



# Faculty Affairs Newsletter

Volume 08  
October 2025



## News from the Office of Faculty Affairs

Greetings CUSM Faculty,

The transition from Summer to Fall is always a busy time here at CUSM. In the past few months, we welcomed the MD Class of 2029 and MBS Class of 2026. These represent the 8th classes to join the MD and MBS Programs. Although the first students did not join till 2018, CUSM was established in 2015 and we now have faculty and staff members who are celebrating 10 years of service – congratulations!

We recently completed our LCME Full Accreditation site visit which took place from Sept 15th to 17th. Thank you, to all of the faculty. Everyone's work contributed to us reaching this significant step. A special thanks to everyone who participated in the meetings with the visiting team. We will hear the decision from LCME in Spring 2026.

Several faculty participated in the LCME site visit in relation to their roles on Faculty Assembly Standing Committees. If you are interested in engaging more with the Faculty Assembly and its role in school governance, we encourage you to attend our Fall Faculty Assembly meeting which is today (October 21st) at noon. You may attend in person or online and the link is posted below and in your email. This year's Faculty Assembly Chair is Dr Ou (Ozzie) Zhang, Associate Professor of Medical Education/Microbiology. Our Vice Chair/Chair-elect is Dr David Seigler, Department Chair and Associate Professor of

Below you will find updates on training activities including another successful Faculty Development week and initiatives to support faculty in research. Some of these activities are taking place through the recently established Center for Brain and Behavioral Health which you can learn more about in the article below.

Please keep us updated on your news and events (facultyaffairsoffice@cusm.edu), and we look forward to featuring them in the February newsletter.

Best wishes,  
The Faculty Affairs Team

[Visit our website](#)

[Send us an email](#)

## University News

### White Coat Ceremony

On July 18, 2025, California University of Science and Medicine welcomed 130 new medical students during its traditional White Coat Ceremony. Surrounded by more than 550 family members and friends, the MD Class of 2029 accepted their white coats and recited the Hippocratic Oath, signifying the beginning of their journey into the medical profession.

This year's class represents the largest number of Inland Empire students in CUSM history, with 42% from the region. Additional highlights include 23% being first-generation college students, 18% alumni of the CUSM Master of Biomedical Sciences program, and 56% with degrees from University of California campuses.

Each student received their white coat from Dr Lyons, President and Dean of CUSM, and Dr Prem Reddy, CUSM's Founder and Chair of the Board, during the ceremony.



David Seigler, MD, Faculty Assembly Vice Chair/Chair Elect, leading the the CUSM White Coat Ceremony procession.



MD Class of 2029 with Dr Reddy.

### Launch of the Center for Brain and Behavioral Health at CUSM

In May CUSM launched the Center for Brain and Behavioral Health (CBBH). The Center is dedicated to advancing health equity in brain, behavioral, and neurological health. Through innovative research, integrated clinical care, education and workforce training, and

meaningful community engagement, the Center works to address disparities in health outcomes, with a particular focus on underserved communities in the Inland Empire.

The Center is led by Founding Director, Dr Zohray Talib, alongside Manager Patricia Lozano, and a team of faculty leads including Dr Elizabeth Morrison Banks (Clinical Lead), Dr Edith Wakida (Research Lead), Dr Vanessa Orozco (Education and Training Lead) and Dr Joel Arvizo-Zavala (Community Lead).

Dr Edith Wakida recently launched a longitudinal Research Training Program in addition to running a series of Information Session on Grants/Research Administration and Management. Look out for invites to upcoming sessions in your email.

More information on the CBBH can be found on the website:  
<https://www.cusm.edu/about/cbbh/index.php>



## CUSM Faculty Receive Federal Grant Funding

CUSM was recently awarded funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Office of Research Integrity (ORI). The funded project, Advancing Research Integrity through Structured Education in the Inland Empire (ARISE-IE), will be led by Dr Edith Wakida as Principal Investigator and Dr Zohray Talib as Co-Investigator. The project was one of only two projects selected nation-wide this cycle.

Over the next 12 months, ARISE-IE will implement a dual-intervention program to strengthen our institutional capacity for ethical research conduct by:

- **Mentorship for Research Integrity (MRI):** Structured training for faculty
- **Leadership for Ethical Research Culture (LERC):** Training for researchers and administrators to strengthen oversight practices
- **Evaluation and Dissemination:** Evaluation and dissemination of guides and policy brief

The goal is to embed a sustainable culture of research integrity at CUSM and offer a replicable model to strengthen oversight and ethical practices at young and rapidly growing academic institutions nationwide.



**Zohray Talib, MD**  
*Executive Vice Dean of Education*



**Edith Wakida, PhD**  
*Assistant Professor*

## ARMC Opens New Adolescent Behavioral Health Unit

On August 7th, 2025, Arrowhead Regional Medical Center (ARMC), CUSM's primary teaching hospital, took a major step toward addressing the region's mental health crisis. Less than a year ago, ARMC broke ground on its new Adolescent Behavioral Health Unit and now has one of the first new units of its kind in San Bernardino County.

ARMC's new facility will include an adolescent behavioral health emergency room, the first in California, that will allow adolescent patients to receive care separate from adults.

The creation of this facility represents a major investment in San Bernardino County's mental health resources and reflects ARMC's ongoing commitment to increasing access to behavioral health care for adolescents.

Learn more about the new center and view the virtual tour [here](#).

[Video Tour](#)



Andrew Goldfrach, Chief Executive Officer, David Seigler, Behavioral Health Chair and Associate Professor, along with other CUSM/ARMC faculty, staff, and leadership.

## CUSM Receives Microscope Donation

CUSM extends its gratitude to Dr Paul Shitabata for the generous donation of a Nikon

## Eclipse 80i teaching microscope.

This advanced piece of equipment will be an invaluable addition to our educational resources, providing students and faculty with enhanced opportunities for teaching, learning, and research collaboration.

Dr Shitabata's thoughtful contribution reflects a strong commitment to supporting medical education and will have a lasting impact in our community.



**Paul Shitabata, MD**  
*Professor of Medical Education*



## Office of Accreditation and Continuous Quality Improvement Updates

The California University of Science and Medicine (CUSM) successfully completed its LCME Full Survey Visit on September 15–17, 2025. During the three-day visit, the LCME survey team met with faculty, staff, students, and institutional leaders to evaluate CUSM's compliance with accreditation standards.

The visit represented a significant milestone in our accreditation journey and reflected the collective effort and collaboration of our entire CUSM community. We are deeply grateful to all who participated in preparation activities, contributed to the Data Collection Instrument (DCI) and Self-Study Summary Report, and engaged with the survey team during their time on campus.

The LCME will review the survey team's findings at its February 2026 meeting, with a final accreditation decision expected thereafter. We extend sincere appreciation to the faculty, staff, and students whose dedication and professionalism contributed to this important institutional achievement.



Dr Zohray Talib, Executive Vice Dean of Education, addresses CUSM community members at the LCME site visit completion celebration alongside Dr Tsugio Seki, Associate Dean of Accreditation and Continuous Quality Improvement and his team members Catherine Eisenbrey and Chris Heun.

## Faculty News

### Research Support from ASPIRE

CUSM's ASPIRE (Advancing Scholarship, People, Innovation and Research in Education) has opened two new services available to faculty, as well as our students, and our CUSM Clinical Partners - the Research Support Unit & Data Analysis Lab.

The ASPIRE Research Support Unit (RSU) provides research consultations for all proposals, projects, publications or presentations for CUSM personnel and its clinical partners. It offers in-person or virtual consultation for individuals or research teams in need of consultation for their projects. The RSU is facilitated by Office of Medical Education faculty experts and data analysts and is open on Thursday afternoons from 1:00 – 3:00PM in 3rd Floor Dry Lab for walk-in consultation and 3:00PM – 5:00PM for virtual consultation. Please contact Dr Elvin Hernandez ([elvin.hernandez@cusm.edu](mailto:elvin.hernandez@cusm.edu)) or Toufiqul Hoque ([Toufiqul.hoque@cusm.edu](mailto:Toufiqul.hoque@cusm.edu)) for research consultations or virtual appointments.

Data management and analysis consultation is also provided through our ASPIRE Data Analysis Lab for students, staff members, faculty members or clinical partners who seek guidance on how to manage their data and perform their own data analysis. Laboratory is held at the same time as RSU consultations in the 3rd Floor – Dry Lab, Thursday afternoons 1:00PM – 3:00PM for in-person, 3:00PM – 5:00PM for virtual assistance.

The ASPIRE unit is also currently offering a series of "Research Skills" workshops which are held in hybrid format, watch your email for invites. The next workshops will be:

1. "Designing a Methodology for a Research Protocol" - Thursday October 30, 2025, 4:00PM-5:00PM
2. "Data Collection: Primary Data vs. Secondary Data" - Thursday, November 20, 2025,

**RESEARCH SUPPORT UNIT & DATA ANALYSIS LABS**

**OUR SERVICES**

- Research questions development ✓
- Help with data analysis problems ✓
- No appointment necessary ✓

In person walk-ins 1-3pm, Virtual consultations 3-5pm

**Dr. Elvin Hernandez**  
Elvin.Hernandez@cusm.edu

**Mr. Toufiqul Hoque**  
Toufiqul.Hoque@cusm.edu

**3rd Floor Dry Lab**  
1-3pm  
Teams for Virtual  
3-5pm



ASPIRE presents

## RESEARCH SKILLS WORKSHOP 5: DESIGNING A METHODOLOGY FOR A RESEARCH PROTOCOL



Hybrid event - LH 125 &amp; Teams

**Thursday**  
October 30, 2025 4:00-5:00PM

Participants will receive hands-on practice with expert guidance in preparing a methods section including:

- Outlining the study design
- Determining inclusion/exclusion criteria
- Population recruitment
- Consideration of analytical techniques

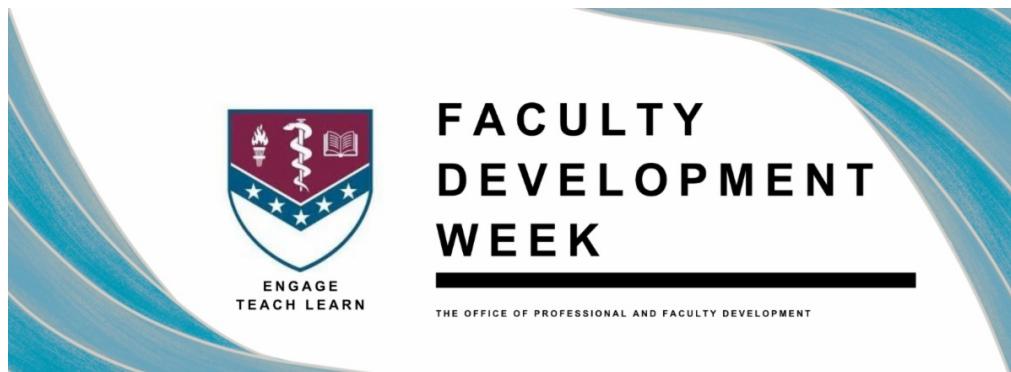
**Speaker: Toufiqul Hoque**  
Email: Toufiqul.Hoque@cusm.edu



## Faculty Development Week 2025

Faculty Development Week 2025 offered a range of seminars, information sessions, and training on a variety of topics. Sessions included seminars on teaching, administration, and effectiveness tools, new technology and info commons resources for faculty, sexual harassment prevention training, integrating coaching skills into student advising approaches, and staple sessions on committee member orientation and promotion planning.

Eleven hours of training were offered, and over 45 faculty attended the week's sessions, both in person and online.



## Faculty Assembly

### Faculty Assembly Updates

The Faculty Executive Council (FEC)—the administrative branch of the Faculty Assembly—has announced its new leadership for the academic year.

This year's Faculty Assembly Chair is Dr Ou Zhang, Associate Professor of Medical Education/ Microbiology. Serving as Vice Chair/Chair-Elect is

Dr David Seigler, Department Chair and Associate Professor of Behavioral Health at Arrowhead Regional Medical Center.

All faculty committees transitioned to new memberships in July 2025. For a detailed overview of current committee memberships, please email the Office of Faculty Affairs.

If you are a new faculty member interested in learning more about opportunities to participate in the Faculty Assembly or its Committees, please contact Linda Connelly, Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs, at [Linda.Connelly@cusm.edu](mailto:Linda.Connelly@cusm.edu).

# Dean's Townhall and Faculty Assembly Meeting

The Faculty Assembly will have its first Dean's Townhall and Faculty Assembly Meeting of the academic year on Tuesday, October 21st, 2025, from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM.

This hybrid event will take place in MBS Classroom #255 on the CUSM campus, with an option to attend virtually via Microsoft Teams.

# Dean's Townhall and Faculty Assembly Meeting Agenda



## *Dean's Townhall*

**1**

Dean's Updates

## *Faculty Assembly Meeting*

**1**

Faculty Committee Reports

**2**

MD Curriculum Update

**3**

Office of Sponsored Programs  
and Research Administration  
Presentation

**4**

Research Updates

**TUESDAY,  
OCTOBER 21ST  
12:00 PM-1:00 PM**

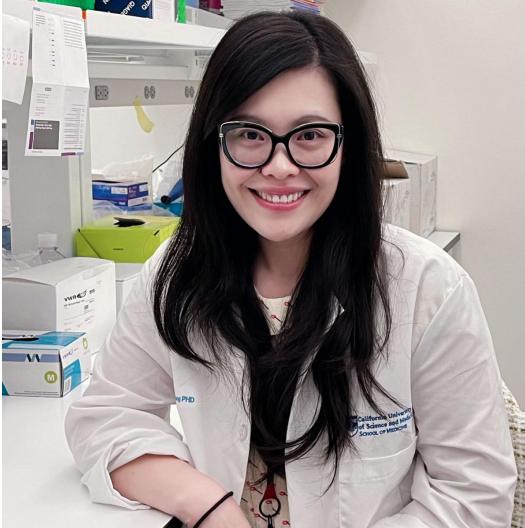
*This will be a hybrid  
session held in MBS  
Classroom #255 on the  
CUSM campus or  
online via Microsoft  
Teams*

*\* Lunch will be provided for in-person attendees*

## **Faculty Spotlights**

### **Brick Builder Grant**

Dr Ou Zhang, Associate Professor, was recently awarded a Brick Builder Grant from ScholarRx. Recipients receive \$500 in funding and access to the Rx Bricks platform, a tool that allows faculty to design and publish an educational "Brick", which is an interactive learning module.



aimed at enhancing medical education worldwide.

The grant period extends for 12 months, during which Dr Zhang will design, refine, and publish her proposed educational Brick titled "Neglected Tropical Diseases". Dr Zhang will also mentor a CUSM M4 student in curriculum design and digital scholarship through this project.

## Ou Zhang, PhD

*Associate Professor of Medical Education*



## National NHMA Award

Dr Alexandra Lopez-Vera, Assistant Professor and Director of Vida/Medical Spanish Program, has been awarded the NHMA Allied Healthcare Professional of the Year by the National Hispanic Medical Association.

This nationally recognized honor celebrates allied health professionals who demonstrate exceptional service and leadership within Hispanic communities.

## Alexandra Lopez-Vera, PhD

*Associate Professor of Medical Education*

## Upcoming Events

### Dean's Townhall & Faculty Assembly Meeting

**Tuesday, October 21st | 12:00 PM-1:00 PM | MBS Classroom 255**

You are invited to attend the upcoming Dean's Townhall and Faculty Assembly Meeting on Wednesday, October 23rd, from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM. This will be a hybrid session, held in MBS Classroom #255 on the CUSM campus or online via Microsoft Teams.

**Spring Faculty Celebration Event**  
**Tuesday, May 12, 2026 | 12:00 PM-1:00 PM**

SAVE THE DATE!

Save the date and plan to join us as we celebrate our faculty's year-round dedication and contributions. During this event we will present faculty awards, recognize leadership on faculty assembly committees, and celebrate spring promotions. More information to follow!



**CUSM MD & MBS Commencement**  
**Monday, May 18, 2026**

SAVE THE DATE!

Commencement is scheduled for Monday, May 18, 2026. A Save the Date will be distributed via email in the coming weeks. Please stay tuned for further details!

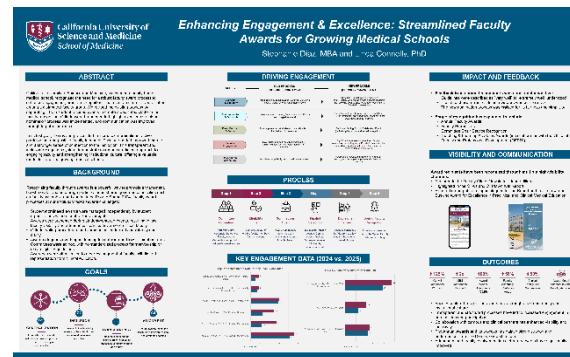
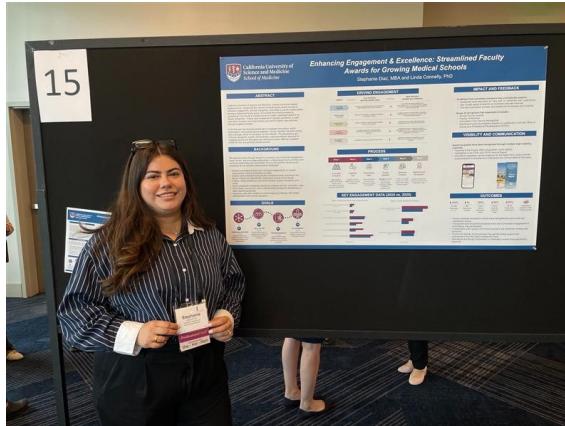
**Office of Faculty Affairs Spotlight**

**AAMC Group on Faculty Affairs  
National Conference**

The Office of Faculty Affairs proudly marked a milestone this July by presenting for the first time at the AAMC Group on Faculty Affairs (GFA) Annual Conference in Portland, Oregon. The GFA is a national affinity group within the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) that focuses on advancing faculty vitality across medical schools and teaching hospitals.

Stephanie Diaz, representing CUSM's Office of Faculty Affairs, presented a poster she co-authored with Dr Linda Connelly, titled Enhancing Engagement & Excellence: Streamlined Faculty Awards for Growing Medical Schools. The poster explored innovative approaches to faculty recognition in rapidly expanding institutions. Stephanie was also selected to participate in a "poster spotlight" session, featuring over 20 peer-reviewed projects from across the country.

This presentation reflects an exciting step forward for the Faculty Affairs Office, highlighting CUSM's growing presence around faculty support, development, and recognition.



Stephanie Diaz and poster at GFA annual conference.

## The Office of Faculty Affairs



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Please contact us for any faculty news items or spotlight submissions.

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