

# IFH INSIGHTS

Quarterly News from Rutgers Institute for Health,  
Health Care Policy and Aging Research

## Summer Interns Conclude Research

Nine interns from across the country were selected out of a highly competitive pool of 1,200 applicants to participate in IFH's Summer Research Internship Program. Over the summer, students received hands-on experience with research topics including cancer, opioid-use disorder, dementia and neuropsychology. Students presented their research and accomplishments to their mentors and IFH staff and faculty to conclude the program.



D'Naija Ammons, Jaelyn Liu, Varun Vekaria



D'Naija Ammons

## Fall Kicks Off Seminar Series

As part of its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, IFH is hosting esteemed speakers to share their work on cross-cutting population health topics. In September, IFH welcomed sisters Margaret Marsh, University Professor at Rutgers, and Wanda Ronner, Professor of Clinical Obstetrics and Gynecology at the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania for their seminar on "A Giant, Colossal, Big Deal: In Vitro Fertilization Comes to America".

IFH also welcomed Shawna Hudson, Professor, Vice Chair of Research and Henry Rutgers Chair of Family Medicine and Community Health at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School; Senior Associate Dean for Population Health Research; and Vice Chancellor of Dissemination and Implementation Science at Rutgers Health, for her seminar on "Learning Health System Opportunities: Cultivating Research Relationships to Enhance Quality and Facilitate Organizational Change".



Wanda Ronner, Margaret Marsh



Shawna Hudson

JULY  
-  
SEPTEMBER  
2025

IN THIS ISSUE

NEW FACULTY & STAFF

NEW GRANTS

INTERNSHIP

PROMOTIONS

SEMINAR SERIES

UPCOMING EVENTS

& MORE

**R** **RUTGERS HEALTH**  
Institute for Health, Health Care  
Policy and Aging Research

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## Lenert Named Biomedical Informatics Center Director

Leslie Lenert, an internationally recognized informatics expert, has been named inaugural director of the Rutgers Center for Biomedical Informatics and Health Artificial Intelligence (BMIHAI), based at IFH.



Lenert joins Rutgers from the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC), where he held positions including distinguished professor of internal medicine, associate vice president of data science and informatics, chief research information officer and director of the Biomedical Informatics Center. Bringing experience in information technology, artificial intelligence, health policy, and public health administration, Lenert was selected for the position after an extensive national search.

## Reinhard Named RWJBH Board Chair

Nationally recognized expert in health and long-term care policy, Susan Reinhard, was appointed the first female chair of the RWJBarnabas Health Board of Trustees.



Dr. Reinhart is a Visiting Professor for the Betty Irene Moore Fellowship for Nurse Leaders and Innovators at the University of California, Davis. She has served as a vice chair of the RWJBH board since 2022, and was a founding member of the Board since 2016. Among other former roles, Reinhard served as the co-director of IFH's Center for State Health Policy.

## Promotions

Congratulations to the following core members who received promotions this summer:

**William Hu**, director of the Center for Healthy Aging Research, was promoted to Professor at RWJMS.

**Ann Nguyen** of the Center for State Health Policy was promoted to Associate Research Professor.

**Chintan Dave** of the Center for Pharmacoepidemiology and Treatment Science was promoted to Associate Professor at Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy.

**Farzin Khosrow-Khavar** of the Center for Pharmacoepidemiology and Treatment Science was promoted to Assistant Professor at the School of Public Health.

**Elizabeth Suarez** of the Center for Pharmacoepidemiology and Treatment Science was promoted to Assistant Professor at the School of Public Health.

**Benjamin Bates** of the Center for Pharmacoepidemiology and Treatment Science was promoted to Assistant Professor at RWJMS.

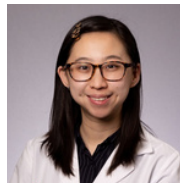
## NEW FACES



**Adeyinka Ajayi**  
Associate Program  
Manager, CPBH



**Dean Carbonari**  
Senior Research Project  
Manager, PETS



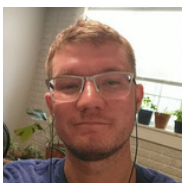
**Chun-yuan (Tracy) Chang**  
Research Associate, CHAR



**Albert Didriksen**  
Visiting Researcher, IFH



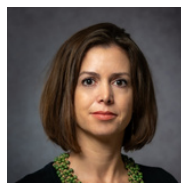
**Samantha Feaser**  
Program Assistant, CHAR



**Brandon Klinedinst**  
Post-Doctoral Associate



**Vincent Lo Re**  
Director, PETS &  
Professor, RWJMS



**Luciana Mascarenhas  
Fonseca**  
Core Member, ADDR &  
Assistant Professor,  
RWJMS



**Pia Mauro**  
Core Member, PETS  
& Associate  
Professor, SPH



**Julianne Varga**  
Research Project  
Assistant, PETS



**Lydia Zhang**  
Data Analyst,  
IFH Data Core

# NEW GRANTS

Preventing Overdose in Supportive Housing: Stepped Wedge Randomized Controlled Trial of a Multi-Sector, Upstream Intervention

**Sponsor:** Subaward from NYU School of Medicine  
**Prime Originating Sponsor:** National Institute on Drug Abuse/NIH

**Joel Cantor (CSHP)**

Allstate Foundation College Service Grant

**Sponsor:** The Allstate Foundation

**Ethan Halm**

Cognitive phenotypes of emotion regulation and suicide risk in Veterans with TBI

**Sponsor:** VA New Jersey Health Care System

**Chintan Dave (PETS)**

Psychosocial and cultural determinants of cardiometabolic health among older Chinese Americans

**Sponsor:** National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute/NIH

Neighborhood environment, psychosocial factors, and AD/DR risk

**Sponsor:** Alzheimer's Association

**Yanping Jiang (CPBH)**

Alzheimer's Disease (AD) and Vascular Brain Injury-related changes in longitudinal Magnetic Resonance Imaging associated with Intraindividual Cognitive Variability in Aging American Indians

**Sponsor:** National Institute on Aging/NIH

Intraindividual cognitive variability in aging adults with Down syndrome: associations with Alzheimer's disease plasma biomarkers, neuropathology and clinical dementia

**Sponsor:** National Institute on Aging/NIH

**Luciana Fonseca (ADRD)**

Facilitating Access to Digital Health Information for Individuals with Multifaceted Health and Social Needs: Smartphone App Co-design in Community Wellness Centers

**Sponsor:** RU Internal Award (Research Office)

**Carolyn Sartor (CPBH)**

Identifying Oncologist Attributes Associated with Prescribing Systemic Cancer Therapies to Patients in the Last 30 Days of Life

**Sponsor:** State of NJ Department of Health

**Login George (CHAR)**

Adverse Health Outcomes From Extreme Heat, Air Pollution, and Medications in Low-Income Pregnant Women and Their Offspring

**Sponsor:** National Institute of Child Health and Human Development/NIH

**Soko Setoguchi (CCHH)**

Scorching Circumstances: The Role of Extreme Heat in Disability among Older Workers in Heat-Sensitive Jobs

**Sponsor:** Subaward from CUNY, Research Foundation  
**Prime Originating Sponsor:** NIH

**Mara Getz Sheftel (CSHP)**

Performance Improvement Evaluation- New Jersey MHBG ARPA Initiatives

**Sponsor:** NJ Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services

**Elizabeth Stone (CSHR)**

Arthritis Foundation and CARRA  
Increase Support for Pediatric  
Rheumatology Research by  
Awarding \$2 Million in Grants

CARRA

NEWS PROVIDED BY  
Childhood Arthritis and Rheumatology Research Alliance (CARRA) -  
JUL 14, 2025, 10:22 ET

ATLANTA, July 14, 2025 (PRNewswire) - In response to changes in the federal funding environment, the Arthritis Foundation and the Childhood Arthritis and Rheumatology Research Alliance (CARRA) have increased funding for their joint grant program that supports physician-led research in pediatric rheumatology. This year, the CARRA-Arthritis Foundation Grant Program will award nearly \$2 million - an increase of \$200,000 from the previous year - to advance research in this critical field.

Daniel Horton's grant "JIA Flares, Recapture of Inactive Disease, and the Patient's Voice," awarded earlier this year by the CARRA-Arthritis Foundation Grant Program, was highlighted by the Childhood Arthritis and Rheumatology Research Alliance.



## Visaria Selected as NJ ACTS Scholar

Center for Climate, Health and Healthcare core member, Aayush Visaria, was selected for the NJ ACTS K12 Scholar award.



Visaria was among the newest cohort of faculty selected for the award.

The K12 Scholars program supports the career development of promising junior faculty committed to advancing human health through clinical and translational research. It is aimed at training the next generation of scientists to become independent investigators pursuing cutting-edge, impactful health science.

This clinical-translational scientist career development program is supported by a grant from the National Institutes of Health/National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) and Rutgers Health Chancellor Brian Strom.

## Cheers4Peers Launches at IFH

The Cheers4Peers Program is a workplace appreciation platform designed to publicly acknowledge staff who display positive and supportive attitudes at work. The program allows staff to recognize the efforts of fellow employees through personalized messages of support and can be sent publicly or anonymously.

Head to [go.rutgers.edu/ifh-cheers](http://go.rutgers.edu/ifh-cheers) to shout out a department, a group of people, or an individual.



Scan QR Code to visit IFH's Cheers4Peers page:



## Upcoming Events



- ADA Turns 35: Panel discussion celebrating 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act
  - Thursday, October 23 2pm - @ The Heldrich
- IFH40 Speaker Series - @ IFH:
  - Wednesday, October 29 12pm: Julie Phillips, Rutgers Sociology - at IFH
  - Wednesday, November 19 12pm: Ellen Idler, Emory (\*New Date) - at IFH
- SPH Suicide Prevention Speaker Series via Zoom:
  - Tuesday, November 18 10am: Laurin Jozlin, Zero Suicide Institute - via Zoom
  - Tuesday, December 2 1pm: Sidra Goldman-Mellor, University of California Merced
  - Tuesday, December 16 10am: Jonathan Purtle, NYU

Visit the events page on IFH's website or reach out to Nicole Swenarton [nswenarton@ifh.rutgers.edu](mailto:nswenarton@ifh.rutgers.edu) with questions.

## Reminder

The IFH Data Core would like to share a friendly reminder to please acknowledge the Core in your publications that leveraged Core personnel or resources.

Please include a statement such as the following:

**"This study was completed in part by research services and data resources provided by the Institute for Health Data Core at Rutgers University, available at: <http://www.ifhcore.rutgers.edu>."**