



Building knowledge. Taking action. Empowering communities.  
*For the health of people everywhere.*

Spring 2024 > ISSUE 2

## VOICES OF PUBLIC HEALTH

### A message from our community



#### **2024 brings exciting developments in UC Merced's Public Health Department!**

We are thrilled to share exciting developments from across the UC Merced Public Health community. Read about our cutting-edge research in environmental health, take a peek at the plans for our new building, and hear from our student leaders and alumni!

*"It has been such a privilege to witness our Valley's community members and organizations, health agencies, elementary and high schools and UC Merced students and faculty working toward a common goal to improve public health in our region."* — Asa Bradman, Department Chair

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### Research and action



## Improving environmental health through community-engaged research

UC Merced faculty are at the forefront of understanding and addressing the adverse health effects of environmental hazards and climate-change related health threats. We highlight their efforts to work with communities to monitor and mitigate environmental challenges such as air and water pollution and extreme heat.

[More >](#)

## Student leaders



## Doctoral student tackles food insecurity on both sides of the US-Mexico border

Many Latino populations have lower diet qualities and are at risk of developing malnutrition, diabetes, hypertension, and obesity. 5th year doctoral student Kimberly Sánchez is tackling nutrition-related health disparities in Latino communities through research on food programs and binational health promotion interventions.

[More >](#)

## Alumni in the field



## Doctoral alum advances health equity through grant-making and community-engaged research

Since graduating with her PhD in Public Health, alum Dr. Tashelle Wright has continued to advance health equity as a program officer at the Tobacco-Related Disease Research Program where she supports initiatives on social and behavioral health, community partnered participatory research, and health equity in research and science.

[More >](#)

## Faculty on the forefront

## Reaching Native American communities through tele-nutrition classes

Rural Native American communities face disproportionate rates of food insecurity and malnutrition. Karina Diaz-Rios and her team are undertaking a study to adapt and deliver culturally acceptable tele-nutrition classes to caregivers of young children in Native American communities in rural California.





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### **Housing instability in childhood has life-long health consequences**

Irene Yen's recent study shows that adults who moved homes frequently in childhood may be at risk for worse health. This research highlights that policies that support housing stability for families, such as eviction protections, can contribute to better health later in adulthood.

[More >](#)

**Follow the link below for more stories about UC Merced Public Health Department faculty research.**

[More >](#)

### **In the news**

[There's renewed pressure on the FDA to ban synthetic food dye Red No.3](#)

– Public National Radio

[UC Merced Magazine features Public Health Department Research](#)

– UC Merced

[Health inequities within the Latin and Asian immigrants populations](#)

[Inequidades de salud de los inmigrantes latinos y asiáticos](#)

– American Journal of Public Health Podcast

### **Contact us**

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