

UC DAVIS

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER

November 2019 Newsletter



When the greatest
challenge is our
imagination

Irva Hertz-Picciotto
Director and Principal
Investigator

Almost simultaneously as the weather begins to cool, California is again being hit with intensive, destructive wildfires. It's a reminder that *No, all is not well on planet Earth and its complex life-sustaining ecosystems*. While the human intellect, innovation, drive, capacity for abstraction, technologic achievements, artistic creations and much more, have led to magnificent and awesome discoveries and transformations of the ways we live, as a species we have also lost sight of how interconnected we are with the natural physical and biological world that surrounds us.

The built world that we have constructed might seem stronger and more fixed in its influence on our lives, but that's an illusion: we still need clean air to breathe, uncontaminated and unspoiled food for nourishment, and water to drink and bathe in – all of these on a very regular basis. When such resources have been polluted and abused, we trample on the necessities for survival and for health.

Thus, the work of our EHSC—studying how environment affects health—is, one way or another, addressing the essentials. The challenge we face is to harness our imaginations so as to tackle the massive imbalances in all spheres and systems, caused by uncontrolled greenhouse gas emissions, and to find ways to re-connect with and preserve the natural systems that have sustained life for billions of years.

We have roles to play, both as researchers and as citizens of Earth.



2020-2021 Pilot Project Request for Proposals

It's official! The 2020-2021 Pilot Projects Program is now underway.

Concept letters that met the November 1 deadline are being reviewed and potential grantees will learn soon if they'll be invited to complete the full application. For details about funding, community stakeholder priorities and the application process, [read all about it here](#).

If you are an applicant

Full applications—The deadline for the full application is **December 1**. Awards go to research that: is relevant to EHSC and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) and has a strong likelihood of leading to significant NIEHS funding in the short-term. Additional considerations are the areas of priority identified in the request for proposals, and presence of a community engagement component and/or potential to influence public health policy.

Don't go it alone—EHSC's Community Engagement Core and Exposure Core are holding design clinics for researchers who will be completing the full application. The Integrative Health Sciences Core will provide consultation for researchers needing assistance on defining/measuring relevant health outcomes in human, animal, or in vitro studies and may suggest collaborators to fill that role. If you're seeking help on the required community engagement or on exposure elements of your pilot project proposal, be sure to attend the respective clinic, which can identify potential community partners or assist with the exposure assessment, and provide constructive feedback to inform the full application.

Exposure Design Clinic

- Tuesday, November 5
- 9:30-11:00 AM
- 2411 Tupper

Contact: [Debbie Bennett](#)

Community Engagement Design Clinic

- Thursday, November 7
- 1:30-3:00pm

- MS1C
- Applicants may also join by video conference through this link: <https://zoom.us/j/9532801379>

Contact: [Aubrey Thompson](#)

Health Outcomes Consultation for Human, Animal or In Vitro studies

- By appointment
- Indicate what ‘model system’ or population you are seeking

Contact for human studies: [Irva Hertz-Picciotto](#)

Contact for animal models or in vitro: [Kent Pinkerton](#)

Contact for respiratory: [Nicholas Kenyon](#)

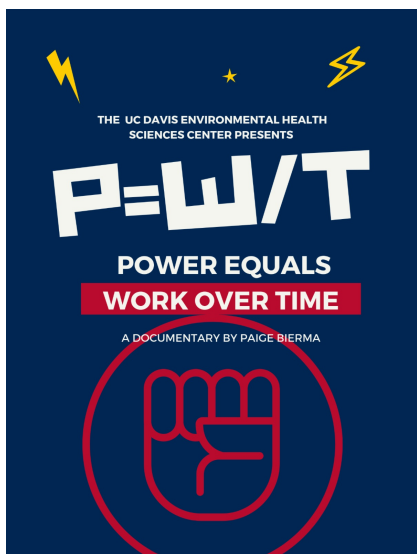


Integrated Health Sciences Facility Core (IHSFC) update

As mentioned in last month’s Newsletter, IHSFC’s [Kent Pinkerton](#) and his team are leading several new and exciting [research projects on e-cigarettes and vaping](#).

Grad students Morgan Poindexter and Navid Singhrao are on Pinkerton’s team and wrote an article about the work they’re doing. “[Kent Pinkerton’s Laboratory breathes fresh air into vaping research](#)” picks apart the current state of the science and where the Pinkerton Lab’s work fits in.

New vaping guidelines: The CDC issued [new guidelines](#) for EVALI (e-cigarette or vaping product use associated with lung injury), the health agency’s new moniker for vaping-related illness.



Community Engagement Core (CEC) update

In October, CEC Program Manager Aubrey Thompson, Science Writer Jennifer Biddle and Filmmaker Paige Bierma trekked some four hours south on I-5 to Kettleman City, a small, farmworker town situated near numerous sources of pollution and has deep roots in the environmental justice movement. There, they interviewed and filmed [Dr. Clare Cannon](#) as she did residential air sampling for her pilot project.

They also interviewed Miguel Alatorre and Maricela Mares-Alatorre from GreenAction and El Pueblo Para el Aire y Agua Limpia. The Alatorres are mother and son and live in Kettleman City. They're also members of [EHSC's Community Stakeholder Advisory Committee \(CSTAC\)](#) and boots on the ground helping Dr. Cannon conduct her research.

Funding from EHSC and the Office of Public Scholarship and Engagement at UC Davis is paying for this mini documentary about Cannon's research. Vice Provost Michael Rios was so excited about the project, he agreed to fundraise for us so we could transform the film into a 30-minute documentary that could air on PBS. The film will be accompanied by workshops for researchers and community members, and if Rios is successful, a companion podcast series. To see how our first day of filming went, check out our [Facebook post](#).

Announcements

Science Seminar Series: Pam Lein and Melanie Gareau are featured speakers at this month's Science Seminar on November 12, 10:30 AM to 12:00 PM at the Genome Building on campus. Don't miss it! [Get all the details here](#).

Round of applause: Irva Hertz-Picciotto, post-doctoral trainee Jacqueline Barkoski, along with Debbie Bennett, Rebecca Schmidt and others published the first paper to examine prenatal exposures to phenols in relation to behavioral development in children: Barkoski JM, et al. [Prenatal phenol and paraben exposures in relation to child neurodevelopment including autism spectrum disorders in the MARBLES Study](#). *Env Res* 2019;179:108719. [Phenols](#) are chemicals used in a wide range of consumer products like adhesives, shaving cream, mouthwash and lip balm.

Great read: Former NIEHS Director Linda Birnbaum says the best thing about retirement is being free to speak her mind. Read her [no holds barred interview in Science Magazine](#).

Flourishing fandom: In October, PBS aired the [30-minute version of Waking Up to Wildfires](#) on its program *ViewFinder*. *Waking Up* features interviews with survivors of the 2017 North Bay wildfires and EHSC scientists Keith Bein, Irva Hertz-Picciotto, Nicholas Kenyon and Anthony Wexler. PBS will syndicate the documentary nationally in December and next year we'll enter the film in the Emmys. Stay tuned for more updates!

Please email Jennifer Biddle (jsbiddle@ucdavis.edu) if you have any announcements or work you'd like to share in next month's newsletter. Thank you!



Clare Cannon and Aubrey Thompson hamming it up on the way back to Sacramento from Kettleman City.

