

# UW ADRC COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

FALL 2023

MEET THE  
TEAM

COMMUNITY

RESEARCH

EVENTS

HEALTH TIPS

RESOURCES

## WE'VE BEEN BUSY IN YOUR COMMUNITY!

### ***Brain Health and Community Resource Fair, August 5th 2023***

"An opportunity to provide resources and education on Alzheimer's disease and brain health."

The UW Alzheimer's Disease Research Center hosted a free half-day event that focused on the importance of brain health and aging. The Brain Health and Community Resource Fair showcased interactive brain health education, research opportunities, and provided free lunch as well as give aways! This event took place Saturday August 5th at El Centro de la Raza Centilia Cultural Center.

### ***UW ADRC Coffee Chat, June 17th 2023***

The UW ADRC Coffee Chat provided an intimate space for interested Latino/a/e/x community members to learn about Alzheimer's Disease research and come together and chat. Sonia Bishop and Janet Rojina shared information on what the ADRC is, our purpose, the importance of having the Latino/a/e/x community involvement in research, and what study involvement entails. Participants were also given the opportunity to ask questions about research and community involvement.

## TEAM MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

### **Theresa Kehne**

Theresa is a clinical research coordinator at the UW Medicine Memory and Brain Wellness Clinic (MBWC). She helps patients with memory concerns from all backgrounds and their families navigate the road to research participation. She supports the ADRC's many research studies including clinical trials and manages the UW ADRC Research Registry. As a member of the UW ADRC Outreach, Recruitment, and Engagement (ORE) team Theresa has worked under Drs. Torres, Domoto-Reilly, and Ko on research projects that partner with the Latino/a/e/x community in Sumner, WA. Outside of work, Theresa likes spending time with her family and friends and is an avid outdoorsperson.





**Yeilim Cho, MD**

## **Sleep Doctor Studies Sleep Apnea Treatment for Dementia Prevention**

A good night's sleep feels so refreshing, and that's thanks to the nightly cleaning cycle of the sleeping brain. During this process, called 'glymphatic clearance', watery fluid rushes along the brain's blood vessels, delivering nutrients while clearing away waste.

The brain's ability to clear out waste products during deep sleep not only regenerates our minds and bodies, but it's also important to maintaining brain health and preventing dementia later in life. Unfortunately, people with untreated sleep-related breathing disorders don't wake up feeling well-rested. Obstructive sleep apnea, the most common of these conditions, causes a person to repeatedly stop and start breathing during sleep, altering their normal progression into deep sleep cycles and keeping them in a lighter stage of sleep. Yeilim Cho, MD is a sleep medicine doctor and researcher at the Veterans Affairs Mental Illness Research Education and Clinical Center, where she cares for Veterans with sleep disorders. Cho also provides education about sleep disorders and helps low-income and uninsured populations access diagnosis and treatment for sleep disorders at a free sleep clinic in Federal way. "People with untreated sleep-related breathing disorders are losing that chance to fully regenerate their bodies at night," says Cho. "I feel so bad when I see this happening because this problem can be treated." A CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure) device, the standard-of-care treatment for obstructive sleep apnea, helps keep the airway open during sleep. "I've heard many middle-aged people say that they can't live without CPAP because they've noticed a dramatic improvement in daytime function and memory," says Cho.

As an advocate for increased awareness of sleep-related breathing disorders in public and primary care, Cho hopes the medical field will adopt screening for these conditions starting at age 45 for people with risk factors such as male sex, older age, postmenopausal status, higher body mass index, and craniofacial and upper airway abnormalities. In collaboration with the ADRC, Cho and her colleagues in the UW Iliff Lab are conducting a clinical experimental study in people newly diagnosed with obstructive sleep apnea. The team will assess glymphatic clearance in study participants using non-invasive brain imaging. The study is designed to show whether and how sleep-related breathing disorders impair the brain's ability to clear out waste products during sleep and whether CPAP treatment improves this crucial aspect of glymphatic function. "I strongly believe that studying the glymphatic system will open up the door for us to understand the link between sleep disruption and cognitive decline," says Cho. If you suspect a sleep-related breathing disorder, Cho recommends asking your doctor about a referral to a sleep clinic, especially if your bed partner notices loud snoring or periods of stopped breathing. These days, tests for sleep apnea can be taken at home.

### **Sleep Tips**

**Have a routine and stick to a consistent sleep schedule.**

**Create a light-dark cycle in your bedroom.**

**Do something physically active or mentally challenging every day.**

**Talk to your doctor if you think you may have sleep apnea or trouble breathing at night.**

**Try to curb caffeinated beverages around 2 or 3 o'clock in the afternoon.**

**Avoid TV, electronic readers, and tablets/smartphones right before bed.**

## Enhancing Participation by Minoritized Groups in AD/ADRD Research

October 3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023

#EMP2023

[knightadrc.wustl.edu/emp](http://knightadrc.wustl.edu/emp)



UW ADRC's Janet Rojina MPH, Derick Aranda MD, Luciana Fonseca PhD, Suman Jayadev MD, and Linda Ko PhD (from left) attended an ADRC-hosted conference to discuss and shape the future of Alzheimer disease research participation.

"I really enjoyed meeting and networking with other ADRC colleagues and seeing creativity in their process of building authentic partnerships with the community."  
- Linda Ko, UW ADRC ORE Core Lead

### By Janet Rojina, MPH, research coordinator on the UW ADRC Outreach, Recruitment and Engagement (ORE) team

This October, I had the privilege of traveling to St. Louis, Missouri to attend the "Enhancing Participation by Minoritized Groups in Alzheimer Disease and Related Dementia Research Conference." This event was organized and hosted by the Knight Alzheimer Disease Research Center and served as a continuation and scaling up of the 2018 workshop on African American Participation in Research and involved all 37 ADRCs and exploratory ADRCs nationally, as well as other groups collaborating with communities.

The idea was to bring together members of the academic community to engage in conversations and help steer Alzheimer's Disease research participation to include representation from minoritized groups. This is a matter of great significance for Alzheimer disease and related dementia research because it is projected that by 2050, over 40% of older adults will be composed of individuals from minoritized populations. Historically, individuals that participate in research are predominantly non-Hispanic whites, underscoring the importance of addressing the issue.

For me, this was a particularly exciting opportunity because a big part of my role as a Research Coordinator on the UW ADRC team involves actively building partnerships with community members from minoritized or underrepresented groups, providing education about brain health, and bringing UW ADRC research opportunities to community members who have been historically underrepresented in research. As I approached the conference, my objective was to gain new insights from the speakers, my peers, and the work that they are doing so that I can compare our approaches, learn from other groups, and also share successful strategies from our center.

**Building Trust** Mark Gluck, PhD from Rutgers University introduced 10 evidence-based strategies that his team employed to recruit over 500 older African Americans from the broader Newark area into their brain health research program since 2015. Examples of the measures include building trust through long-term investments in community health and hiring a large engagement team with deep connections to the community. "This presentation offered practical solutions and ideas that can readily be applied to effectively recruiting and retaining research participants within the African American male demographic, which historically have been the most challenging cohort to get involved in research," said Derick Aranda, MD, of the Cleveland Clinic and also a Trainee in our UW ADRC Research Education Component (REC) and also a trainee in our UW ADRC Research Education Component (REC).

**Learning from the Community** Dedra Buchwald, MD, UW ADRC Native Research and Resource Core Lead, and Amanda Boyd, PhD from Washington State University also shared recruitment lessons learned from engaging with individuals from American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities. They emphasized the importance of distributing information through Native organizations and including members of the AI/AN community on the research team.

**Expanding Research** Social determinants of brain health are non-medical factors, such as neighborhood resources, education, income, stress, or social connection, that are shown to influence brain health outcomes. Megan Zuelsdorff, PhD of the University of Wisconsin-Madison presented on a national effort to systematically collect this information from ADRC research participants. Studying the social and environmental context of participants' lives, alongside their medical and biological data, is needed to help us understand what is driving the population-level disparities in Alzheimer's and how we can build better clinical and behavioral interventions.

I return from the conference with many new ideas to implement, connections for potential collaborations, and a renewed enthusiasm to continue doing the important work that we do. As I work, I will carry with me the wisdom of conference speaker Sid O'Bryant, PhD of the University of North Texas, who encouraged us to "Be bold!" and recognize that reaching diverse communities isn't more challenging; it merely requires a distinct approach and UW ADRC is part of that transformative wisdom.

# RESOURCES



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## Alzheimer's Association

Phone: 1-800-272-3900

Email: [info@alz.org](mailto:info@alz.org)

Website: [alz.org](http://alz.org)

Call the Alzheimer's Association 24-Hour Helpline to speak for free to a Master's level social worker, any day or time.

Explore the monthly education programs offered by the Alzheimer's Association WA State Chapter: [alz.org/alzwa/helping\\_you/education](http://alz.org/alzwa/helping_you/education)



Conexion Contigo by Lupita Zamora is an independent Spanish language radio program for the community where you will find information, opportunities and more.

[facebook.com/ConexionContigoRadio](https://www.facebook.com/ConexionContigoRadio)

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Visit [Alzheimers.gov](http://Alzheimers.gov) for updated health information tailored to caregivers, people living with dementia, and professionals.  
**En español:** [Alzheimers.gov/es](http://Alzheimers.gov/es)



## Contact us

Questions about this newsletter:

Email: [adrc-community@uw.edu](mailto:adrc-community@uw.edu)

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**UW Memory and Brain Wellness Center**

Web: [uwmemoryandbrain.org](http://uwmemoryandbrain.org)

En español: [memoria.uw.edu](http://memoria.uw.edu)

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