# CTSI eNewsletter - September 2010

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## From the Executive Director's Desk

As we approach the midpoint of year 5 of our first CTSA award, we're already looking ahead. We've worked hard to establish a range of services and resources, for example CTSI's comprehensive Consultation Services and *UCSF Profiles*, see featured story. We've also worked collaboratively to facilitate organizational changes at UCSF to better enable clinical and translational research across the campus with a central cores office and a single intramural funding agency, the Resource Allocation Program (RAP).

We now want to capitalize on the successful programs we've built and focus them to jointly target several important and ambitious goals. One such cross-cutting initiative is focused on accelerating clinical research. To do so will involve bringing the resources of CTSI and UCSF together with the creation of new services, such as a UCSF Participant Recruitment Service.

A second cross-cutting initiative recognizes the critical need to have benchmarks in order to show improvement in key areas. For example, how are we doing in getting investigators up and running for a clinical trial? How efficiently are we shepherding proposals through our contracts and grants office? And, how cost-effective is our provision of research consultation services? To answer such questions, we need to first have access to data that describes baseline performance in these areas. This then is the focus of the second initiative, to either directly develop or facilitate the development of research metrics and dashboards across UCSF. This will allow us and others to assess where we stand, and from there, to improve performance.

Finally, going beyond improving research administration and support services at UCSF, we've taken on a challenge that gets to the heart of our mission — improving human health especially in our own community. The San Francisco Bay Area Health Improvement Project, or SF Bay HIP as this cross-cutting initiative is called, is visionary and ambitious. With partners from across the research, healthcare and community spectrum, including hospitals in the bay area and the Department of Public Health, we are poised to impact health in the community.

New initiatives mean new people to bolster our already strong team. This is a good time to welcome our 2010 additions, including Bill Balke, MD, our new Director for Clinical Research Services. To help get our Participant Recruitment Service off the ground, Nariman Nasser joins us as Director, and CTSI Central will round out its leadership team with the addition of Melanie Funes, PhD, as Senior Program Manager, Leslie Yuan as Director, Web Products, Todd Choy as Director, Finance, and Delpha Snow as Director, Operations & HR. We invite you to join us at our holiday open house on Dec 13th at our offices in China Basin Landing to meet both old and new — RSVP to Billy.Davis@ucsf.edu ✉ for more details.

Moving ahead, we recognize that one of our major challenges is getting the word out about all that we offer to facilitate research at UCSF. This year more than ever, we will be focusing on this task. Become a CTSI ambassador and help us spread the word!

**Susan A. Autry, MBA**
CTSI Executive Director

Do you have a specific question you would like the Executive Director to answer? Let her know at ctsi@ucsf.edu ✉ .

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# New on the Site

## Curbside consulting: using a blog to disseminate best practices in research ethics

Often there is no one right answer to complicated research ethics dilemmas. Bernard Lo, national bioethics expert at UCSF, brings his discussions from the classroom and hallways into the public sphere to provide researchers with a forum to help them navigate such issues. The Research Ethics Blog covers topics, such as patient consent, authorship, research misconduct, and protecting participants in clinical trials, to help clinical and translational researchers and students think through and identify best practices for addressing challenges in research ethics.

Read the blog and join the dialogue!

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# Featured Resource

## Informatics services support diverse needs of researchers

A suite of tools helps investigators with their data and informatics needs for projects of all types and scale. The tools were developed by CTSI's Biomedical Informatics program (and ITS Academic Research Systems) and are provided through CTSI Consultation Services. Learn more about all informatics services.

- **MyResearch@UCSF**: A professionally managed, secure, web-based, collaborative environment in which to store files containing sensitive data.
- **Research Electronic Data Capture (REDCap) and REDCap Survey**: A tool to manage your research data and develop electronic data capture forms, reports, and surveys.
- **Integrated Data Repository (IDR) Data Extracts**: A data warehouse of clinical and life sciences data including UCare, Dental Data, and several public data sets.
- **The Health Records Data Service (THREDS) Data Extracts**: Access to various data sources, including the LCR (Lifetime Clinical Record), Invision, dating back to 1996, and longitudinal data from clinical databases on Community Health Network (CHN) patients.

# Featured Story

## UCSF Profiles: The power of discovering people, research expertise, and networks at UCSF

Finding experts and collaborators is now easier than ever at UCSF. It's made possible by UCSF Profiles, a recently launched expertise discovery and networking tool. Through this tool you can search for experts at UCSF by research topic and discover networks of co-authors, similar people, and more.

In the following interviews, five members of the UCSF community share why they are excited about *UCSF Profiles*. Dan Lowenstein, "The Visionary", was one of the authors of the original CTSA grant. He envisioned a tool that would allow researchers to connect with each other using the power of data and social networks. "The Early Adopters", Laurence Huang, an AIDS researcher, and Ida Sim, a Biomedical Informatics researcher, were among the first users of the beta version of the tool, sending critical feedback to CTSI's Virtual Home team. Margaret Tempero, Deputy Director of UCSF's Cancer Center, provides the perspective of "The Academic Leader". She discovered tasks that became much easier for her to accomplish using *UCSF Profiles*. Finally, Mini Kahlon, CTSI's CIO and Director of the Virtual Home program, speaks as "The Catalyst". She facilitated bringing the vision to life, motivated by what she knew was possible in the light of recent advances in technology and informatics.

### Why is UCSF Profiles important?

*The Visionary: Dan Lowenstein, MD, UCSF Professor, Vice Chair, Dept. of Neurology, Member of the CTSI Board of Directors*

Even in the era of the Internet, it's challenging for researchers to learn about expertise in research fields outside their own. What we needed was a formal strategy that allowed anyone to learn about the current stage of research and expertise as it exists at UCSF. In my mind that's one of the most important reasons for having a software product like *UCSF Profiles*. It enables us to describe in an objective, data-driven manner who is working on what at UCSF.

### What problem does UCSF Profiles help solve?

*The Visionary: Dan Lowenstein*

Let me give you an example. I'm interested in the intersection of the genetic basis of common epilepsies and the determinants of pharmaco-responsiveness. At the moment, the only way I can network with other faculty interested in these topics is basically through my own institutional knowledge or by using

search engines like Google. I don't know whether the number of hits that I get actually represents a complete list or not and I have to wade through mixed results, so this is very inefficient and incomplete. With the full implementation of *UCSF Profiles*, I think we finally have a convenient and effective system for accessing the full spectrum of knowledge and expertise that exists among our faculty.

## How might you use UCSF Profiles?

*The Early Adopter: Laurence Huang, MD, UCSF Professor of Medicine, Chief, AIDS Chest Clinic, SFGH*

I might use *UCSF Profiles* to find co-mentors. As a trainee, you don't want to do exactly what your mentor is doing, otherwise you always walk in their shadow. You want to do something that is similar to your mentor's area of interest, but to have your own niche. As a mentor, I want to help my mentees find their niche. I can help my own mentees find additional co-mentors that can provide guidance in areas of interest using *UCSF Profiles* — I couldn't do this before. I can even learn who has collaborated with people I identify through the tool and contact them to find out whether they are nice to work with. That becomes really powerful.

*The Visionary: Dan Lowenstein*

I agree. In my role as Director of Physician Scientist Education and Training in the School of Medicine, hardly a day goes by where I don't get a request from a pre-medical or medical student from anywhere around the country who is looking for a research opportunity at UCSF. They ask for my help in identifying faculty at UCSF doing specific types of research who have an opening in their research group for a trainee and who have a reputation for being good mentors. Currently there is no system in place for identifying those individuals. I'm looking forward to when *UCSF Profiles* will enable us to link trainees and faculty in a much more efficient way.

*The Early Adopter: Ida Sim, PhD, MD, Associate Professor of General Internal Medicine, Director, Center for Clinical and Translational Informatics, UCSF*

The tool is surprisingly easy to use, and it's especially useful for first-cut identification of people in fields I'm not familiar with. It's complementary to meeting people in person — I can search information about someone before I'm actually meeting this person, or follow up on learning more about someone I met at a meeting. The co-authors network, for example, tells me something about their level of work and scholarship, which would be more difficult to find out using PubMed.

## How was UCSF Profiles brought to life?

*The Catalyst: Mini Kahlon, PhD, CTSI Chief Information Officer*

We knew we needed something that combines Amazon.com type innovations (for example, researchers involved in research X tend to also search for Y) with Facebook strengths (for example, I might want to see the latest publications from the co-authors of your co-authors). Then add a matchmaking component like match.com and we'd really be providing something truly helpful for our research community.

We assessed whether we should build our own tool or use an existing one. At a meeting organized by the Clinical & Translational Science Awards Consortium (CTSA) I learned about a research networking software product developed by Harvard Catalyst (Harvard's CTSA institute). I was inspired by the smart algorithms it utilized and the ambitious vision of the tool's designer, Griffin Weber. On top of that, Harvard Catalyst was making this product freely available as open source software.

UCSF became Harvard's first partner in deploying the open source software. We obviously chose well, today the Profiles community includes 40+ other institutions. We remain close collaborators, with UCSF working on extensions to the software, slated for release this winter, that will be provided back to the open source Profiles Research Networking Software for other institutions to use.

## Can academic leaders benefit from UCSF Profiles as well?

*The Academic Leader: Margaret Tempero, MD, Deputy Director and Director, Research Programs, UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center*

From a program-building standpoint, I think *UCSF Profiles* is awesome. When I build a research program, I need to make sure it's all-inclusive. I can see how *UCSF Profiles* helps identify people inside and outside of a department. It helps me figure out which investigators I should invite to the table.

## What could UCSF Profiles offer in the future to help the UCSF community in its work?

*The Academic Leader: Margaret Tempero*

Looking ahead, I think it would be very useful to link investigators to their funded projects. This might be information that is not accessible to the public, but is available to the UCSF community. Right now it is cumbersome to find such information. If your goal is to develop faculty and offer them opportunities, then having evidence of their grant support readily available would help. You'd be able to find everyone who is doing something related to the program you're building. The same is actually true for young investigators who are looking for mentors. I usually tell them to review the mentor's history of receiving peer-reviewed grants. This is an important criterion in a mentor, yet the information is hard to retrieve. *UCSF Profiles* could change this.

From the perspective of a researcher, I can clearly see *UCSF Profiles* becoming a useful tool to help me search for information about biorepositories. Let's say I'm interested in collecting serum samples from patients with diabetes because they might have pancreatic cancer. Having an understanding of who is collecting what at UCSF allows us the opportunity to team up and use resources more efficiently.

*The Early Adopter: Laurence Huang*

Many of us are represented on different websites that all ask for slightly different information. Then, you get these endless requests to update this information on a regular basis. If *UCSF Profiles* managed to distribute the latest information to other sites, maybe even automatically populated them – that would be a big time saver.

*The Catalyst: Mini Kahlon*

Interesting that Laurence brings up the challenge of populating multiple websites with information from the tool. In fact, we have launched the ability for any group or individual at UCSF to receive automatic data feeds from *UCSF Profiles*. The Center for Aids Research (CFAR) has already piloted the service to enhance their new website at http://cfar.ucsf.edu/ . Our goal is to make it as easy as possible not only for others to benefit from the work we've done in cleaning up and preparing useful data, but to allow them to innovate beyond our work.

*The Early Adopter: Ida Sim*

I could see *UCSF Profiles* providing me information about pending or approved CHR and maybe even NIH applications submitted by UCSF researchers, so that it's easy for me to assess the projects others are currently working on that are not published yet or what they're going to do soon. Of course I realize that for us to enter that domain, we need to think carefully about access and permissions.

## What are some of the challenges a tool like UCSF Profiles brings?

*The Catalyst:* *Mini Kahlon*

The power of *UCSF Profiles* is in its ability to mine existing data that's already available either through the Internet, or internally within the institution, and to present the information in ways that reveal relationships, patterns, and networks, for example. On the flip side, such a tool opens up the possibility of revealing too much information or at least so much that it feels intrusive to researchers. We realize this and know that we have to balance innovation with a careful, thoughtful, and user-informed approach to revealing information.

## What can UCSF expect from the tool in the future?

*The Catalyst:* *Mini Kahlon*

This is truly just the beginning. Currently *UCSF Profiles* covers only one major group of our community. We plan on adding all the members of the UCSF community that are critical to research, continuing with fellows, residents, and research staff. We will also integrate additional publication sources so that, for example, faculty in the school of nursing or dentistry have more complete profiles, since the publications they publish in may not be available in PubMed. The inclusion of research-descriptive data, like grants and patents, will help tailor the tool further to meet researchers' information needs.

In addition to that, we're excited to integrate *UCSF Profiles* with tools that allow people to not only discover collaborators but to actually bring together a group to work on projects. Further, Profiles will be extended with more specific matchmaking functionality, the first of which will allow mentees, either students or junior faculty, to search for potential mentors.

But our extensions to the tool are only a part of the future for Profiles – Harvard, of course, will continue to improve Profiles, but in addition we are extending the software to make it easy for anyone (for example, other departments at UCSF or other academic institutions) to create new applications that utilize the data and algorithms behind Profiles. Perhaps someone in the Memory & Aging Center has heard from his investigators that they'd like to enhance UCSF Profiles with customized publication feeds from people they have selected as collaborators. We will provide them with all the information they need to build that application themselves. Once built, this application can be then shared with others through an application library, much like the Apple store for the iPhone.

We also recognize if we truly want to help advance research across disciplines and institutions, we will need to reach beyond our institutional walls. To achieve this, we're helping facilitate a national initiative which will enable *UCSF Profiles* to communicate with similar tools at other institutions, so our researchers will be able to search for expertise and collaborators across the nation.

Finally, we'd love to hear from the campus community about suggestions and ideas on how the tool may help the university and the conduct of research. We have an Open Forum that enables discussion of points raised, or you can just use the traditional approach of dropping us an E-mail at ctsi@ucsf.edu ✉.

## *UCSF Profiles Summary*

*UCSF Profiles* provides the ability to search for investigators based on their research expertise. The tool also reveals network relationships between investigators, for example based on co-authorship or similar research experience. It automatically aggregates researcher and publication data from the free public biomedical database PubMed and UCSF's Human Resources departments. While the data are updated automatically, users can customize their own profile.

## *Helpful Links*

- Try the tool — http://profiles.ucsf.edu
- View introduction to UCSF Profiles (ppt 5MB)
- Read UCSF Today news article "UCSF Profiles Gives Faculty Power of Building Networks on Campus"
- Read FAQ
- Learn about the UCSF Profiles project
- Get UCSF Profiles data feeds — contact us at ctsi@ucsf.edu ✉
- Share your ideas and feedback — UCSF Profiles Open Forum

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## CTSI in the News

- UCSF Profiles Gives Faculty Power of Building Networks on Campus
- Symposium to Highlight Prospects, Challenges of Translating Stem Cell Science into Future Therapies
- Academic Senate Joins RAP Making Grant Process Easier for UCSF Researchers
- Mentor Development Program Gains Acclaim Across UCSF
- UCSF Launches Doctoral Program in Epidemiology & Translational Science
- Grove gift launches translational medicine program at UCSF & UC Berkeley

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## Updates and Announcements

### The Academic Senate joined UCSF's Resource Allocation Program this fall 2010 cycle – combining more funding opportunities than ever for UCSF researchers

With more than 20 different grant types UCSF's Resource Allocation Program (RAP) offers funding opportunities across a broad research spectrum. Learn more

### New issue of *Connections* eNewsletter published

Read about translational health research that involves the communities UCSF serves, brought to you by the UCSF CTSI Community Engagement & Health Policy program. Learn more

### Master of Advanced Study in Clinical Research program accredited

The review committee at Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) commended the program, stating, "an obviously well-conceived program designed to meet an important need in health fields. Program evaluation is an evident aspect of the operations of this program, including good outcomes information."

## The 4th cadre of mentors graduated from CTSI's Mentor Development Program (MDP)

In May 2010, Dr. Sally Marshall, Vice Provost of Academic Affairs, presented the 14 graduates their certificates. Learn more

Applications for the 2011 CTSI MDP will be accepted starting in October 2010. Read on

## UCSF International Projects Database improved by CTSI's Global Health program

The database provides upgraded information about UCSF researchers based on UCSF's new research discovery and networking tool, UCSF Profiles. In addition, the database displays videos that highlight UCSF's work in Kenya, India, Zambia, Guatemala, Botswana, and Tanzania. Explore the tool.

## Support for UCSF international activities continues to improve

Members of CTSI's Global Health program helped identify and successfully address fundamental issues that often impede UCSF researchers — from health and safety to finance and regulations. Explore how UCSF travel insurance, workers health programs, and financial regulations have been tailored to accommodate international work - visit the Global Research Enterprise Support (G-RES) website.

## 4 new UCSF research core facilities available to researchers

The Electron Microscopy Lab, Translational Informatics Core, Biomechanical Testing Facility, and the Surbeck Laboratory of Advanced Imaging. All research core facilities and contacts are searchable through the online core database.

## Retreat to discuss the future of UCSF cores: building common ground

At the 2nd Core Leadership Retreat, sponsored by CTSI, 75 people representing 45 different research core facilities met to review the progress made since the last retreat in 2007, to learn about aspects of promoting cores and marketing core services, and to identify growth areas. With new Executive Director for the Research Resource Program, Julie Auger, UCSF's cores will continue to improve the offer of state-of-the-art services to UCSF investigators.

## Clinical Research Scholars Graduation and Teaching Awards

On June 4, 2010, the Training in Clinical Research (TICR) program honored graduating scholars in the Advanced Training in Clinical Research (ATCR) Certificate and Master's in Clinical Research degree programs. 20 scholars earned the ATCR Certificate and 19 scholars earned the Master's degree. This year's TICR teaching awards went to: Tom Newman, for a faculty member who exhibits outstanding teaching in lectures or small group sections; Adithya Cattamanchi, for a TICR scholar teaching assistant, who exhibits outstanding teaching in one of the TICR courses; and Eric Vittinghoff, for a faculty member recognized as providing outstanding advising to TICR Scholars.

## CTSI K scholars for 2010 have been announced

Beginning July 1, 2010 the CTSI K program will include 62 scholars, over half of whom obtained individual career development awards, e.g., K23, K01, K08, K12. The scholars participate fully in the CTSI K program, along with 26 CTSI KL2-funded scholars. The program is directed by Stephen B Hulley MD, MPH. Ralph Gonzales MD, MSPH, and Kirsten Bibbins-Domingo PhD, MD, MAS, are Associate Directors. Christine Ireland, MPH, is the Deputy Director. View the list of CTSI K scholars and mentors.

### Opportunity for 15 Hours of free research consultations for K grant preparation — participate in a trial

- Open to junior investigators applying for a mentored career development (K series) grant
- For Questions, email David Bui ✉ or call 415-514-8086
- Learn more

### Get assistance with regulatory and compliance requirements for your grant proposal and clinical and translational research study

- Open to all, initial consultation free of charge
- Contact: Email Marlene Berro or call 415-476-9429
- Learn more

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## Feedback

The purpose of this eNewsletter is to keep you informed of key CTSI activities and their impact on the UCSF community. We hope you enjoy this issue and encourage your feedback. Contact us at ctsi@ucsf.edu ✉.