Greetings From Our Director

Happy New Year! It is very nice to be in touch with you again through In Focus. This issue provides an overview of the significant research, training, and community engagement work being done at SIRC. As you will learn through the different articles and announcements, all the work is conducted in partnership with communities and it aims at preventing, reducing, and eventually eliminating health disparities. Our committed community research partners with their daily contributions are making our expanding research program a reality. We are starting three new community-based Randomized Control Trials (RCTs). These studies— with the active participation of children and their parents—will produce evidence-based interventions to prevent and reduce obesity, substance use and other risky behaviors in Latino and American Indian urban communities. Multiple hard working teams are fully engaged in the production of manuals, the training of facilitators and other field personnel, the production of survey instruments and other measures and data collection activities. All of this is only possible because of the active participation of our community research partners in every step of the process and the daily work of SIRC’s very competent and dedicated team of staff members, students, and investigators. Thank you everyone! I am confident that all of our hard work will result in innovative and efficacious interventions that will greatly benefit the well-being of our communities. Please read the more detailed description of the three RCTs and other research and health literacy initiatives on pages three and four.

The planning of the 11th Annual SIRC Research Conference is well under way. As we announced in the last issue of In Focus, it will be held on Friday, April 19, 2013 at the Sheraton Hotel in downtown Phoenix, with the theme of “Advancing Health Equity through Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR).” We are very fortunate to have Dr. Barbara Israel of the School of Public Health at the University of Michigan and her community research partner Ms. Angela G. Reyes as the conference’s keynote speakers. I am looking forward to seeing many of you at this stimulating research event where we will recognize the contributions of key leaders, celebrate our shared accomplishments, and renew our commitment to reducing and eliminating health disparities. We are still looking for conference sponsors in order to make the event as accessible as possible to our community partners and students. Please let us know if you can help with institutional or individual sponsorships by emailing Nick Ray, our Center Manager, at nick.ray@asu.edu.

Enjoy this issue of In Focus and please visit us often on Facebook and on our webpage as new information becomes available about research findings, the conference, and other training and engagement opportunities.

Good health,

Flavio F. Marsiglia, Ph.D., SIRC Director
Distinguished Foundation Professor of Cultural Diversity and Health
School of Social Work, College of Public Programs

Community Corner

The entire SIRC Team joins in sending heartfelt congratulations to Doug Hirano, Executive Director of Asian Pacific Community in Action and former Chair of SIRC’s Community Advisory Board on his selection as a Piper Fellow by the Virginia G. Piper Trust. Doug is recognized for his outstanding work to enhance the quality of life for people in Maricopa County. The award includes $30,000 for a sabbatical including study, travel and opportunities to visit best practice sites around the U.S; $10,000 for staff development at APCA and the ability to apply for $50,000 for an Organizational Enhancement Award to implement some aspect of his fellowship project.

Doug’s leadership, wisdom, energy and experience were vital in the development of SIRC’s Community Advisory Board as was his participation on the Executive Council, Strategic Planning Committee for the P-20 grant and SIRC’s Annual Conference. Doug continues as an important member of the Community Advisory Board. We celebrate Doug’s masterful achievement, wish him well and know he will continue to make important contributions to reduce health disparities and improve peoples’ lives.

Hats off to Doug! Three cheers!
SIRC Goes Global

As an engaged global participant in the field of health disparities, SIRC is excited to have a role in international conversations revolving around health disparities research, internships, postdoctoral fellowships, and other training and research activities. As a part of such international collaborations, SIRC and the School of Social Work are proud to be a part of a collaborative sponsored by the China Association of Social Work Education (CASWE), the US Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), and the People’s Republic of China (PRC) Ministries of Civil Affairs and Education.

The China-US Collaborative on Master of Social Work (MSW) Education

The Arizona State University School of Social Work is one of seven American schools of social work that participated in a bi-national China-US conference held at Peking University in Beijing, China on December 10-14, 2012. SIRC was represented by its Director Dr. Flavio Marsiglia, who presented a paper on “Social work with families: Teaching and research in China and the US.” The ASU delegation also included Dr. Fei Sun, Assistant Professor of Social Work and Dr. Meirong Liu from Howard University. The China-US Collaborative on Master of Social Work (MSW) Education aims at promoting the development of MSW education and establishing strategic cooperative relationships between Chinese and American universities. ASU has been paired-up with the Huazhong University of Science and Technology in Wuhan, a public coeducation research university in the Hubei province of China.

The sister universities are developing a plan to promote social work education and research in central China. In his presentation, Dr. Marsiglia highlighted “the rapid ongoing social transformations in China and the need to develop an indigenous Chinese practitioner-researcher social work model.” These changes, he added, “require an ongoing assessment of social needs and cultural assets in order to design evidence-based interventions that can support the well-being of rural and urban Chinese families.” The warm Chinese hospitality helped the participants cope with the very cold and snowy Beijing winter. The ASU School of Social Work and SIRC are excited with the work plan developed which includes health disparities research internships and post-doctoral fellowships among many other proposed training and research activities. The collaborative is sponsored by the China Association of Social Work Education (CASWE), the US Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), and the People’s Republic of China (PRC) Ministries of Civil Affairs and Education.

SIRC in Uruguay

Although Uruguay is the smallest Spanish speaking country in South America with a population of only 3.3 million people, it has been very much in the news lately due to its impending broad legalization of Marijuana. In November 2012, SIRC researchers were hosted by Mr. Carlos Libisch, a psychologist and prevention researcher in Montevideo, who organized a series of meetings with the country’s authorities and academic leaders. They discussed possible youth prevention interventions and strategies that could be implemented in connection with the enactment of such legislation. Meetings were held with the leadership of the National Bureau of Drug Abuse (Junta Nacional de Drogas) at the Presidential Palace as well as with the Dean and faculty of the College of Psychology of the University of the Republic. Among the many ideas that emerged from these meetings were to secure SIRC’s support in evaluating current youth drug prevention efforts and to implement a cultural adaptation and evaluation of the Spanish language version of keepin’ REAL (Mantente REAL) for Uruguay. Mr. Libisch became connected to SIRC through our research partners at the University of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia-Spain where he received his Masters degree in Psychology. Through his involvement in Galicia’s research projects he became aware of keepin’ REAL and SIRC’s other evidence-based interventions.

Office of Evaluation and Partner Contracts Offers New Training

In conjunction with her work as Chair of the Governor’s Substance Abuse Epidemiology Working Group and the State Epidemiology Outcomes Workgroup contract, Dr. Wendy Wolfertseig and team members developed, pilot tested, refined and implemented a new one-day training: Communities in Context Curriculum: Using Data to Empower Arizona Communities. This training, now being offered free-of-charge, helps preventionists, community leaders, coalition members, policymakers, and key stakeholders utilize substance abuse-related data and the Community Data Project website in a data-driven decision-making process. Tutorial webinars and community presentations have also been developed to explain the Epi data and training.

SIRC Evaluation and Partner Contracts continues its work with partners to respond to and secure contracts including a new pilot project in schools using SIRC’s two evidence-based curricula along with a third evidence-based bullying prevention program. The team also completed a multi-year federal external evaluation subcontract with a three-year workplace climate assessment and training webinars on working with LGBTQ clients.
Southwest Interdisciplinary Research Center’s Projects

In the last issue of InFocus we shared the exciting news about SIRC receiving a second, five year P20 Center of Excellence award from the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities of the National Institutes of Health (NIMHD/NIH). This award will fund cutting-edge research through a number of projects.

The American Dream Academy and Familias

One of the main studies funded by the P20 continuation award (2012-2017) is an effectiveness trial of the Families Preparing the Next Generation (FPNG) intervention developed by SIRC during the first five years of the P20 award. FPNG was developed as a parenting program to increase the effect size of the keepin’ It REAL youth intervention. The new effectiveness trial is being conducted in association with our research partner the American Dream Academy (ADA). They are an ideal partner to help us test if the already efficacious FPNG intervention will produce the same strong effects when it is implemented by a community research partner.

The aims of the study are to:

1) Test the effectiveness of the integrated and enhanced Youth/Parent prevention intervention (KIR + Familias)
2) Examine if the effects of KIR on youth substance use are mediated through enhanced: family functioning, parenting skills, and parental social support
3) Explore the moderator effects of acculturation and acculturation stress on parent and children desired outcomes
4) Examine the relative cost effectiveness of the two interventions (KIR & Familias).

The Randomized Control Trial will be implemented with 540 parent-child dyads at 18 Phoenix middle schools. The Principal Investigator is Dr. Flavio Marsiglia and the Co-PI is Dr. Adriana Umaña-Taylor. Mr. Alejandro Perrilla is the Executive Director of the American Dream Academy.

Urban American Indian Youth Substance Use: Ecodevelopmental Influences

This new SIRC study, led by Principal Investigator Dr. Stephen Kulik and Co-Investigator Dr. Stephanie Ayers, investigates risk and protective factors for substance use among American Indian (AI) adolescents in urban areas. Urban AI families, now a growing majority of American Indians, face unique stressors due to migration to urban settings, family disruption, adult substance abuse, and challenges in remaining connected to their cultural heritage. This study attempts to detail the complex set of interacting socioenvironmental forces in urban AI communities that shape the resilience and vulnerability of urban AI youth to substance use. The study uses ecodevelopmental theory to map peer, family, school, and neighborhood influences on substance use among urban AI youth in Arizona.

The project uses data from the Arizona Youth Survey, a state-wide survey of youth substance use with large numbers of AI youth (N=3,450) living in urban communities.

The study aims to:

1) Document the relative influence of these factors at different levels
2) Test how parental influences interact with those at other levels
3) Examine how these influences differ in urban AI youth subgroups (females/males, 8th, 10th, 12th grade)

In collaboration with community partners such as the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission, the study bridges science to practice and policy through mechanisms for interpreting and disseminating findings. It also provides a platform for translational research into how to target and deliver prevention programs comprehensively by identifying ways that urban AI youth and families meet the challenges of living in urban social contexts by calling upon protective factors embedded in their family and social structures, as well as cultural heritages.

Every Little Step Counts

Obesity and type 2 diabetes disproportionately impact Latino youth. However, it is now clear that type 2 diabetes can be delayed and possibly prevented through lifestyle intervention. Unfortunately, there are very few diabetes prevention programs for Latino youth. To address this gap, a group of SIRC researchers led by Gabe Shaibi, Ph.D., of ASU’s College of Nursing and Health Innovation and their community partners have developed a culturally-grounded, community-based diabetes prevention program specifically designed to improve the health of obese Latino adolescents.

The five-year study will test the short and long-term effects of the program on diabetes risk as well as quality of life. The program incorporates lifestyle education classes delivered by promoters from the St. Vincent de Paul Medical and Dental Clinic along with physical activity sessions delivered by trainers from the YMCA. The goal is not only to establish that diabetes can be prevented but also show that doing so can be cost-effective in the long run.
Southwest Interdisciplinary Research Center’s Projects

Community Engagement & Outreach Core
The Community Engagement & Outreach Core (CEOC) of SIRC works to enhance and expand existing meaningful community-academic collaborations in order to promote minority health in the U.S. Southwest region, and to prevent, eliminate and reduce health disparities. The CEOC’s work is driven by Community Based Participatory Research and the strategic planning of our Community Advisory Board (CAB).

SIRC investigators and CAB members identified the following strategic health disparities activities to guide the CEOC over the next few years:
1. Enhancing the leadership role of the CAB
2. Strengthening the research capacity of community partners
3. Increasing translational research and health literacy efforts
4. Building community evaluation capacity
5. Developing policy and advocacy initiatives.

Under the leadership of Dr. Eddie Brown, Director of American Indian Studies, the CEOC aims to establish innovative research partnerships between SIRC and community groups and organizations, to implement joint innovative minority health and health disparities research and to inform the development of responsive public health policies and services.

African American Cardiovascular Health Literacy Exploration
Barbershops and salons are trusted environments within the African American community. Creating a cultural space where Black barbershops and salons are potential community partners for health promotion programs targeting hypertension, diabetes, prostate cancer, and other diseases disproportionately affecting Black men and women is the purpose of the African American Cardiovascular Health Literacy Exploration. Dr. Olga Davis from the Hugh Down's School of Human Communications is the Principal Investigator.

This health literacy project employs a community-based approach to blood pressure (BP) screening as a means of increasing health literacy about cardiovascular disease among Phoenix's African American community. Barbers and cosmetologists represent community members with existing credibility across many topics of interest to the community at large. Among African American men, Black-owned barbershops serve as a cultural institution that draws large loyal male clientele and provides an open forum for discussion of numerous topics – including health – with influential peers, and male social networks could be key to increasing health literacy. This exploration in partnership with barbershops and salons aims to: develop a rapport with urban Black barbershop and salon owners/operators, conduct focus groups and interviews with shops and their clients to confirm health needs at the community-wide level, and explore cultural approaches for health sustainability of the African American community of metropolitan Phoenix.

Training Asian American Lay Health Navigators
As part of the CEOC, Dr. Perla Vargas serves as principal investigator for the Training Asian American Lay Health Navigators demonstration project. This project focuses on enhancing and expanding existing meaningful community-academic collaborations in order to promote minority health to prevent reduce and eventually eliminate health disparities. The adoption of community health workers as frontline outreach paraprofessionals has emerged in response to the need for effective risk reduction interventions that are more accessible to underserved populations at elevated risk when traditional outreach efforts have failed. The project is a collaboration with Asian Pacific Community in Action (APCA), a not-for-profit organization created in 2002 to meet the health-related needs of Asian/Pacific Islander (API) individuals and families residing in Maricopa County.

To fulfill its mission, APCA has developed several interventions using the community health worker approach, including programs for screening and referral for the Hepatitis B Virus, diabetes, breast and cervical cancer, and tobacco education and referral for smoking cessation. Through this collaboration, the project aims to design, implement and evaluate API community based health literacy initiatives.

Research, Education and Training Core (RETC)
The Research, Education and Training Core (RETC) supports the mission of SIRC by helping build scientific capacity in health disparities research and helping produce the next generation of health disparities researchers. This is accomplished through research, training and education that support knowledge development within an ecodvelopmental framework that conceptualizes health and health disparities as a result of the intersection of multilevel factors. Emphasis is placed on community-based participatory research in which researchers and community members are co-equal partners in the pursuit of reducing or eliminating health disparities.

The RETC is led by Dr. Mary Gillmore who provides general direction and oversight of the program. Dr. Gillmore has a distinguished publication record and her research focuses on the prevention of adolescent STDs/HIV, unintended pregnancies, and substance use—heath problems that occur disproportionately among minority groups. Along with Dr. Gillmore, Dr. Perla Vargas serves as Co-director and the senior faculty of SIRC serve as mentors, directing, overseeing and facilitating training efforts for early career faculty and promising doctoral students.

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CAB Update

The Public Policy Subcommittee of the Community Advisory Board (CAB) was formed as a part of the new P20 grant at SIRC. This subcommittee will help SIRC design strategies for using our findings to promote policy changes and related advocacy efforts on health disparities. The subcommittee will work with community leaders to develop trainings, web-based materials and policy briefs to mobilize community members to engage in policy, systems, and environmental improvement strategies.

The Public Policy Subcommittee is chaired by Manuel Medina, Associate Director of TERROS Behavioral Health Services, Inc., and its members include Yvonne Fortier, Director of Clinical Services for Native American Connections, Inc.; Eileen Eisen-Cohen, Chair of Research and Training and Evaluation Team Leader for the Maricopa County Department of Public Health; Teresa Peña, Cultural Competency Director for Magellan Health Services; Carol Poore, President and CEO of the Southwest Center for HIV/AIDS; Beal Salazar, Director of Children’s Services for the People of Color Network; and Alexandra Kassman, who works with the Refugee Women’s Health Clinic.

SIRC Schedule of Events & Meetings Spring 2013

February 20, 2013 - SIRC Health Disparities Lecture Series - Coping with Food Insecurity Risk and the Specter of Chronic Disease among Low-income Latinos by Selene Szekupinski Quiroga, Ph.D., Research Scientist, School of Human Evolution & Social Change, Adjunct Faculty, College of Nursing and Health Innovation, SIRC Faculty Research Affiliate and Dr. Donna Winham, Howell Research Associates, Wednesday - Noon to 1 p.m. - SIRC Suite 720

February 27, 2013 - SIRC Applied Health Disparities Research Series - Modeling Social Dynamics Using Deterministic and Stochastic Models by Danielle Robbins, Ph.D., SIRC Data Analyst, Wednesday, 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. - SIRC Suite 720

March 6, 2013 - SIRC Health Disparities Colloquium - Maternal Depression within African American Families: Prevalence, Risks and Treatment Utilization by Rhonda C. Boyd, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine Children’s Hospital, Philadelphia Department of Psychiatry Center for Family Intervention. Wednesday - Noon to 1 p.m. - SIRC Suite 720

March 23-24, 2013 - The National Women’s Health Network Board Meeting - Co-hosted by SIRC - Saturday, March 23 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday, March 24 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. - SIRC Suite 720

March 27, 2013 - SIRC Applied Health Disparities Research Series - Data Analysis Presentations - Improving Experimental Design Using Sensitivity Analysis by Danielle Robbins, Ph.D., SIRC Data Analyst Wednesday - 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. - SIRC Suite 720

April 19, 2013 – SIRC’s 11th Annual Research Conference – Advancing Health Equity through Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR)- Sheraton Hotel - Downtown Phoenix – 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

SIRC Connected

In an environment of rapidly evolving technology, SIRC is doubling down on its communications efforts, updating existing tools and unveiling new ones. Through this process there will be three stand out ways to keep in touch:

sirc.asu.edu - The SIRC website is the best source for information on all of our pilots, projects and programs. The SIRC website also hosts an up-to-date list of peer-reviewed publications, as well as reports and evaluations.

Facebook.com/asu.sirc - The easiest and quickest way to stay connected with SIRC is to like us on facebook. Through social media, stay tuned to all of SIRC’s upcoming events and announcements.

In Focus/E-Focus - In addition to our regular In-Focus newsletter, SIRC is launching a new E-Focus that will be published three times a year. This will be an online news and events update distributed via email.

To sign up for E-Focus please visit sirc.asu.edu/news

Research Capacity

The Data Analysis Clinic (DAC) provides ongoing methodological and statistical support and training to investigators, students and community members every Wednesday from 1-1:45 p.m. in UCent707. The last DAC for spring semester will be on April 24, 2013.

The Advanced Statistical Analysis Work Group (ASA WG) is a user group for advanced students, faculty, and community partners addressing more complex methodological and statistical analysis. This group meets every Wednesday from 1:45 – 2:30 PM in UCent707, finishing for the spring semester on April 24, 2013.

SIRC Welcomes

Jose Rios Lua

is the new communications coordinator at SIRC. Jose comes to us from ASU’s Center for Global Education Services where he coordinated international and domestic communications for the International Students and Scholars Office and the Passport Acceptance Office. In December 2012, Jose received his undergraduate degree in communications with a focus in community advocacy. While an undergraduate student at both Estrella Mountain Community College and ASU’s Downtown Phoenix campus Jose was involved in a variety of student organizations and activities including student government, Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán and World AIDS Day. Jose will be working along with SIRC administration to coordinate all aspects of the center’s external communications needs including this newsletter, the SIRC website, social media and other efforts to increase awareness of the center’s work.
Save the Date for SIRC's 11th Annual Conference
ASU School of Social Work, College of Public Programs

Please join us on April 19, 2013 at the Sheraton Phoenix Downtown Hotel for the 11th Annual SIRC Research Conference. Our theme this year, "Advancing Health Equity Through Community-Based Participatory Research", addresses head-on what our work is all about, namely the importance of community-based participatory research to overcoming health disparities in minority and underserved communities. We are delighted to announce that the 2013 conference keynote address will be delivered by a dynamic duo; Professor Barbara Israel, Dr.P.H., of the University of Michigan's School of Public Health, and Angela G. Reyes, Executive Director of the Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation who is also a long-standing partner of the Detroit Urban Research Center. We have identified and invited renowned breakout session presenters and guest speakers to ensure that this is the most informative conference ever. Included in our breakout sessions will be a discussion of the role of social media in CBPR; a conversation about ethical concerns around CBPR and a dialogue with experienced policy makers and community policy advocates about how CBPR can be used to impact the policy process.

To register, learn more about the upcoming conference, our exciting keynote speakers and what other workshops you will be able to attend during the day please visit sirc2013.com