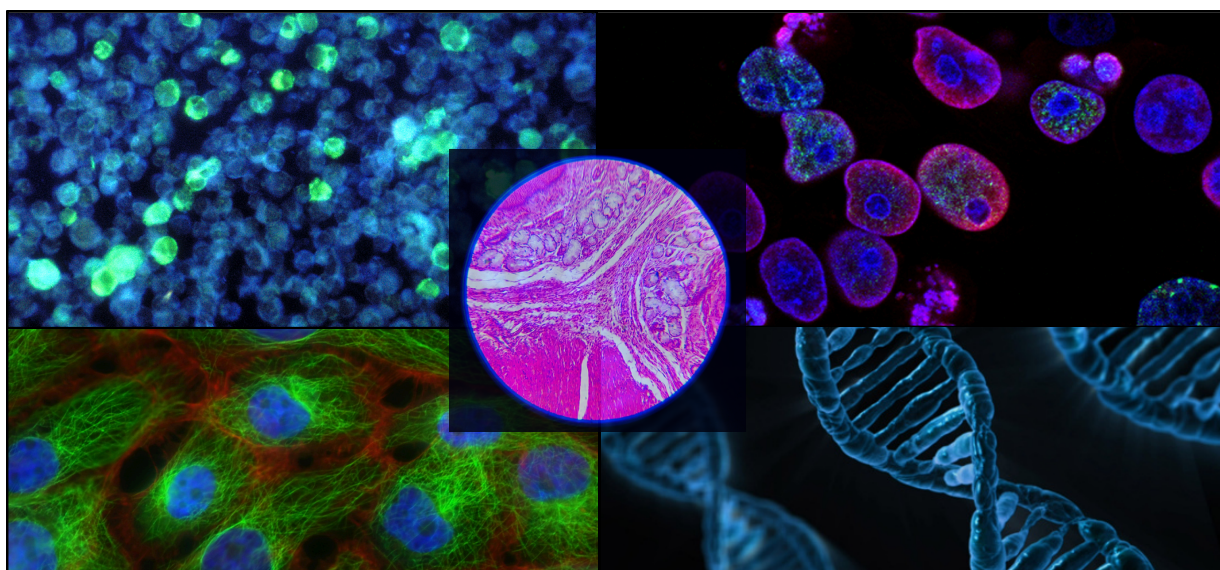
UCR’s CIRM Programs Summer Symposium

A symposium for all of UCR’s CIRM Program Trainees
Hosted by UCR



Inland Empire Stem Cell Consortium’s Annual Symposium

Open to all students and researchers within the Consortium
Hosted by City of Hope on Thursday, November 6th, 2025



Thank you for reading!

Dr. Prue Talbot, Director, Stem Cell Center and Core Director, TRANSCEND Program Coordinator, UCR CIRM-Bridges	email: talbot@ucr.edu
Dr. Huinan Liu, Director, RAMP Program Director, STRIDE Program	email: huinanl@ucr.edu
Dr. Rachel Behar, Academic Coordinator Stem Cell Core	email: rachel.behar@ucr.edu
Learn more about the Stem Cell Center and Core	https://stemcells.ucr.edu
