

APRIL 2024

DRC PILOT & FEASIBILITY PROGRAM: Co-Directors share their reflections



Jane Reusch, MD

*Professor of Medicine and Biochemistry - Endocrinology, Metabolism and Diabetes
Staff Physician and Merit Investigator - Veterans Affairs Hospital
CCTSI-VA Liaison*

What drew you to consider being a director this pilot program? I have a career long interest in building the research workforce in diabetes. Further, given my long tenure at the University of Colorado, I have a clear understanding of the incredible diabetes research assets at our institution across campus including the Barbara Davis Center, adult endocrinology, pediatric endocrinology, perinatology, bioengineering, school of public health, ACCORDS and our affiliates Denver Health and The VA. As such I had a clear vision that we could reach out across the campus and beyond to identify and support promising diabetes research careers to increase the impact of the University of Colorado in the field of diabetes research. I also have a career long interest in mentorship. I had an exceptional mentor myself in Dr Boris Draznin and I have been very strategic in learning both the tangible and intangible skills that can enable my mentees to succeed. I have been able to leverage these skills across the institution within my own division, pediatric endocrinology, the CCTSI and as a Senior Scientist, Associate Director and mentor at the Ludeman Family Center for Women's Health Research. As such when we were designing our NIH DRC submission I was thrilled to have the opportunity to lead the pilot of feasibility program.

What specific skills and growth did you see blossom within each awardee? One of the most exciting changes to see in pilot awardees is moving beyond a mentored career development research program to one that the DRC Scholars direct. The opportunity to design a personal research agenda, execute the experiments outlined and build a research program within that vision is extraordinary. The P&F Awards enable these scientists to demonstrate the importance of their research question and generate compelling preliminary data to support the next steps in their career. One other aspect that has been so exciting in this cycle has been to see our DRC Scholars develop confidence in themselves as independent scientists.

What were the major challenges that you saw most awardees need to confront and navigate? The move to independence from a mentored career development position requires overcoming imposter syndrome. It is important that the scholars believe in themselves and their research questions unique from their mentor's work and or complimentary to their mentor's work. In addition some of our scholars found it challenging to set up the needed collaborations to execute their research plan separate from their mentor. There are many hurdles early in a research career and the P&F leadership needs to advise to support success, A \$50,000 pilot and feasibility award is critical yet does not overcome the need to be able to sustain funding that can support PI salary and research. It is important for us as the program directors as well as the primary mentors of each scholar to work with them to map out a viable transition to independence and negotiations for additional support as warranted. We also have the opportunity to be quite thoughtful about what independence and career success can look like in the newer world of team science.

What advice do you have for any prospective applicants in the future? My first advice is choose diabetes research. Diabetes is a field that is wide open for new ideas and it is a global health problem that has absolutely not been solved. Here at the University of Colorado I would urge interested applicants to understand the strengths of the research community. Specifically we have exceptional assets in basic islet biology, immunology, animal models of cardiovascular disease and diabetes complications, transformative human subject mechanistic research and a foundation for clinical trials and epidemiology. In sum, if you are interested in diabetes research, we can facilitate you finding a niche and supporting your growth and development.

How has serving as a director for the award program helped your ability to lead/mentor/conduct research? Through this program I have become more greatly aware of the breadth and depth of the diabetes research community on campus; also, I can see how other Centers of Excellence on campus can be leveraged to enhance the impact of diabetes research. A career of discovery is a privilege. I have also learned all too well a lesson that I already knew: choosing a career as an independent investigator can be an overwhelming choice. It can be overwhelming for a number of reasons including the competitive nature of grant writing, the challenge of publications, the absence of hard salary, work life balance and, for physicians, overall lower salary. Yes these challenges are real but any good job has challenges. Working as a physician scientist, I have the opportunity for discovery, mentoring, training of physicians and clinical providers and the great honor of taking care of patients. I have the world's best job. I personally cannot imagine a different job and, yet as a mentor, I understand this career trajectory is not for everyone. I need to respect the career decisions of the DRC Scholars and my individual mentees and facilitate a transition to a career that most durably addresses their career objectives. Every time I have the opportunity to help someone be in the career that is right for them (fosters happiness), I grow and become a better mentor and a better researcher.



Paul Rozance, MD

*The Frederick C. Battaglia Chair in Neonatology Research - Children's Hospital Colorado
Professor of Pediatrics, Neonatal Medicine - Perinatal Research Center*

What drew you to consider being a director this pilot program? The opportunity to advance diabetes research in general and integrate two areas of research I am particularly interested in with other diabetes related research on campus. These two areas are diabetes during pregnancy and the developmental origins of diabetes.

What specific skills and growth did you see blossom within each awardee? The most striking growth is when an awardee realizes they are part of a diabetes research community on campus and they start forming new collaborations and directions because of this.

What were the major challenges that you saw most awardees need to confront and navigate? Understanding the resources available on our campus.

What advice do you have for any prospective applicants in the future? Understand that the Pilot Award is just one step on your journey.

How has serving as a director for the award program helped your ability to lead/mentor/conduct research? I have learned so much from each of our Awardees; about science, career challenges, and career opportunities. Mostly I have learned what a great group of scientists we have on campus and there are always people willing to help others.



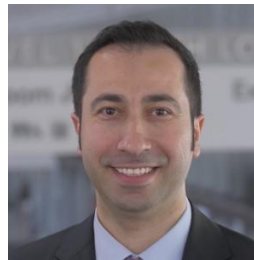
DR. POLSKY RECOGNIZED FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO STANDARD OF CARE GUIDELINES

We would like to recognize and congratulate the contributions of one of our faculty members, Dr. Sarit Polsky, toward creating the 2024 ADA standards of care guideline. ADA standards of care set the care standards in diabetes by serving as an essential guiding document and reference for clinicians, policymakers, and others across the globe. The impact of such a guide cannot be overstated, as it directly affects the quality of care provided for people with diabetes. The invaluable input and dedication demonstrated by Dr. Polsky will significantly impact the care of people with diabetes. The ADA and our entire community would like to extend our heartfelt appreciation to Dr. Polsky for the tireless efforts in contributing to the guidelines and ensuring they are comprehensive and current. Dr. Polsky's professionalism, expertise, and commitment to diabetes care are highly commendable and have certainly contributed to advancing diabetes care. Dr. Polsky's selflessness and dedication undoubtedly set a remarkable example for all in the field of diabetes care, and it is a privilege to work alongside Dr. Polsky.



CONGRATULATIONS DR. AKTURK - AACE RISING STAR IN ENDOCRINOLOGY

The American Association of Clinical Endocrinology (AACE) has selected our very own Dr. Akturk as a recipient to receive the AACE Rising Star in Endocrinology Award to be presented during AACE's 33rd Annual Meeting, May 9-11, 2024, in New Orleans, LA. Congratulations on this well-deserved recognition! This award is presented to an individual who is within 10 years of completing their endocrine fellowship and has demonstrated actionable outcomes in outstanding leadership, teamwork and/or innovation in supporting our mission to elevate clinical endocrinology for global health through contributions in patient care, scientific endeavor and/or education.



WIELD SEEKING NOMINATIONS OF INFLUENTIAL WOMEN

Women Inspiring and Elevating Leadership in Diabetes (WIELD) is a grassroots organization that started in 2021 with the goals of increasing visibility of, and leadership by, women in the diabetes, obesity, and metabolism fields. One of our WIELD working groups is compiling our own top 100 women in diabetes list! Publication of this list will help to highlight the fundamental contributions that women have made in advancing these fields and will serve to inspire more women to pursue a career in science. **We are seeking nominations of influential women at the Full Professor or Professor Emeritus level to be a part of this list.**

Please send the names of 1-2 scientists that you feel exemplify excellence in their contributions to obesity, metabolism, diabetes, or endocrinology as well as excellence in mentoring and service to the scientific community. A

letter of recommendation highlighting your nominees achievements is required; however, self-nominations will also be accepted. Please email your nominations to Darleen Sandoval (Darleen.Sandoval@cuanschutz.edu) by (TODAY) April 1st to be considered for inclusion.

DIABETES COMMUNITY EVENTS



2024 EPIC Diabetes Conference

We can't wait to see you for the 7th annual EPIC (Empowering Patients for Individualized Care) Conference. EPIC is presented by the Children's Diabetes Foundation and the Barbara Davis Center for Diabetes, offers an opportunity to learn about caring for type 1 and type 2 diabetes in a comfortable, understanding, and positive environment. This year, EPIC will feature a new format that prioritizes community connections. While diabetes specialists will still be stationed in each room to provide brief presentations, our guests will have the chance to connect with healthcare professionals and diabetes peers to get their questions answered and form meaningful relationships. Join us to learn from the experts and create lasting connections. Everyone who registers gets a \$10 King Soopers gift card!

Click [here](#) to purchase a ticket




SPRING SEMINAR SCHEDULE:

April 10 & May 8
2:00 PM ET | 12:00 PM MT

<https://diabetes-virtual-seminar.org/>


WRISG 2024 - REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN



Western Region Islet Study Group Annual Meeting
16-18th October 2024

Organizers: Anna Gloyn (Stanford), Julie Sneddon (UCSF), Mark Huising (UC Davis)

Website



Topics include

REGISTRATION OPEN

Asilomar, CA



The Facts

When: 16-18th Oct 2024
Where: Asilomar, CA

Who: Islet biologists especially trainees!
Registration: Early Bird by May 31st 2024
Featuring: The John C Hutton Rising Star & Gerold M Grodsky Awards



Contact:
pediatric-endo@stanford.edu
@WRISGMeeting (#WRISG2024)

This meeting is being organized by the **Golden State Islet Seminar Series (GSIS)** which is run by the Stanford Diabetes Research Center (SDRC) with colleagues from UCSF and UC Davis, with financial support from industry partners.

Click [HERE](#) to register now

Please note that early bird registration is available until the end of May.

The Western Region Islet Study Group (WRISG) 2024 meeting aims to bring together trainees & faculty studying islet biology to share their discoveries, enhance interactions, and encourage collaboration in diabetes across Western Canada and the USA.

Any research in islet biology is welcome & this is a trainee focused meeting

Click [HERE](#) to see the full flyer.

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS SEMINAR SERIES

SPRING 2024

Mondays at 12:00pm
BDC Main Conference Room 2104

DATE	PRESENTER

Monday, April 1, 2024	Nikki Farnsworth, PhD
Monday, April 8, 2024	Catherine Nicholas
Monday, April 15, 2024	Holly O'Donnell, PhD
Monday, April 22, 2024	Dylan Sarbaugh
Monday, April 29, 2024	Jordan Jacobelli, PhD
Monday, May 6, 2024	Maigen Bethea, PhD

2023-2024 BDC & DRC DIABETES SPEAKER SERIES

Seminars will take place in person on Fridays at 12pm MT
All seminars will have a link provided for registration.

Questions? Contact:
Christy Vasey, christy.vasey@cuanschutz.edu, 303-724-9787

DATE	SPEAKER	AFFILIATION
Friday, April 12, 2024	Lu Cai, MD, PhD Professor	Director, Pediatric Research Institute University of Louisville School of Medicine
Friday, April 26, 2024	Roland Tisch, PhD Professor	Microbiology and Immunology University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
Friday, May 10, 2024	Senta Georgia, PhD Assistant Professor	Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism Keck School of Medicine, University of Southern California

JOB POSTINGS & OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUNDING



[Click Here to see all current JDRF RFAs](#)



[Click Here to see all current NIH NIDDK RFAs](#)



University of Colorado
Anschutz Medical Campus

NIH T32: Research Training Program in Metabolism, Obesity and Type 2 Diabetes for PhDs, MDs or DOs



Endocrinology, Metabolism and Diabetes
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

The Division of Endocrinology, Metabolism and Diabetes in the Department of Medicine at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus is now accepting applications to provide salary support for post-doctoral research training in metabolism, obesity, and type 2 diabetes. Individuals with PhD, MD, or DO degrees are welcome to apply. During the period of support trainees will have the opportunity to work in mentor-based research with one of the many investigators that do studies using model systems that extend from genetic studies in flies, mechanistic studies in animals and humans to interventional studies in people with diabetes or obesity and epidemiological studies in populations across the lifespan. Trainees will have the opportunity to take part in a range of seminars, workshops, and specialized training opportunities. A central resource for trainees is the NIH funded Colorado Nutrition Obesity Research Center which supports several core labs and has a pilot project program that supports the work of junior investigators. More information about the research going on in Metabolism, Obesity and Type 2 Diabetes associated with this program can be found at: <http://cunorc.org/>.

<https://medschool.cuanschutz.edu/endocrinology/research/metabolism-obesity-and-diabetes>

Details on the application process are included in the application flyer click [HERE](#) to view.

Applications will be reviewed by the Recruitment Committee and awardees notified in mid-May. Applicants must be US citizens or have a green card. The Training Program in Metabolism, Obesity and Type 2 Diabetes is committed to recruiting and retaining an outstanding and diverse trainee population including trainees from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups and trainees with disabilities. Applicants from these groups are strongly encouraged to apply.

Feel free to contact Dr. Daniel Bessesen if you have any questions about eligibility, your mentor, or your proposed area of research (Daniel.Bessesen@cuanschutz.edu).

The deadline for application submission is Monday, April 29th.
Submit your completed application to Daniel.Bessesen@cuanschutz.edu.

COLORADO
NORC
Nutrition Obesity Research Center

2024 Pilot & Feasibility Projects RFA

The Colorado Nutrition Obesity Research Center (NORC) is requesting applications for pilot and feasibility projects to support new investigators with projects relevant to nutrition or obesity who have no independent NIH (or comparable) funding. The goal of the program is to help junior investigators perform studies that will help them build their independent research program and support their efforts to acquire a career development award (K01, K08, K23, VA CDA2 or similar award) or their first independent R01 award. The program supports a [broad range of research on nutrition and obesity](#), which includes, but is not limited to, the following areas:

- Early life influences affecting long term health
- Women's health and sex differences research
- Exercise, physical (in)activity, or energy expenditure
- Metabolic regulation, dysfunction, and related co-morbidities (diabetes, cancer, CVD)
- Interventions for better health

Proposals related to the science of behavior change, personalized nutrition/medicine, and disease-specific treatments are also encouraged. Fellows and junior faculty members who are from underrepresented minority populations or from disadvantaged backgrounds are strongly encouraged to apply. Projects that have a research focus on underrepresented minority populations or individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds are also encouraged.

Investigators early in their training are strongly advised to identify a mentor who will help support the applicant in the conduct of the proposed project (a mentor support form is included in the application packet). Absence of documented evidence of mentor's support for post-doctoral applicants will be considered a relative weakness. Evidence in the application that the mentor or department is prepared to provide some level of matching funds will be considered a strength, but it is not required. Use of one of the NORC Core Labs (see <http://cu-norc.org/> for more information) in the proposed project is strongly encouraged and will be viewed a relative strength. Please contact the NORC Pilot Program Director Daniel Besesen at daniel.besesen@cuanschutz.edu (cc: caro.henauw@cuanschutz.edu) if you have questions about your eligibility or details about the application process.

FUNDING: Proposals can request up to \$40,000 (direct costs) paid over a 2-year award period (\$20,000/yr). Successful applicants will be required to provide a progress report after the first year of funding, and the second year of funding will be contingent on demonstrated progress towards the proposal's original objectives and the ongoing availability of funds. No support for computers is allowed, but salary may be requested for technical support and/or the principal investigator. Requests for travel expenses cannot exceed \$1,000/year. Expenses in all categories especially any requested salary support must be carefully justified.

To obtain application instructions and document templates, please contact:
Caro Henauw at caro.henauw@cuanschutz.edu

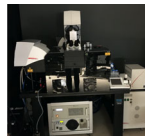
SUBMISSION DEADLINE: COB May 20, 2024
Applications are to be submitted in PDF format to caro.henauw@cuanschutz.edu

AWARD START DATE: September 1, 2024

[Click here to see current CU INTERNAL Limited Submission Funding Opportunities](#)

Have you considered using a DRC core service?

The DRC contains four biomedical cores that provide services and resources to DRC investigators. These cores are designed to facilitate and broaden CU Denver DRC research by expanding access to shared equipment, enhancing availability and training for emerging technologies, and allowing scientists to have greater access to clinical tissue and data.



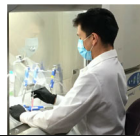
Cell and Tissue Analysis
Access to state-of-the-art multi-color confocal microscopy, flow cytometry analysis and cell sorting services, and expert assistance for mass cytometry and ion-beam imaging technologies.

[Learn More about Cell & Tissue Analysis](#)



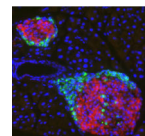
Clinical Resources
Access to an integrated, campus-wide, research registry enabling informatics-based clinical studies.

[Learn More about our Clinical Resources](#)



Disease Modeling
Access and training in stem cell technologies for in vitro human disease modeling of diabetes & molecular core services.

[Learn More about Disease Modeling](#)



Tissue Procurement & Processing
Access to islet isolation and transplantation services along with access to commonly used cell lines and diabetes-related histology techniques.

[Learn More about Tissue Procurement & Processing](#)



DRC WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS

APPLY NOW!

Now is a great time to consider applying to become a DRC Member. We welcome members who are broadly engaged in all aspects of diabetes research, including complications associated with diabetes. As a member, you would get a discount for core usage and prioritized services.

Browse our website to learn more:
<https://medschool.cuanschutz.edu/diabetes-research-center>

Here is a list of our current membership criteria

1. Full-time University of Colorado faculty



2. Pursuing research broadly relating to diabetes or metabolism that is funded by the NIH, ADA, JDRF or other diabetes-related funding source
3. Current recipients of DRC Pilot & Feasibility Awards, regardless of funding source
4. New faculty (within 5 years of first faculty appointment) who are developing independent diabetes-related research programs

If you are interested in joining as a member please click [HERE](#) to fill out an application.

Want us to feature you or a colleague on an upcoming DRC newsletter? Have an important research update?

[Click Here to Submit a Story to the DRC Monthly Newsletter](#)



[Click Here to Follow us on X](#)

Please remember to acknowledge support from the University of Colorado Diabetes Research Center and our associated cores by referencing NIDDK grant #P30-DK116073 in your presentations and publications.

[Click here to visit the DRC Website](#)

[Click Here to Subscribe to this Newsletter](#)

Contact Lisbel.Woods@CUAnschutz.edu with any questions or feedback about this newsletter

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