Happy 2022, DBMI!

2022 | January | UCSD Health Department of Biomedical Informatics

What a great way to end 2021 and start 2022!

We had so much to celebrate in 2021: our many contributions made us proud to be part of DBMI, UCSD and the San Diego region in general. Thanks everyone for making 2021 so memorable.

DBMI is starting the new year with new projects, new people, and a continued commitment in developing and/or implementing new technologies and using large collections of data to promote health for all.

Let's continue our amazing journey together. Happy 2022!

Lucila Ohno-Machado

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10 new jobs

created at UCSD (for > 150 positions funded by DBMI at UCSD and collaborating institutions

> 120 publications

by our faculty and students, with the majority having trainees as first authors

10 additional grants

including two large centers, representing > $22M in new awards

9 new trainees

totaling 22 long-term trainees for the year, 14 interns, and 5 DBMI courses

New projects

In January 2021, we started the RADx-rad Data Coordinating Center by the NIH. This large project helps organize 50 grantees on their incredibly new technologies to diagnose COVID-19 and associated conditions. The UCSD team involved units in Health Sciences and on general campus, from ethics to bioinformatics to laboratory medicine.

We were also awarded grants and contracts by NIH or other agencies for predictive modeling for sepsis, for increasing medical diagnosis accuracy, to mine electronic health records, and to continuously improve and manage a system of vital records for the state of California.

In late 2021, we were awarded a prestigious NIH/NHGRI Center for Excellence in Genome Science, focused on studying genetic and social determinants of health for admixed individuals. This is also a collaboration between Health Sciences and other units on general campus.

Kit Curtius's lab received a generous donation.

Shamim Nemati launched a new course on Cloud Computing (MED 299) and Michael Hogarth launched Special Topics in Public Health (FMPH 491).

Personalized Medicine

for All

It was our privilege to participate in UCSD Health initiatives to promote health in San Diego and to provide data-driven answers to questions derived from clinicians, researchers, and the public in general. The vaccination superstation at Petco Park was the place to be early 2021, and the station at RIMAC was equally impressive during the spring. Thank you all so much for your dedication!

New people / New roles

Ten new people were added to our team to attend to the needs of many new projects and some others were brought in to fill the big shoes of those who left after a long history of contributions to DBMI (Elizabeth Santillanez, Michele Day, and Paulina Paul). We thank them for all they did to help bring DBMI to where it is now, and we welcome our new colleagues.

Chris Longhurst was selected to be the Chief Medical Officer and Chief Digital Officer for UCSD Health. Lucila Ohno-Machado received the title of Distinguished Professor.

Eli Aronoff-Spencer (Infectious Diseases), Sally Baxter (Ophthalmology), Chris Dameff (Emergency Medicine), Amit Majithia (Endocrinology), and Ming Tai-Seale (Family Medicine) started joint or affiliate appointments at DBMI.

People of the year awards

Staff

Supreeth Shashikumar

Faculty

Amy Sitapati

Shamim Nemati

Trainee

Jennifer Nguyen

Jonathan Lam

Achievement award

Brian Fox, Jihoon Kim, Kai Post

DBMI people voted for those who went above and beyond to make it a model environment for staff, faculty, and trainees. It was difficult to select just a few people for this year's awards, since the whole team did a great job. A few examples of dedication and flexibility stood out.

Congratulations!

Diverse in many ways

We at DBMI take pride of the many disciplines we integrate into our work, the many languages we speak, the many places we grew up in (and the many places we still want to go to). The different perspectives help us grow and thrive in a very competitive environment. We prepare for that accordingly:
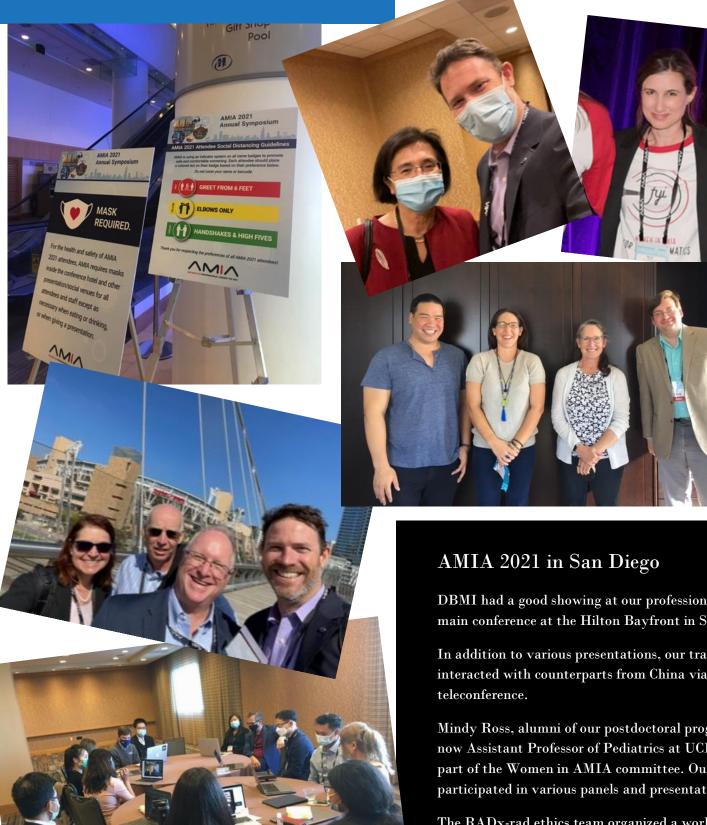
This year the whole DBMI did a refresher training in "Understanding Unconscious Biases," and many people also took the course on anti-racism that was offered by the RADx-rad DCC project.

We restarted in-person activities for the All of Us Program while instituting a hybrid in-person and telecommute strategy for office personnel. Thanks to Nancy Herbst, we had over 40 virtual Happy Hours with themes as varied as favorite cartoons, art, food, hobbies, cities/landmarks, songs, movies, Jeopardy…

UCSD had high recruitment and retention activities for the NIH All of Us Research Program, thanks to the leadership of Amy Sitapati. We were also the first consortium outside the coordinating center to publish results based on All of Us data in the peer-reviewed literature (a work led by Sally Baxter, a former trainee and current joint faculty member, in collaboration with DBMI staff and trainees).

The development of novel predictive models for sepsis and MISC-C (a pediatric condition associated with COVID-19) was led by Shamim Nemati, with assistance by Supreeth Shashikumar and Jonathan Lam. Jennifer Nguyen was recognized for her leadership as trainee representative, organizing town halls and increasing the communication within the training program.

Brian Fox, Jihoon Kim, and Kai Post excelled in taking over complex programming projects previously led by Paulina Paul.

AMIA 2021 in San Diego

DBMI had a good showing at our professional society's main conference at the Hilton Bayfront in San Diego.

In addition to various presentations, our trainees interacted with counterparts from China via teleconference.

Mindy Ross, alumni of our postdoctoral program and now Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at UCLA, was part of the Women in AMIA committee. Our faculty participated in various panels and presentations.

The RADx-rad ethics team organized a workshop on data sharing.

As we do every year, we organized a UC-wide get together to celebrate our collective accomplishments.

We look forward to continuing to actively participate in all AMIA's activities in 2022!

Most photos in this issue were taken by Tyler Bath